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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

Data News Weekly Celebrates



Willie "Brother Will" Muhammad



Lionel Milton



Susan Henry



Erica Murray



Brandon Okpalobi



Marian Pierre



Gail Glapion



Toya Barnes-Teamer Ph.D



Sonita Singh



Gretchen Bradford



Terry Williams



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Highlighting the Best of New Orleans Community Servants

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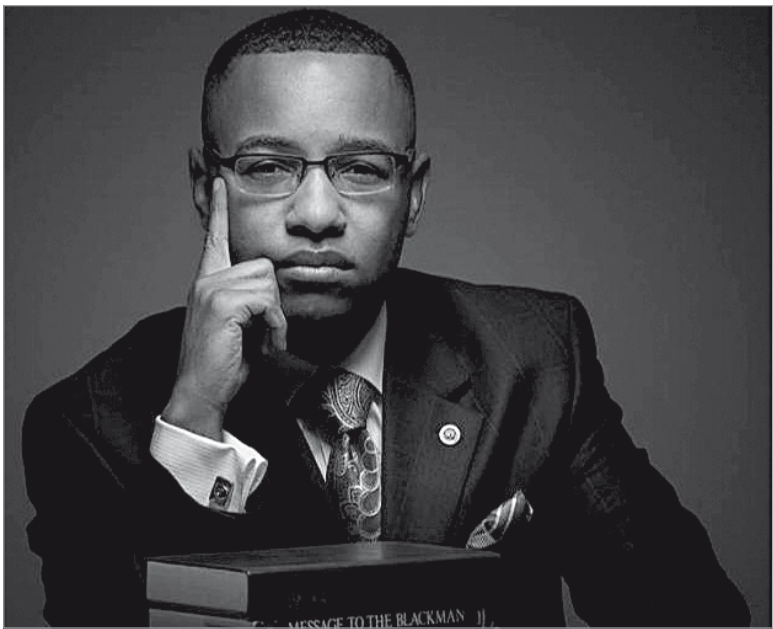
Data News Weekly Presents

The 2014 - 2015 Trailblazers of the Month

Highlighting the Best of New Orleans Community Servants

MAY 2015

WILLIE (BROTHER WILLIE) MUHAMMAD



Brother Willie Muhammad is known around the City as the student minister and head of the Nation of Islam Mosque No. 46 in New Orleans; that under the national leadership of the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan. In addition to his duties as a minister he is a professional educator, who has used his voice to empower and enlighten people to tap into the power within them to better their situation.

Many lives have been touched by Brother Will. Referring to himself as a servant of the people, his goal is to leave his impact on his community. Last year Muhammad led the Man Up March that brought out men from across the City in a show of unity to present a different face of Black men in New Orleans. The march was inspired by the historic Million Man March in 1995. Reaching out to many different brothers doing great things in the community, Muhammad ventured to give the City a different view of Black men who are doing positive things.

Muhammad says that while the cameras are off the work goes on that continues to empower the community. Since the march, Mu-

hammad and the men who took part in the march have been hosting programs such the Daddy Daughter Dance, a Black Business Bus Tour and a host of other events that empower and celebrate positive work being done in the community.

As a teacher and student of history, Brother Will understands that the problems in the African- American community did not just happen yesterday and that much work still needs to be done to correct the ills that afflict it. "Our community did not get in this condition overnight and the conditions will not change overnight. This is not a sprint but it is a marathon" he says.

He believes in an old African Proverb which says, "The ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people," which is why he stresses the importance of family as the key to rebuilding our community. "We must work harder to get our people to believe that they can make a difference. We must also connect them back to the divinity within themselves. And believe that God has given us a part of himself and with God all things are possible."

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DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

JUNE 2015

LIONEL MILTON



Coming from a City that gave the world - Jazz, gumbo, beignets and Who Dat; New Orleans' visual artist Lionel Milton has become an artist whose work is the essence of the limitless potential that art has in bringing people together. His unique style has garnered him clients from many walks of life who clamor for one of his original creations. And while his work has been received with much acclaim and taken him across the globe, at the core of his being he is a humble guy who is truly committed to inspiring young people using his art to reach them and touch their lives.

