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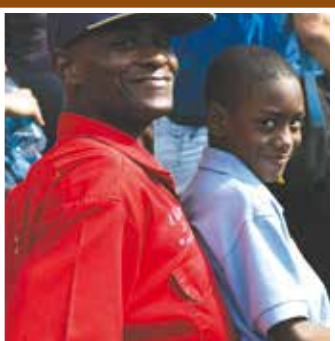
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The National Urban League Continues the Legacy of Empowering the African-American Community



Center, Marc Morial, President & CEO of the National Urban League, marches with Rev. Jesse Jackson and others to mark the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington.

By Edwin Buggage

The National Urban League: A Short History of its Origin

The National Urban League has been at the forefront of the movement for freedom, justice and equal-

ity. On its website it gives a brief history of its origin, it reads:

The National Urban League, which has played so pivotal a role in the 20th-Century Freedom Movement, grew out of that spontaneous grassroots movement for freedom and opportunity that came to be called the Black Migrations. When the U.S. Supreme Court de-

clared its approval of segregation in the 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson decision, the brutal system of economic, social and political oppression the White South quickly adopted rapidly transformed what had been a trickle of African-Americans northward into a flood.

Those newcomers to the North soon discovered they had not escaped racial discrimination. Excluded

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50th Anniversary March commemorating The March on Washington. The quest and the struggle for justice and equality is a never ending thing because one must protect the gains we've fought for," says Morial.



Erika McConduit-Diggs, President and CEO, Urban League of Greater New Orleans

from all but menial jobs in the larger society, victimized by poor housing and education, and inexperienced in the ways of urban living, many lived in terrible social and economic conditions. Still, in the degree of difference between South and North lay opportunity, and that African-Americans clearly understood. But to capitalize on that opportunity, to successfully adapt to urban life and to reduce the pervasive discrimination they faced, they would need help. That was the reason the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes was established on September 29, 1910 in New York City. Central to the organization's founding were two remarkable people: Mrs. Ruth Standish Baldwin and Dr. George Edmund Haynes, who would become the Committee's first executive secretary.

Mrs. Baldwin, the widow of a railroad magnate and a member of one of America's oldest families, had a remarkable social conscience and was a stalwart champion of the poor and disadvantaged. Dr. Haynes, a graduate of Fisk University, Yale University, and Columbia University (he was the first African-American to receive a doctorate from that institution), felt a compelling need to use his training as a social worker to serve his people.

A year later, the Committee merged with the Committee for the Improvement of Industrial Conditions Among Negroes in New York (founded in New York in 1906), and the National League for the Protection of Colored Women (founded in 1905) to form the National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes. In 1920, the name was later shortened to the National Urban League.*

Since then the organization's founding it has been as important in

the fight for the movement towards social, educational and economic progress for African-Americans. And while today the struggles of access have been fought and won on many fronts, there is still a long way to go until Lady Liberty's light fully shines on its Darker Brother as the great poet Langston Hughes says in his epic poem "I Too Sing America."

Urban League Leads the Fight for Civil Rights in the 21st Century

"The issues of today are jobs, justice and education. The National Urban League has a heavy focus on economic empowerment. We are heavily involved in workforce development, entrepreneurship and after school programs are what we work on," says National Urban League President and CEO Marc Morial, who also served as New Orleans Mayor from 1994 to 2002. Elaborating on The focus of the Urban League he says, "Justice is an issue today that is defined as issues around criminal justice, police accountability as well as voting rights. Education is always an issue because it is about the preparation of our children and making them key to the discussion of moving our people forward. These issues are key to us not just on the national level but the local level as well. Most Civil Rights organizations are not involved in direct services and that is something that makes us unique."

New Orleans Urban League Director Erika McConduit-Diggs has been with the organization for seven years serving in a variety of capacities something she says helps her better understand its inner workings and makes her more effective as its leader. She echoes the words of Morial, who speaks of the direct service aspect of the Urban

League which differentiates it from other Civil Rights organizations.

"We have many direct services within the Urban League. We have Project Ready where we provide tutoring, in addition to college and career preparation. We have two area high schools we partner with Lake Area High School and Landry-Walker. We also partner with several area colleges that offer classes to our students. We partner with Nunez Community College, Delgado, as well as UNO. We also provide workforce development where we work with unemployed and underemployed individuals. Within that we also work with ex-offenders. We provide a specialized approach to educational attainment helping them receive high school diplomas or some sort of training that can help them find employment. We also help small businesses, we support the development of new businesses, and we also have an entrepreneur boot camp."

The Myth of Post-Racial America and the Continued Need for Civil Rights Organizations

With the ascendance of Barack Obama becoming the first African-American President of the United States in 2008, in many corners of the country many began to speculate that the U.S. had overcome its sad racial history and was on its way to being post-racial. With this being a position posited by many, it became one of the main talking points of the chattering class, but closer to the ground things had not changed much for the average African-American.

"I never embraced the idea that Barack Obama's election meant that we were a post-racial nation. I always thought it was a misinterpretation. I believe it was a very

important day in our history; but I feel more importantly the objective should be not to be a post-racial nation but a post-racist nation. We need to become a multicultural democracy, and with the election of Barack Obama it was an important step in that direction. But some of the things that have happened since his election have shown that we have not moved to a post-racial or post-racist society," remarks Morial disagreeing with the idea of a post-racial America as he makes a clear distinction between an ideal and the reality of the country we live in that has not yet moved beyond race.

In the 21st Century as we see African-Americans occupy cultural spaces that they never have before, some would say there is no longer a need for Civil Rights Organizations. But as witnessed by the recent issues surrounding the shootings and utter disregard for Black lives by some in law enforcement, it shows that the journey to justice and fairness is still necessary.

"I have heard that argument but I wish people could see my email inbox, the thing about those who say we don't need civil rights organizations, they say that until they need them. The quest and the struggle for justice and equality is a never ending thing because one must protect the gains we've fought for," says Morial. Continuing he says, "We are as in demand and are as relevant as we've ever been in our history, because our role has changed. In the 60's Civil Rights groups were working to change laws centered on segregation and creating access. Today it's about public policy, legislative actions, and holding public officials accountable and to protect our gains and our organizations; give them a way to impact their communities to be involved in civic affairs."

The Struggle for Equity Continues in New Orleans 10 years after Hurricane Katrina

It is a mixed bag about the success of the recovery of New Orleans nearly 10 years after Hurricane Katrina. One could point at many successes, but one could equally look at many of the failures of the recovery. It is truly a tale of two cities consisting of have plenty's and have nothings when it comes to access and resources.

"If I had to grade New Orleans as we approach year 10 after Hurricane Katrina I would give it an I, meaning incomplete. Because while you see signs of physical progress and revitalization, you also see neighborhoods that seem to be left behind, you still have over 100,000 people who have not returned to the City after Katrina because they couldn't; either their home was destroyed or their jobs went away," says Morial as he evaluates the progress of the City he once served as Mayor where he left office with a 70 percent approval rating. "There is a tremendous amount of work left to be done and there is an unacceptable amount of violence and an unacceptable amount of poverty and those issues which go hand in hand with one another need immediate attention."

To address some of the issues of equity, the Urban League is sponsoring an event on August 26-27 of this year during the week that marks the 10th Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. Their hope is to shed some light on the issues that still face the City in its recovery while the world shines its light on the City that during those horrific days changed the City forever.

"We will have a 10-Year Com-

Cover Story, Continued on page 10.

Second Liner Profile Series

Wellington "Skelly" Ratcliff, Jr.

Rolling and Flying High

By Rachel Carrico & Daniella Santoro

If you've ever been to a second-line parade, you've probably noticed Wellington "Skelly" Ratcliff, Jr. dancing behind the band. He accomplishes more moves inside of his wheelchair (and sometimes outside of it!) than many can manage while walking. He gives a whole new meaning to the term, "rolling". But you may not know that the incredible dance history of Skelly Well started long before he innovated footwork on wheels.

"People walk up to my kids. They say, 'You don't know who this is! He a legend!'"

Skelly began dancing with his family while growing up on Josephine and LaSalle Streets before his Mom sent him to dance class with his sister. "I took up ballerina! I took up tapping!" Then he took his tap skills to the French Quarter to hustle for tips. But it was his grandmother who brought him to the second-lines. "More and more, she started [to see that] I liked to dance to the music." When he was 12 years old, his grandmother approached Alfred "Bucket" Carter and asked if Skelly could join the Young Men Olympian, Jr. Benevo-



lent Association. That's when he really "jumped off into second-lining."

By age 16, Skelly was competing in rap contests, gong shows, and break dance competitions. He started the Footloose Breakers with 20 boys in his neighborhood, and drafted his Mom as their manager. She helped the group to buy matching Wolfman jogging suits and a full roll of linoleum. "Everywhere we went, from City Park" to Jackson Square—"we ain't have to have no stage. We'd put it [the linoleum] in the grass and go to spinning on our heads." Soon they were dancing

for hire at clubs and concerts—including Patti LaBelle's show at the World's Fair—but a major highlight was winning a contest at the Superdome. "My Mama said, 'I done paid all this money—y'all better place!' I'm like, 'Man, our career is in jeopardy! We got to go home with a trophy!'" And they did. Skelly recalls the instant that the judges announced, "First place winners: Footloose Breakers! Boy, I ran up on that stage, snatched the trophy, stood up on the stage to show everybody!"

Skelly's status as a legendary

dancer has not waned since he was paralyzed from gunshot wounds at age 19. He focuses his efforts on second-lining now, putting his footwork in his upper body. Along with his close friend, Joseph "Rollin' Joe" Henry, he has perfected the art of footwork on wheels.

"I still enjoy music like you enjoy, but I express it a little different, from the chair. I might can't get up and do my little one-two-spin-around, hop up on my toes. But when you see me pick this wheelchair up and spin it around—stop—put it down, get up out the chair, crawl..." That's when Skelly's really bucking. During those bouts of intense footwork, sometimes Skelly moves in a way that we cannot see: his spirit takes flight. "It's like that experience, some people say, 'I had an out-of-body experience.' My body could be right here but my spirit... you know what I'm saying? I'm flying above the whole second-line."

Like Skelly, many second-liners feel the spirit move when they let go and give in to the music. Second-lining is but one of many dance traditions in the African diaspora that uses dance as a vehicle to spirit, and the experience is not limited to religion. From Sanctified churches

go to the dance floor at Celebration Hall, dancers and musicians rely upon rhythm, chanting, collective bodily movement, and percussive feet as ways to hook up with spirit and take flight. This has been happening in New Orleans for a long time. Historians often trace part of second-lining's history back to the Ring Shout, a ritual practiced by enslaved men and women across the South. Worshipers stepped together rhythmically, in a counterclockwise circle, singing and chanting until individuals reached ecstatic states. Some even suggest that the second-line moved the Ring Shout into the streets.

Skelly's body and spirit dance hard for four hours every Sunday, but he doesn't stop moving when the parade concludes. "If you look at me after four hours at a second-line, I still have to get home. And I get home. I push." Skelly, Joe, and others are starting a new second-line club, "Push for Change," which combines their passions: raising awareness about wheelchair life, wheelchair basketball, and second-lining. Very soon, we might see a whole club of main liners rolling on wheels and, every so often, flying above the whole second-line.

Chores.
A perfect moment to talk about alcohol.