Milton is one of the original members of YA/YA (Young Aspirations/Young Artists, Inc.) an organization which provides artistic experiences and opportunities to area teens. His young years in YA/YA provided Milton with an opportunity to get outside of his community and see that the world was bigger than his neighborhood. That kind of exposure at a young age allowed him to grow in so many ways and fostered his desire to pass his experiences onto others, translating into Milton's work today teaching art to young people.

This New Orleans native is a well-known ambassador for his City and especially the Lower 9. He has worked with Actor/Humanitarian Brad Pitt's Make It Right Founda-

tion, who commissioned Lionel to create the merchandising artwork for the "Pink Project" with the proceeds going to the future rebuilding of homes in his native neighborhood, the Lower Ninth Ward. He's also created posters for the Voodoo Music and Essence Music Festival and his work has been featured in numerous corporate advertising campaigns, television programming, and clothing brands during his twenty-plus career as an artist.

He is an advocate of education and new technology and is using his art to encourage reading. He has an app available on iTunes called the ABC's Learning Party developed by Lionel Milton & Jacob Devaney. An app called Mardi Brah - Coconut Catching Game set in the streets of New Orleans and worked with Sony PlayStation 3 to design a level for the video game "Little Big Planet."

There are so many things that are happening in racial relations today that has created a powder keg that is exploding all over the country. He is using his art to bring people together for what it is; one colorful family of humanity. Of his commitment to the community Milton says, "I continue to stay in the trenches so maybe one day some generation after will remember the positive contributions we have given through art and creativity."

JULY 2015

SUSAN HENRY



There are many things that are of concern to the African-American Community. In many instances those issues are filtered through a distorted lens that often times does not paint an accurate picture of the African-American Community and often does not lead to solutions. Susan Henry is leading the charge to change that with her work in media in addition to her work

as an advocate in her community.

"I work for a community radio station WBOK-1230AM and our mission is to give the Black Community a voice. We try to find people who have something to say and give them a platform to voice their views," says Henry. She believes WBOK and other African-American owned media outlets are a valuable resource.

"I feel most information we get about our community is not from an African-American perspective, so we try to provide information that is useful that can benefit, inform and empower our community."

Her life outside of work is one also centered on giving back and empowering others. Where she serves on several boards and giving her time she takes part in civic activities that inspire the next generation. She also is training the next generation at the radio station, for she feels it is important that what she does there with young people; they will be able to replace her and carry on the tradition of giving people a voice and serving others.

"We need to think about the next generation and preparing them to carry on the work we do today to improve our community for tomorrow and beyond. I have had interns at the station and after being there many of their lives have been changed from just being around positive Black female role models."

Henry is an advocate of education and says that change begins with adults doing things that can inspire greatness in young people.

"We can speak about change all we want, but the best thing we can do for the next generation is to lead by example; we need to show them people who are doing great things and encourage them that they can reach greatness as well."

Cover Story/Continued on next page.

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Cover Story/ Continued from previous page.

AUGUST 2015

DR. ERICA MURRAY



Dr Erica Murray is a woman who has for over two decades been an entrepreneur transacting businesses globally and establishing an impressive clientele, through her many business enterprises and as a global radio host of a "top hit" show on iHeart Radio and as an international business consultant.

She possesses a very strong business acumen which coupled with structure and discipline, has guided both her business and personal life. Dr. Murray has been recognized by her colleagues for having extraordinary determination and is known for her creativity, motivation and her ability to secure a deal.

Even with all of her success, she feels it is her duty to give back and serve others.

"I think it is important and our corporate social responsibility, to prepare a generation to lead that is going be able to advocate for our community. Also with giving I am honoring those people who poured into me and that is what we are supposed to do is to serve others and give them the tools to be successful. I want to be part of the solutions to the problems in our community that is why I give back," says of her commitment to serving her community by inspiring the youth.

She is not only a business person, but an educator, volunteering her time to teaching young people by giving them the tools to build a foundation for future success.

As a Jr. Achievement Volunteer, Murray teaches high school and middle school students about financial literacy, success and entrepreneurship. She also is involved in Outreach HIV and AIDS Awareness projects to hopefully stop the spread further weakening the community. Of her work in this area, she says, "I think we must get a hold on this deadly disease because it is something that's reached epidemic proportions, something that is affecting all of us."

Reflecting on her life, she feels like passing on her knowledge and her story is important. Far too often that young African-Americans do not look at their lives beyond their immediate environment. They often suffer from the affliction of low aspirations and settle for mediocrity. Murray is trying to work to change that perception among young people, telling them that they can do and be anything they aspire to if they expand their world view and are willing to do the things necessary to become a success in whatever they endeavor into.

Erica A. Murray is a woman whose life is a testimony that hard work pays off. That a young girl coming from a housing project in New Orleans shows that a flower can grow out of concrete. And today she is inspiring the next generation to see the world beyond their immediate front door, and expanding their dreams to reach around the globe.

Cover Story/Continued on page 8.



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Frank Pinion
Historic St. James AME Church Photographer

On Sunday, August 14, 2016, The historic St. James AME church presented three Meritorious Service Awards to law enforcement officers in New Orleans as part of its Annual Family & Friends Day worship celebration. Pictured is Rev. Samuel Butler, Rev. Jay Augustine, Mrs. Michelle Augustine, Commander Hans Ganthier, Supt. Michael Harrison, & Rev. Robert Brumfield. Not Pictured: Sheriff Marlin Gusman.