For tips on how — and when — to begin the conversation, visit:
www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov

i talk
they hear you

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
www.samhsa.gov • 1-877-SAMHSA-2 (1-877-726-4727)

Rep. Richmond Expresses Concerns with the President's Revenue-Sharing

Washington, DC — In a letter sent to President Obama, Rep. Richmond (LA-02) expressed concerns with his budget proposal as it pertains to revenue-sharing from oil and gas production in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS):

"While the OCS is owned by all Americans, Louisiana has borne the environmental and infrastructure costs of energy production for decades," said Rep. Richmond. "The revenue from production in the OCS is vital to the State's \$50 billion coastal restoration plan. The President's proposed revenue sharing reduction does not appear to take this into full consideration."

"The entire country benefits from the oil and gas production occurring everyday off the coast of Louisiana. However, most states do



not share similar burdens resulting from that production. I trust upon further review the President will recognize these discrepancies and reconsider his proposal."

Copa Airlines Announces New Nonstop Service Between New Orleans and Panama

Copa Airlines, subsidiary of Copa Holdings, S.A., {NYSE: CPA} and member of the Star Alliance global airline network, today announced it will begin nonstop service four times a week between New Orleans, La., and Panama, Republic of Panama, on June 24, 2015. New Orleans will be Copa Airlines' 11th U.S. destination and its 71st overall.

The New Orleans region has been one of the largest U.S. markets without nonstop service to Latin America with over 400 passengers daily traveling to the region. Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (MSY) is the largest commercial airport within 300 miles and captures over 80% of Louisiana's enplanements.

"GNO, Inc. is proud to have been an integral part of the outstanding team that is bringing Copa Airlines to New Orleans, reopening the Gateway to the Americas," said Michael Hecht, President and CEO of Greater New Orleans, Inc. "This fulfills one of our top priorities – to reconnect Greater New Orleans to its historical ties to Central and South America – and thus catalyze

a broad range of growth opportunities for the businesses, ports, universities and hospitals of our region. We look forward to working with Copa Airlines, one of the best air carriers in the world, in order to make this flight a great success."

"Copa Airlines is pleased to launch the new nonstop service between Panama and New Orleans, an exciting tourist and cultural destination with strong commercial ties to Panama and a growing Hispanic and Latin American population," said Pedro Heilbron, CEO, Copa Airlines. "Copa's new flight will not only greatly enhance business and leisure travel options between Louisiana and Panama, but also will increase connectivity to more than 55 destinations throughout Latin America."

"With this new international flight, we open the gateway to the Americas and unleash new economic opportunity for the region's businesses and tourism industry," said New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu. "We are absolutely thrilled to welcome Copa Airlines to our great City."

GrandMaster Eric O'Neal, Sr. Joins SHAPE America on Capitol Hill for Speak Out Day 2015!

Representing his home state in the Nation's Capitol, GrandMaster Eric O'Neal, Sr. is the only Louisianan to join SHAPE America for Speak Out Day February 10 – 11, 2015. A long time champion of health and physical conditioning, he wants leaders in Washington D.C. to know that reclaiming the health of kids, beginning with proper nutrition and physical activity in schools, is priority for American people.

This year GrandMaster O'Neal is partnering with SHAPE America to further his mission of helping children across America. He is traveling to Washington, DC for SHAPE America's Speak Out Day where on February 11, 2015, he will encourage legislators to support health and physical fitness

programs in schools with the PHYSICAL Act.

PHYSICAL Act S. 392 is sponsored by Senator Tom Udall (D-NM) and H.R. 2150 is sponsored by Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-OH-11), and recognizes physical education and health education as core aca-



demic subjects within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Research has shown the incident of excessive weight among children ages 2 to 5 has more than quadrupled in 30 years. Research has also shown that increased physical activity leads to higher brain activity and increased test scores. Furthermore, for every \$1 spent on prevention, \$3.25 is saved in future health care cost.

On February 11th, SHAPE America and representatives of more than 80 regional and national health organizations will address

members of Congress to express their support of PHYSICAL Act S. 392 and H.R. 2150. GrandMaster O'Neal has expressed that he is honored to be a part of this movement and plans to represent Louisiana and fight for the right to a healthy life for all kids.

Founded in 1885, SHAPE America is the largest organization of professionals involved in school-based health, physical education and physical activity, and dedicated to teaching and promoting active, healthy lifestyles. With a vision of "Healthy People – Physically Educated and Physically Active!" SHAPE America's mission is to advance professional practice and promote research related to health and physical education, physical activity, dance, and sport.

SHAPE America works with First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" to bring healthy lifestyle changes to schools around the United States, promoting an active and educated life for future generations.

XU MLK Day of Service



Xavier University's Division of Education and Counseling and La Green Corps teamed together to conduct a day of service at the Xavier University Community Outreach Center on MLK Day, Jan. 19. Pictured are division faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, La

Green Corps members, and visiting faculty and their families from Hebei University in China. The effort was coordinated by Dr. Rosalind Pijaux Hale, Professor, Division of Education and Counseling who is pictured kneeling on the first row third from left.

February 2015 Ashé Cultural Arts Center Events

The month is packed with activities that include a Black History Month event, a theater offering, One Billion Rising, and more. As usual, there is an activity or event that can be enjoyed by all ages. In addition, not to be missed, Community Cinema brings "American Denial" to the silver screen at Ashé. All of the film screenings are followed by provocative discussions by speakers of note.

Ashé also will introduce its latest venture, the Ashé Power House. Located at 1731 Baronne Street, this venue expands our campus and allows for more productions and later hours of operation. Grand opening events are planned for February 27 and 28, 2015.

Community Cinema presents American Denial

February 20, 2015 | 6:00–8:00 p.m.
Ashé Cultural Arts Center | 1712 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd., NOLA
Free and open to the public

One Billion Rising – Drum! Dance! Rise!

Honoring warriors on the front lines who work to end violence against women and girls
(NOLA date changed from the national Feb. 14 celebration, due to Mardi Gras madness.)
February 21, 2015 | 10:00–4:00 p.m.
Ashé Cultural Arts Center | 1724 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd., NOLA
Free and open to the public, especially caregivers and healers.