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TRAILBLAZERS

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Lionel Milton

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Marian Pierre

Gail Glapion

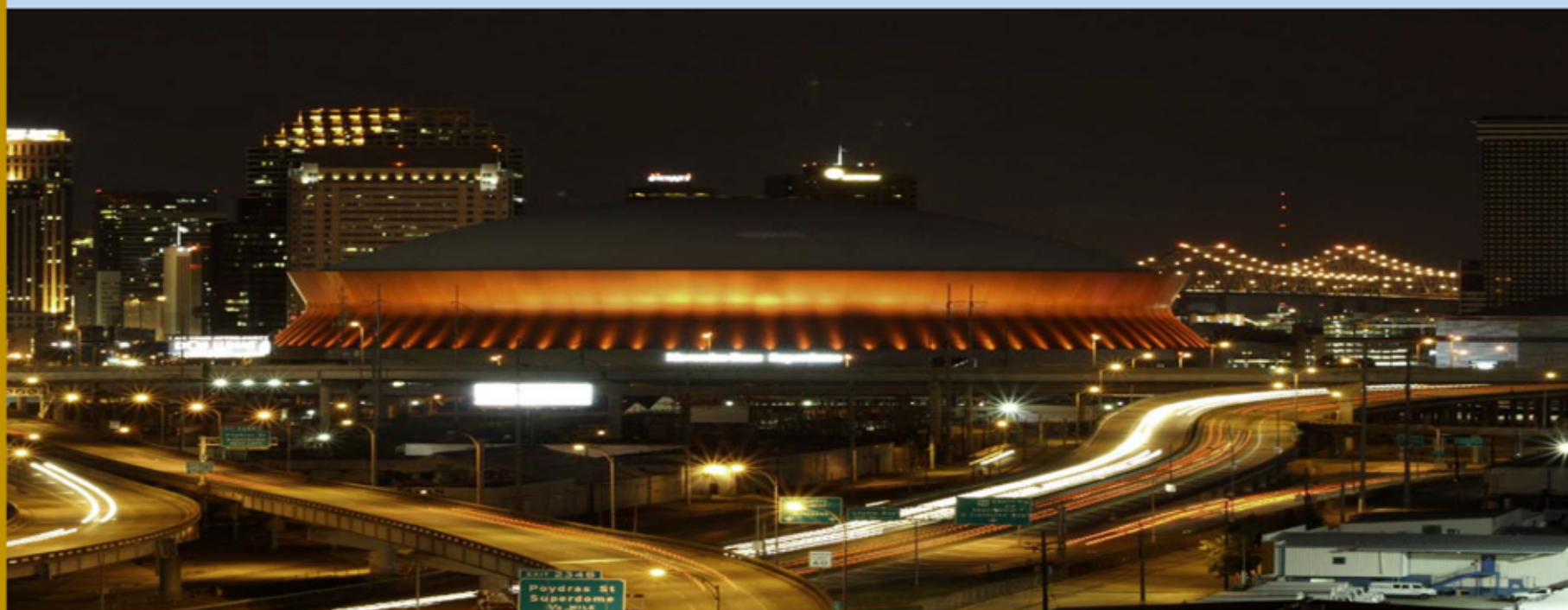
Toya Barnes-Teamer

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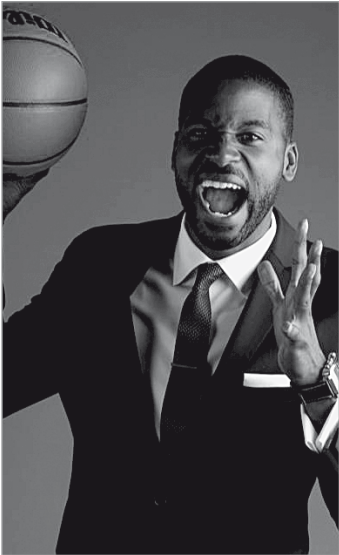
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SEPTEMBER 2015

BRANDON OKPALOBI



Young people today face many obstacles to achieve greatness and reaching their full potential. Oftentimes this is because of a lack of role models. Brandon Okpalobi, a New Orleans native who now calls Miami, Florida home is a shining example of someone that's spent his life

committed to reaching greatness as an individual in addition to being a community servant, inspiring and encouraging people across the globe in making their dreams a reality.

He is a graduate of St. Augustine High School. While a student there, Brandon played on the basketball team, he says of his experience as an athlete and the lessons he learned there, he has applied to other areas of his life. An example of his fortitude, perseverance, and persistence is after applying to five colleges the University of Miami offered him a partial academic scholarship. Determined to play basketball he tried out for the team and received a full scholarship, eventually, becoming the captain of the team in his senior year. Not only did he stand out on the court, but also as a student earning a degree in Computer Information Systems.

Brandon Okpalobi's story exemplifies that with hard work anything is possible. It is the motivation behind his company, DIBIA Athletic Program, that he describes as "Providing elite sports training for athletes to develop fundamental skills through detailed analysis of individual skills, innovative drills and dynamic in-

struction. Our intense training program is designed for boys and girls, ranging from age 7 to professional athletes. DIBIA trains athletes worldwide and hosts camps/clinics in Miami, New Orleans, LA, Bermuda, Bahamas, Latin America and Nigeria."

He speaks passionately about DREAM which is DIBIA's Community Outreach Initiative. "We bridge their desire for excellence, leadership and sports to educate youth on other essential core value systems. We translate the skills that are required to win in sports into skills that are required to win at life. This allows for the development of a blueprint for success, in language young athletes understand."

Over the years his program has touched many and said he is elated when kids are seeing their dreams come to fruition. And while there are some who have been in the public eye that eschew being thought of as a role model, it is something that Okpalobi fully embraces, "There is nothing I don't like about being viewed as a role model. I embrace it every day. This honor is a constant reminder to me daily on how to conduct myself."

NOVEMBER 2015

GAIL GLAPION



Gail Moore Glapion is a beacon of light in the City of New Orleans and a shining example of service. Throughout the years she's worked in many capacities in the fields of education and public service.

Beginning in the classroom as a teacher she began a lifelong love of fueling the next generation for success. Later serving in numerous posts; Executive Director of the YWCA; Vice President of the New Orleans Branch of the National Urban League, in addition to Director of the Urban League Street Academy and later as an elected official, serving on the New Orleans School Board for two decades and for a time was its President. "When I look back on my life I didn't think of being of service to others as anything extra, I just thought it was what you were supposed to do. Serving is an expression of being grateful and I am grateful to my parents who came from humble beginnings who were my examples of service, so throughout my life I show my gratitude by helping serve my community in any way I can."