Saviour's Day International

February 22, 2015 | Doors open at 12:00 noon – Event time: 2:00–6:00 p.m.
Ashé Cultural Arts Center | 1724 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd., NOLA
Free and open to the public

Soul Full Sunday Brunch Theater: Soul Sisters: Out of the Ashes - 2 Corinthians 5:17

February 22, 2015 | 2:00–5:00 p.m.
Ashé Cultural Arts Center | 1712 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd., NOLA
\$35; \$25 groups of 8 or more and children ages 4-11; children 3 and under free

Redd Linen Night Artists' Dinner

February 24, 2015 | 6:00–8:00 p.m.
Ashé Cultural Arts Center | 1712 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd., NOLA, Suite 301
By Invitation

Ashé presents the Black History Month Presentation of The Origin of Life on Earth: An African Creation Myth

February 26, 2015 | 10:00 a.m. (School Performance)
February 27, 2015 | 10:00 a.m. (Public Performance)
Cohen College Prep | 3520 Dryades St., NOLA
\$7 per person

Workplace Wellness Luncheon presents a Life Reimagined Checkup

February 26, 2015 | 12:00–1:30 p.m.
Ashé Cultural Arts Center | 1712 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd., NOLA
Free and open to the public

For more information or to schedule an interview on any of the following events, contact Viola Blunt at (504) 813-9008 or violatjohnson@gmail.com.

2015 Lundi Gras Festival

The Zulu Lundi Gras Festival is a fun-filled day allowing the people of New Orleans and our city visitors an up-close look at the Zulu Characters.

The festival is free and open to the public.

This event is hosted by the 600 members of the Zulu Social Aid & Pleasure, who welcomes you to a fun and exciting day of food, music, arts, and crafts along the beautiful riverfront of New Orleans. The 22nd Annual Zulu Lundi Gras Festival will take place on Monday, February 16, 2015 from 10:00am to 6:30pm in Woldenberg Park along the Mississippi River in the French Quarter. The festival will feature local, world-renowned and Grammy award winning entertainers performing on three (3) stages.

Special Guests of the Lundi Gras Festival this year will be Mr. Rickey Smiley and Mrs. Phaedra Parks.

Mr. Rickey Smiley is an American standup comedian, television host, actor, and radio personality best known for his prank phone calls.

Mrs. Phaedra Parks is a celebrated entertainment attorney best known as a star of The Real Housewives of Atlanta.

The Lundi Gras Festival includes a huge line up of talent:

Kermit Ruffins & the Barbecue Swingers
Rebirth Brass Band
Amanda Shaw & the Cute Guys
Michael Soulman Baptiste Band

Big Al Carson & the Rare Connection
Ed Perkins Band
Original Pinettes Brass band
Dwayne Doopsie & The Zydeco Hellraisers
The Revelers

The Lundi Gras Festival will add great taste and flavor to your day:

Rainey Restaurant & Catering
Jack Dempsey's Restaurant
The Praline Connection
Dunbar's Catering
Loretta's Authentic Pralines
Ms. Linda Soul Food Catering
Nelson's Creole Cuisine

..and many more!



Top: Comedian Rickey Smiley



Left: Real Housewives of Atlanta Star, Phaedra Parks

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

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Dr. Norman Francis to Ride as Zulu Parade Grand Marshal



Dr. Norman Francis

Photo by Antwan Harris

Dr. Norman Francis, president of Xavier University, has been named as the Grand Marshal of Zulu, one of Carnival's best known parades.

The announcement was made Wednesday.

Francis is currently the longest-serving president of a single institution in the United States. He has overseen tremendous expansion at the school.

Francis has received over 40 honorary degrees, 20 leadership awards and now he can sit as Grand Marshal of one of the most popular Krewes in the world.

He said he remembered seeing his first Zulu parade in the 1940's and never imagined being a part of the parade itself.

This is the same title held by a few local celebrities such as Leah Chase, Fats Domino, Harold Dudley and the list goes on.

Dr Francis said he was surprised he was chosen to be the Grand Marshal and at first said he was not ready to accept it.

"No way, I said, that is too big for me."

Dr. Francis who announced he would be retiring this year says he still going to be around in the community.

Add Data Employment Ad to bottom half of the page.

Zulu will ride Mardi Gras Day, February 17th at 8am.

Data News Weekly is Hiring

Data News Weekly Newspaper, The People's Paper, is hiring for two positions in our New Orleans Office.

Editor/Reporters

About the Job

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If interested, send your resume, cover letter and at least three clips of your work to Terry Jones Publisher, Data News Weekly, 3501 Napoleon Ave, New Orleans, LA 70125, or via email to terrybjones@bellsouth.net, or call (504) 821-7421.

Sales Manager/Retail Ad Manager

About the Job

Data News Weekly Newspaper is the leading African American media company in New Orleans, publishing a weekly newspaper. Additionally, its website under ladatanews.com is the most read Black website in the region.

We are currently seeking a strong leader to proactively manage broad aspects of the advertising division. You will be working in a positive team-oriented atmosphere which has a modern press, leading website and award-winning newspaper.

Responsibilities include but not limited to:

- Prospect and develop sales leads for print and digital product lines
- Drive online and cross platform advertising sales
- Identify, create strategies, develop influential contacts, and help close new digital products
- Increase overall revenue opportunities in both print and online
- Develop a team sales atmosphere

Our ideal candidate will possess the following education,

skills and experience:

- Minimum 5 years print and digital sales and manager experience
- Self-starter, capable of executing within all phases of sales cycle
- Strong relationship building and client service background
- Strong organizational, communication and presentation skills
- Team player and leader
- Understanding of Analytics and ad serving technology
- Strong motivational skills
- Recruit talent

Our company provides a competitive salary, and an environment that encourages personal and professional growth. We are an equal opportunity employer.

If you are interested in a rewarding career, email a cover letter and resume to: terrybjones@bellsouth.net or mail to: Data News Weekly, c/o Terry Jones, Publisher, 3501 Napoleon Avenue, New Orleans LA 70125

Poverty Doesn't Have to be a State of Mind



Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

The racial differential in the poverty rate is staggering. Last time I checked, about 12 percent people in the United States, one in eight people are poor. Depending on race and ethnicity, however, poverty is differently experienced. Fewer than one in 10 Whites are poor; more than one in four African Americans and Latinos are poor.

Differences in occupation, income, employment and education are considered the main reasons for poverty, with current and past discrimination playing a role in educational, employment and occupational attainment. We see the discrimination when we consider

that African American women with a doctoral degree have median earnings of about \$1,000 a week, compared to about \$1,200 a week for Black men and White women, and \$1,600 a week for White men. White men earn 60 percent more than African American women, and a third more than Black men and White women.

It would not take much to recite the differences, by race, or education, unemployment, earnings and occupation. The recurrent question in reviewing the data is: What are we going to do? It makes no sense to just recite the data and then wring our hands as if nothing can be done. The three steps in social change are organization (especially protest), which leads to legislation (with pressure) and litigation (when legislation is not implemented).

Often laws preventing discrimination have been passed but not adhered to, forcing litigation to get offenders to do the right thing. Of course, it takes more than a minute. It takes people who are committed for the long run. "The arc of the

moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice," Dr. Martin Luther King said in 1964.

Carter Godwin Woodson understood the long arc when he founded the Journal of Negro History and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915. The organization and the journal have changed their names to reflect the nomenclature of these times, and they are now called The Journal of African American History and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Both the organization and the journal have now existed for 100 years which is perhaps why ASALH chose "A Century of Black Lives, History and Culture" as its 2015 theme. (ASALH choose a Black History Month theme each year). This year, their focus on the long arc of African American life in our nation and asserts that "this transformation is the result of effort, not chance."

Carter G. Woodson made many choices that led to his education and to the creativity and brilliance that motivated him to uplift Black

History through Negro History Week, now Black History Month. Woodson was the son of former slaves, and a family that was large and poor. He worked as a miner in West Virginia, and attended school just a few months a year. At 20, he started high school and by 28 he had earned his bachelor's degree. He was only the second African American to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard (W.E.B DuBois was the first in 1895). He was a member of the Howard University faculty and was later a dean.

He wrote, "If you can control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his action. When you determine what a man shall think you do not have to concern yourself about what he will do. If you make a man feel that he is inferior, you do not have to compel him to accept an inferior status, for he will seek it himself. If you make a man think that he is justly an outcast, you do not have to order him to the back door. He will go without being told; and if there is no back door, his very nature will demand one."

In other words, poverty can be the reality of living, but it doesn't have to be a state of mind. Many are trapped in poverty because that may be all they know, and because protest, legislation, and litigation have not provided a passage out of poverty. No one provided a passage out of poverty for Woodson. He worked as a miner to earn a living, and he transcended his status as a miner to make a life of embracing his people and our history. He wrote about the ways that our thinking could oppress us as much as living conditions can. He is a role model and example for African Americans today because, motivated by a desire to be educated, he fought his way out of poverty. There is a difference between thinking you can live like Carter G. Woodson, and thinking that you can't. (CHECK OUT www.ASALH.org for more information on Carter G. Woodson and his organization.)

Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist based Washington, D.C.

Did NBC's Brian Williams Also Lie About Hurricane Katrina?



George C. Curry
NNPA

"NBC Nightly News" anchor Brian Williams has finally admitted that he had incorrectly asserted that a helicopter he traveled aboard in 2002 while reporting on the Iraq War in 2003 was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade, forcing an emergency landing.

"This was a bungled attempt by me to thank one special veteran and by extension our brave military men and women veterans everywhere..." he said on air.

Williams' admission came on

the heels of a story published in the military publication Stars & Stripes that challenged his retelling of events.

"NBC News anchor Brian Williams has told a war story over the years since the 2003 invasion of Iraq. It grew to where he was claiming to be on a Chinook helicopter that was forced down after taking rocket-propelled grenade and small-arms fire," the newspaper reported. "In his on-air apology Wednesday, he backed off that, but said that he 'was instead in a following aircraft.' Soldiers who were in two Chinook companies say he was not in, nor ever near, a helicopter that was being fired upon."

Williams, who makes \$13 million a year, has drastically altered his story over the years, according to a timeline published by CNN.

Lt. Col. Jerry Pearman, the mission commander when one of the three Chinooks took fire, told Stars

& Stripes, "I can say with 100 percent certainty that no NBC reporters were on any of the aircrafts."

Following his public admission, Williams said that he would forgo his anchoring duties at the top-rated network news program "for the next several days." Politico.com, describing what it called "a sign of deepening trouble," reported on Sunday that Williams cancelled an appearance on "Late Night with David Letterman" that had been scheduled for Thursday.

It was on an earlier Letterman show that Williams also gave his now-discredited account.

The New York Times reported, "In 2013, Mr. Williams told David Letterman that he had actually been on the helicopter that got shot down, adding that a crew member had been injured and received a medal. 'We figured out how to land safely,' he said, 'we landed very quickly and hard. We were stuck,

four birds in the desert and we were north out ahead of the other Americans."

Of course, none of that was true. Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), the media watchdog group, said, "Now that he's cleared that up, there are some other tall tales that Williams might want to take back. Take his recounting of the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans (Dateline NBC, 8/22/10; Extra!, 10/10):

"You know, I've been around a lot of guns and a lot of dead bodies, and a lot of people shooting at people to make dead bodies. But you put them all together and you put it in the United States of America, and boy, it gets your attention....

"It was clear already there weren't going to be enough cops.... Everywhere we went, every satellite shot, every camera shot, we were at the height of the violence and the looting and the—all the re-

ports of gunplay downtown. Well, who's bathed in the only lights in town? It was us....