Gail Glapion proudly states she was educated in the City; from her early years in High School at Joseph S. Clark to her BA and MA Degrees in Education from Dillard University and LSUNO (now UNO) respectively. She's an advocate of quality education and over the years worked with countless youth, giving them the tools to be successful in life, "I am always surprised and grateful when I see people I have taught or encouraged doing well; that is the best payback of giving back for me. Young people who attended the Urban League Street Academy, they would say to me that they went on

and are doing great things. I believe encouraging people is important, we sometimes don't know the impact it can have on someone."

Mrs. Glapion has served on many boards and organizations dedicated to a variety of causes, but today, she currently serves as Managing Director and President of Anthony Bean Community Theater Board of Directors. Speaking of her work with ABCT where she has occasionally performed she said, "I saw working with ABCT as a great cause, it rekindled a passion in me. I do believe we have an obligation if we are to get involved with organizations to do the hard work and what it takes to maintain an institution. This is the most fulfilling aspect of doing volunteer work, for me it is about service and building institutions; I've been blessed that most of the organizations I've given focus to have become institutions."

Mrs. Glapion's life is a reflection of service, commitment and dedication to build, maintain and sustain institutions whose missions address human needs. Something she attributes to her faith as a lifelong member of the Pleasant Zion Missionary Baptist Church. "I have tried to live what it means to be a Christian and lived by the golden rule and good things have happened. I had the blessing of a lifelong mate John Glapion and we were parted only through death and I have three wonderful children Todd, Donna and Randy and two grandchildren. I have a great attitude about life and despite its problems I see the glass half full. I am grateful, I have a positive attitude and am optimistic about the future and see the world in its great possibilities."

OCTOBER 2015

MARIAN PIERRE



Marian Pierre, CEO and Founder of Crescent Guardian, Inc., is an example of someone that's making an impact in the field of business and is also committed to serving her community. Since its founding in 1993, she's become the first woman owned multi-million-dollar Professional Security Service Firm in a three state region. In addition to being a successful entrepreneur she also works with others giving them the tools to become successful.

Her life's journey has been a path where she always strives for excellence. Prior to founding Crescent Guardian, Ms. Pierre had a successful career in New Orleans City Government. Throughout her professional career, she has been devoted to empowering wom-

en through politics, education, social involvement, and economics through an organization she founded, Women Organized Mobilized for Empowerment Now (W.O.M.E.N.).

In her years of owning several businesses she's acquired the aptitude and knowledge on the do's and don'ts in business and now passes it on to entrepreneurs just starting out. "I teach other business owners how to get certifications that they may need, in addition to getting their financials in order so they can get loans. I am willing to share anything I've learned on my own, through from the school of hard knocks, if it can make it easier for newer businesses." She is also part of a group called "The Collaborative" a collective of African-American business owners from different sectors who work together in various business ventures. "In this collective we look at how we can come together to bid on projects and receive entire contracts and not only parts of them. It is important that we show we can work together moving forward as African-American businesses to help employ and empower people in our community."

For her work as a business and civic leader she's won numerous awards;

City Business named Ms. Pierre Woman of the Year in 2007 and most recently in 2012. In 2008 she was awarded the Parrin J. Mitchell Entrepreneur of the Year Award. Under her leadership, CGI was also honored as New Orleans Small Business of the Year in 2000. While she appreciates winning awards, Pierre feels the true reward for her is helping others become successful. "No one who is successful gets there on their own, in my case I have had many people help me to get where I am." Continuing she says, "I feel as a community, when we are locking arms while climbing the mountain together when we get to the top, it is harder to get knocked off because you have something that keeps you anchored."

Marian Pierre today is a woman that is an inspiration to all. She says that it's not always been easy, she says if you have a goal then you must have a plan and have the will to see it through, never give up, and always trust in God. "If I had to say something that could inspire people I always go back to anything I have done, I have not accomplished on my own and once I got to my destination I always reach back and help somebody else."

Cover Story/Continued on next page.

Cover Story/ Continued from previous page.

DECEMBER 2015

TOYA BARNES- TEAMER PH.D.