"We had to ask Federal Protection Service guys with automatic weapons to just form a ring and watch our backs while we were doing Dateline NBC one night.... State troopers had to cover us by aiming at the men in the street just to tell them, 'Don't think of doing a smash and grab and killing this guy for the car.'"

FAIR stated, "As long as he's in a confessional mood, Williams might as well admit that he didn't see 'a lot of people shooting at people to make dead bodies,' nor would people have killed him for his car if he hadn't been surrounded by feds—none of which appeared in his original reporting."

The New Orleans Times-Picayune reported in a Pulitzer Prize-

Commentary, Continued on page 11.

Garden Shows Scheduled Around Louisiana

By Johnny Morgan
LSU AgCenter

As Louisiana gardeners anticipate warmer days and their first opportunity to get into the garden, the LSU AgCenter has announced the spring lineup of garden shows. The shows will kick off in March and continue into June in Hammond, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Alexandria, New Orleans Covington, New Orleans and Thibodaux.

March 14, Hammond

The Hammond Spring Garden Day will be held March 14 at the LSU AgCenter Hammond Research Station at 21549 Old Covington Highway, La. Highway 1067, just off U.S. Highway 190, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This event is open to the public and all interested persons are invited to attend. It will feature kids' activities, plants sales, gardening seminars, gardening and agriculture exhibits, and concessions that will include homemade items.

Admission to the event is \$5.00 per vehicle. Bring nonperishable foods for the food drive to benefit the Tangi Food Pantry.

March 14-15, Baton Rouge

The 13th Annual Baton Rouge Spring Garden Show is set for March 14-15 at the John M. Parker Coliseum on Highland Road in Baton Rouge.



The show will run from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. and include local nurseries and other vendors selling plants and other garden wares, including tools, pots, ornaments and landscaping materials.

LSU AgCenter horticulturist David Himelrick said the floor of the coliseum will be transformed into a world of plants and gardens for the event. Children's activities also will be available.

March 20-21, Covington

The 2015 Northshore Garden and Plant Sale will take place March 20-21 at the Covington Fairgrounds.

The show will open at 8:00 a.m. and close at 4:00 p.m. both days with educational presentations at

10 a.m., noon and 2 p.m.

LSU AgCenter personnel and industry professionals will speak on topics such as backyard poultry, weed control, irrigation and garden diseases. Admission is \$5 per person, with children under 12 entering free.

March 27-28, Lake Charles

The Southwest Louisiana Garden Conference and Expo 2015 will celebrate its 16th annual show and plant extravaganza on March 27-28 at Burton Coliseum at 7001 Gulf Highway in Lake Charles.

Educational programs will include home vegetable gardening and fruit production on Friday, and ornamentals and landscape garden-

ing and herbs on Saturday.

The event will include a plant health clinic with LSU AgCenter experts and Master Gardeners to answer gardening questions. Vendors will have many plants and gardening-related items for sale.

The Expo attracts more than 4,000 garden lovers, residents and visitors each year. Hours for the event are 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Admission is \$3 for adults and free for children 12 and under.

April 10-11, Alexandria

The second annual Central Louisiana Garden Expo will be held on April 10, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and April 11, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The garden expo will be held at the

State Evacuation Shelter on U. S. Highway 71 South of Alexandria.

The expo will feature vendor booths with lawn and garden items, educational gardening seminars, plants and supplies, question and answer booth, garden clubs and plant societies, and Master Gardener demonstrations, said LSU AgCenter agent Sara Shields, who is coordinating the event.

April 11-12, New Orleans

The 36th Annual New Orleans Spring Garden Show will be held at the City Park Botanical Garden April 11-12 from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. on Sunday.

Lee Rouse, LSU AgCenter horticulture agent in Orleans Parish, said the show will feature plant and garden products, exhibits and sales throughout the garden, a kids' discovery area, educational programs, music, and arts and crafts in the Azalea Garden.

Master Gardeners and LSU AgCenter horticulture experts will be available to answer questions from homeowners, who also may bring soil samples for analysis by the LSU AgCenter's Soil Testing Lab.

Admission is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children ages 5-12. Children under 5 and members of Friends of City Park may enter for free.

For additional information, contact Rouse at 504-658-2900 or Sarah Bertrand at 504-736-6519.

Commentary, Continued from page 8.

winning story, "Four weeks after the storm, few of the widely reported atrocities have been backed with evidence. The piles of bodies never materialized, and soldiers, police officers and rescue personnel on the front lines say that although anarchy reigned at times and people suffered unimaginable indignities, most of the worst crimes reported at the time never happened."

To Williams' credit he did air a week-long series called "After the Storm: The Long Road Back" in which the network tackled racial discrimination, among other issues. He said Katrina was different from most disasters and that NBC would "keep covering it."

However, that was not the case. FAIR observed, "... Katrina's

impoverished victims faded rapidly away from NBC's coverage thereafter. By the six-month anniversary in February, NBC had joined its rivals in limiting coverage to a brief look at the struggles of putting on Mardi Gras in a depopulated city, then moving on before anyone could accuse them of peering too deeply into matters of race or class."

Perhaps it was another "bungled attempt" by Brian Williams to portray himself as a hero.

George E. Curry, former editor-in-chief of *Emerge* magazine, is editor-in-chief of the National Newspaper Publishers Association News Service (NNPA.) He is a keynote speaker, moderator, and media coach.



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Our Carnival New Year 2015



Eric Griggs, MD
Data News Columnist

For the rest of the country, January 1 marks the season of new beginnings, renewed spirits, and resolutions to improve lifestyles and relationships. Here in New Orleans, it's a different story. Though every year we fall in line with the standard recognition and celebration rituals, the season of renewal, for many, begins on the day after Mardi Gras - Ash Wednesday. With Carnival Season being the culmination of festivity that begins with Halloween, New Year's recognition tends to become little more than another party along the way. Resolutions made during this time are often made thinking, "This is what I plan to do after Mardi Gras." With this reality, I thought it would be most ap-

propriate to revisit the advice on "resolutions" during the Lenten season of sacrifice and adopt them for the rest of the year.

Every year the same story, the same routine. We resolve to be better people, give up old habits, go to church, lose weight and the list goes on. The number of gym and church memberships spike for the month of January and attendance begins to taper after the first week. The year always seems to start with a bang and end with an excuse. The solution and secret to success is actually quite simple and easy to achieve. When making resolutions this year, KEEP IT SIMPLE:

1- Resolve to be more resolute.

The simplest resolution to keep is to be more determined in your actions, whatever they may be. Set goals for yourself that are easily attainable and can be built upon each week. Take the "one day at a time" approach, building a record of success along the way. Start small, end BIG, but focus on remaining focused.

2- Choose to lose one bite at a time.

One of the biggest mistakes that people make when attempting to lose weight is setting lofty goals and resorting to drastic measures. My grandmother always said, "Fast doesn't last. Slow down and do it right." When it comes to weight loss, these words ring true. Smaller portions of food and increased water consumption make the simplest recipe for success. Eat slowly, chewing each bite. Drink a bottle of water with every meal. Stop eating when feeling full - simple as that! Also, keep a food journal. This really helps. Honesty is key, but writing things down is proven to create a mind-body connection that encourages one to not only accomplish his/her goal but also stay committed to the plan. Review it every day, and remember, no one is perfect. Just take it one bite at a time!

The average amount of safe weight loss is between 1-3 pounds per week. That means, if we commit to lose just one pound per week, we could drop 52 pounds in 12 months! That's success in most circles.

3- Get checked. Get fit. Get moving!

Before beginning to attempt any lifestyle change, health or otherwise, go to the doctor. Life moves quickly. Change is difficult, but without change there can be no growth. The cost of change, however, is stress. Make it a point to see your primary care physician prior to making any drastic lifestyle changes and alert them of your new goals. You might be surprised by how helpful a physician can be to your plan.

The next step is to mentally prepare for the upcoming change by reminding yourself that each day is a new beginning and that change will be easier each day. Acknowledge your daily accomplishments and know that failure is not an option. Don't look back. Allow for minor setbacks, but learn from them and keep it moving. A strong mind is built by tests of endurance.

Finally, get up, get out, and MOVE! It doesn't require a gym membership to lose weight and stay fit. Find something you enjoy and DO IT - daily. The key to weight loss is a simple equation of in's and out's. The goal is to take in less than you burn up by

MOVING. All activities, including dancing, walking, gardening, riding a bicycle, laughing, smiling, swimming and jogging burn calories and NONE of them cost large sums of money. Move it and lose it!!

Most importantly, when considering what to change or "give up" during this season of Lenten sacrifice, remember to consider changes that can be permanently adopted. Consider spiritual and character enhancements such as the addition of prayer or the elimination of procrastination, gossip, or overindulgence. It is a documented fact that prayer and meditation reduce stress levels by shifting brain activity from the stress-prone right frontal cortex (in the brain) to the calmer left frontal cortex (in the brain). Quiet, reflective moments are essential to the achievement of a balanced and healthy life.

(<http://www.oprah.com/spirit/Meditate-or-Pray-Every-Monday-Matters#ixzz2LSMWFbjo> blood pressure)

Prescription for the week: Be resolute in your resolutions after Carnival this year. Get checked. Get fit. Get MOVING!!™

Cover Story/ Continued from page 3.

memoration Conference called, "Rise Katrina 10" while the eyes of the world will be on New Orleans. Our goal is to make sure we can tell a very honest story about the state of Black New Orleans. During this conference we are going to discuss education, workforce and economic development, criminal justice, housing, health, the environment and civic engagement. The goal is to come up with a set of recommendations that we can advance moving forward in working towards equity," says McConduit-Diggs as she hopes this conference can lead to action that solves some of the problems that continue to plague New Orleans post-Katrina.

Where are Today's Leaders? Filling the Need to Lead

When one thinks of the heyday of the Civil Rights Era or throughout the history of the African-American sojourn in this country, there has been someone at the forefront that

many looked to as the spokesperson for the aspirations of the Black people of this nation. But what must be noted is that never at any point in the history of African-Americans history in their country has their outlook been monolithic. But today it is fragmented in a way that has many wondering who speaks for African-Americans and what is their agenda as a community?

Morial feels that there is not a lack of talented people, but people are looking in the wrong places. He believes that today's leaders will include women as well as men. He is also of the opinion that access alone does not equal progress and that leadership must press for more tangible and measurable goals that impact the people who need the most help.

As an example of this new brand of leadership he speaks of what the Urban League is doing and he also speaks highly of New Orleans Urban League President Erika McConduit-Diggs and his confidence

in her ability to lead, "I have a lot of confidence in the President of the New Orleans Urban League Erika McConduit-Diggs, she represents a new generation of leadership around the nation. We have more young people leading Urban League affiliates than at any time in our history. We have more women leading Urban Leagues than ever before and I feel that is a good thing."

On the issue of leadership he feels it is important to stress the difference between inclusion or exclusion of African-Americans from gaining real power when they get access to elected posts or other spheres of influence he says, "I think that I would like to see the emerging generation of African-American Leaders, be more aggressive, be more assertive and more vocal on things. I will give you an example, I believe there is a great deal of upside to the medical complex in the City, but I hear no one talking about

having a diversity and inclusion plan to ensure that some of the jobs will benefit the African-American community and the residents of New Orleans. This is one of the largest economic development projects to come down in these times." Continuing he says, "When I was mayor when we had the casino project, when we had the new convention center project and the arena, and we insisted and ensured that there was a plan for jobs for our people and minority contracting participation and there was public conversations about it and written agreements."

A History of Struggle and the Definition of Greatness

The Urban League has been an organization with a rich and storied history. They have been involved in many of the gains of African-Americans and been part of coalitions that have led to advance the fight for freedom, justice and equality.