Toya Barnes-Teamer PhD is committed to giving back to her City. Coming from humble beginnings in the Lower 9th Ward, she says this is where the seeds were planted for her lifelong commitment to serving others. "My parents Emanuel Barnes Sr. and Dolores Barnes instilled in us to help those in need, in addition there were so many people who supported and helped me to get where I am, I feel it is my duty to give back," says Barnes-Teamer, who holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Loyola University and received her PhD in Higher Education Administration from the University of New Orleans. She has worked for over two-decades in higher education at both the university and technical college level. Barnes-Teamer feels that her experiences working with young people from different backgrounds has been fulfilling in seeing young people reach their goals. "I am always proud to see kids walking across the stage during graduation time. To see them work through whatever obstacles they face and to see them realize that hard work pays off, is a great feeling for me as they begin down the road to success."

She is committed to and on the frontlines in helping to solve many of the problems that faces the City of New Orleans. While she understands that much needs to be done to fix the City on the education and economic front, something she believes create situations where young people make bad choices; she feels solutions must start at home and the community level. "We have to stop

pointing the finger at the schools because k-12 can only do so much, it is up to parents and the community to take up the issue of raising our young and again become a village in raising our children," says Teamer. "We need to have a more holistic approach to repair what I feel is a multi-generational problem in our community, we must not only engage our children but we must get better at helping families improve their quality of life."

For her service of helping others throughout her career she's received several awards including; being a two-time recipient of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) President's Awards, one for exemplary leadership during the Hurricane Katrina Crisis, and another for Workforce Development in the region. She was also selected by New Orleans City Business as one of its "40 under 40" individuals to watch in the community.

Toya Barnes-Teamer is a woman who is committed to empowering all the people of New Orleans, but she feels that African-Americans and their institutions and history is important in maintaining given the monumental changes taking place in New Orleans post-Hurricane Katrina. "Newspapers like Data News Weekly must continue because we need someone who can tell the story of African-American people of New Orleans. We need Dillard, SUNO and Xavier to continue to help educate the future leaders of our City and be part of the rich legacy of our City."

JANUARY 2016

SONITA SINGH



Sonita Singh, is a person who is committed to helping people around the world have a quality life. Through her work in New Orleans and various cities in the U.S., in addition to her work in various African countries and Bangladesh, she is determined to help those in need in creating solutions to the problems of global inequality.

Her journey into serving others began when as an undergraduate student at Tulane University, where today she's working on her PhD in International Development. "I remember early on I wanted to help people around the world have a better quality of life. I worked in Bangladesh and Ghana

and planned on getting my Medical degree and Master's Degree in Public Health at the time. I remember working in Ghana on a project related neonatal tetanus, in the U.S. this is not a big deal, but when you see it in Ghana and children suffering it was clear everything they were dealing with was poverty related and was something I felt could be solved."

Over the years after receiving her Master's Degree in Public Health from Tulane University, she's worked helping provide valuable resources for people in need creating public awareness campaigns that help empower communities. Her work that's saved many lives and led to long-term solutions for people in developing countries and disenfranchised people in the U.S.

Making the connection between poverty in America and in developing nations she says, "The work I do I feel is similar regardless of where I am, because it is all connected to people not having access and helping find ways to give them access to things that will improve their standard of living and quality of life." Continuing she says, "When you look at infant mortality in the south, and I've worked in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama and while they have a higher rate in Africa, the disparities between those who have and do not have are grounded in

poverty and structural inequality."

This idea of eradicating structural inequality is at the heart of much of Singh's work. Presently, she is working in conjunction with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice, The Louisiana Department of Public Safety & Corrections (DPS&C), and the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine; researching, programming and evaluating recidivism in the highest risk population, related to crimes involving drugs and guns.

To assist in this helping people across the globe reaching their full potential she founded a non-profit called, The Institute for the Sustainable of Advanced Renewable Resource Technology I-STARRT, Singh says, "ISTARRT is a non-profit where anything can come after the word ISTARRT; whatever the innovation is that awakenings, societies or communities."

Singh says this is at the heart of her work; awakening people in communities and also stakeholders that they have a collective responsibility to create more sustainable communities. "Local people know how to use their intelligence and have solutions but no one is tapping into that." Sonita Singh is on a mission to empower those in need and because of her commitment to create equity and access to people across the globe.