This is something that continues

to this day under the leadership of Marc Morial. Who is someone who has seen the struggle for civil rights upfront and personal as his father, the late Ernest "Dutch" Morial was among many historical first in the City and the State of Louisiana. Eventually, he became the first African-American Mayor of New Orleans winning the election of 1977 and serving two-terms. During this time the elder Morial befriended many great men and women including Xavier University President Norman Francis who is retiring at the end of the 2014-15 school year after 46 years. Also this year he is Zulu's Grand Marshal.

Morial speaks highly of Francis saying, "He is like a second father to me, he was one of my father's best friends and after my father died he became like a surrogate father to me, my brother and sisters. His record speaks for itself in the sense that if you look at Xavier before Dr.

Cover Story, Continued
on next page..

3 Sentenced to Prison in Slaying of Black Man in Mississippi

By Jack Elliott, Jr.

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Three young White men who admitted they were out hunting Black people to attack when they beat, ran over and killed a 47-year-old car plant worker in Mississippi's capital city were sentenced Tuesday to federal prison following a hate crimes investigation.

U.S. District Judge Carlton Reeves sentenced Deryl Paul Dedmon to 50 years; John Aaron Rice to 18 ½ years; and Dylan Wade Butler to seven years on the most serious of the counts against them, commission of a hate crime. Dedmon, 22, Rice, 21, and Butler, 23, are all from Brandon, Mississippi.

Dedmon also faces two life sentences in a Mississippi prison. He pleaded guilty in a state court in 2012 to capital murder and hate crime.

"What these people did was ugly, painful and sad and criminal," Reeves said.

They were charged in the June 2011 death of James Craig Anderson.

All three, wearing red prison jumpsuits and shackled at the waist and ankles, took to a podium to apologize to members of Anderson's family for their actions.

"I want to tell the Anderson family how truly sorry I am," Dedmon said.

The apologies came after an impassioned condemnation of their actions from Anderson's sister.

Barbara Anderson Young said her brother's death came "at the hands of these strangers with eyes



FILE - In this March 21, 2012, file photo, a Hinds County Sheriff's Department deputy directs Deryl Dedmon to a seat in a Hinds County court room in Jackson, Miss. Dedmon is one of three young white men who admitted they were out hunting black people to attack when they beat, ran over and killed a car plant worker in Mississippi's capital city were sentenced Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2015, to federal prison following a hate crimes investigation. (AP Photo/Rogelio V. Solis, Pool, File)

full of hatred."

Prosecutors said the youths harassed or assaulted Black people who they thought were homeless or intoxicated. Victims were chosen because they thought they would not tell police, authorities said. The harassment began in April 2011, culminating in the death of Anderson.

The three pleaded guilty in March 2012 to one count of conspiracy and one count of committing a hate crime. Each was sentenced to five years on the conspiracy count to run concurrent with the other.

In Dedmon's case, Reeves said the federal sentence would run concurrent with his state sentence.

Dedmon was at the wheel of a truck that ran over Anderson in the parking lot of a Jackson hotel. The scene was caught on a security camera at the hotel.

The surveillance video, obtained by The Associated Press and other media, shows a white Jeep Cherokee in which Rice was allegedly a passenger leaving a hotel parking lot at 5:05 a.m. Less than 20 seconds later, a Ford truck backs up and then lunges forward. Anderson's shirt is illuminated in the headlights before he disappears under the vehicle next to the curb.

Before sentencing the three, Reeves told the courtroom that the Anderson's death reflected the "inhumanity of racism" with which

Mississippi has dealt throughout its history.

"The sad thing is these ... hunts were instigated by our children, these kids," said Reeves, who is Black. "The victims were targeted because of their race. These three defendants and others made a joint decision to act on racial hatred."

Reeves said a later hearing would be held to discuss restitution.

Seven others are awaiting sentencing.

Reeves will sentence Joseph Paul Dominick, William Kirk Montgomery and Jonathan Kyle Gaskamp on Feb. 25. Dominick pleaded guilty to conspiracy in 2013 and faces five years in prison. Montgomery, who pleaded guilty in 2012, faces life in prison on a hate crime charge and five years on conspiracy. Gaskamp, who wasn't present the night Anderson died, pleaded guilty in 2012. He faces five years in prison for conspiracy and 10 years on a hate crime charge.

U.S. District Judge Henry T. Wingate will sentence four people:

— Sarah Adelia Graves, who pleaded guilty in December, faces five years in prison on a conspiracy charge at sentencing April 9.

— Shelby Brooke Richards, who pleaded guilty in December to conspiracy and concealing the crime by lying to police, faces eight years in prison at sentencing April 16.

— John Louis Blalack, who pleaded guilty Jan. 7 to two hate crimes charges, faces 20 years in prison at sentencing April 23.

— Robert Henry Rice, who pleaded guilty Jan. 7 to one hate crime charge, faces 10 years in prison at sentencing April 30.

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Cover Story/ Continued from previous page.

Francis became President it was a great university, but when you look at Xavier now it is in the top tier of all universities in the country." Continuing he says, "Norman Francis has vision. He understood Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) before it was in vogue. He started preparing young men and women in becoming doctors when no one was focused on that as a niche. He quickly rebuilt the campus after Katrina having 9 feet of water throughout the cam-

pus." Then he chimes in on Francis as a person saying, "He is a very down to earth man, when we were growing up he would cut his own grass, he would work on his own cars. He was and is a very down to earth guy and for all of his successes and achievements he does not wear it on his shoulders but when he walks in a room he commands respect that to me is greatness."

Marc Morial is man who's spent his life around so many great people and he says they all have certain

things in common; humility and a passion for serving others. "To be great you have to care about people and you have to stand for something. Having principles and standing for something, also doesn't mean you have to be inflexible or rigid about everything. But a good leader believes in something and has passion for it and what I think I've learned most about watching great leaders is that they're remarkably ordinary while at the same time being extraordinary."

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