FEBRUARY 2016

GRETCHEN BRADFORD



Gretchen Bradford is a native of New Orleans and resident of Pontchartrain Park. Over the years she's worn many hats in an effort to bring back this historic community after Hurricane Katrina in her multiple roles as a Community Leader, Organizer, Humanitarian and Businesswoman.

Presently, she is the President of Pontchartrain Park Neighborhood Association, a board member of the Better Choice Foundation Charter Schools,

Chairperson of the Gentilly Festival and Commissioner on the Gentilly Development District.

"I grew up in Pontchartrain Park, my family's been living here since 1958, it was a beautiful neighborhood, it was like living in our own little City, I had a beautiful childhood here. People looked out for each other, it is a neighborhood where families are connected, we grew up with a lot of hope instilled in us," she says reflecting on her upbringing in Pontchartrain Park.

This community, like much of New Orleans, was ravaged by the water and decimated, leaving in its wake an uncertain future following Hurricane Katrina. At this point Gretchen began her advocacy work alongside Actor Wendell Pierce, who also grew up in Pontchartrain Park and both were instrumental in the recovery effort and its revitalization.

"The Bring Back New Orleans Commission proposed making our neighborhood into green space and this was something that we planned to fight. We were one big happy family of 1200 homes. It was a hard time, that's all we could dream about, we had a memory of a beautiful life and all that's been

washed away. All we could think of is we wanted this back. We became passionate about bringing everything back in the neighborhood."

In her work she's advocated for the rebuilding of homes, the restoration of NORDC Wesley Barrow Stadium, which was sponsored by Major League Baseball, the revitalization of the Basketball Courts, which was sponsored by the New Orleans Hornets, the rebuilding of the playground along with family picnic area tables, and the restoration of the Joseph Bartholomew Golf Course. She organizes and leads monthly meetings to address the needs of the community to local elected leaders.

When speaking of her work she says, "I believe Pontchartrain Park is worth preserving where African-Americans owned our own homes in the 50's. We were self-sufficient and we want to continue that tradition. We are strong and resilient standing strong in our beliefs and we are united. We are bouncing back and we are passionate about what we believe in and we love our community and it is a great place to live and visit and I feel passionate about rebuilding our community and preserving our history."

Lousiana Flood Affects Thousands

New Relief Efforts

Eric Craig
Multimedia Editor

A severe storm in Louisiana has left six people dead and over 10,000 people in shelters according to Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards.

On Friday, August 12, 2016, Louisiana was hit with record-setting rain that weather experts called an inland tropical depression. Rivers near Baton Rouge, such as the Amite River, set records for high water levels.

According the Gov. Edwards, 20,000 people were rescued during the weekend's flood.

"I can't say it's worse than a hurricane, but it's plenty bad," Edwards said during a press briefing.

Over 37,000 people are without utilities in the affected cities and parishes, Edwards said. By Sunday night, over 10,000 people have arrived at shelters according to Edwards. Nearly 2,000 national guardsmen have been deployed in the affected the parishes since Friday's storm.

In Denham Springs, a city east of Baton Rouge, Mayor Gerard Landry stated over 90 percent of the homes have been damaged by



Gov. John Bel Edwards meets with Louisiana officials about immediate relief efforts.

flood waters.

As the storm clears, Gov. Edwards stated that Louisiana will continue to watch for rising river waters, canals, bayous and streams as water levels steadily rise.

On Sunday, August 14th, the Federal Government declared that Tangipahoa, St. Helena, East

Baton Rouge and Livingston parishes suffered a major disaster.

Relief Efforts

The 100 Black Men of Metro New Orleans are accepting donations for flood victims at their operating location at 6600 Plaza Drive, Suite 201 New Orleans, LA 70127.

Additionally, donations can be sent to any of the five Liberty Bank and Trust branches in New Orleans.

Liberty Bank President, Alden J. McDonald, is asking for community support.

"We are committed to helping people impacted by the floods in Louisiana. We will be accepting any donations at all of our Louisi-

ana operating branches and we will provide any support that is needed to get supplies in the hands of the people that need them," McDonald said.

The Orleans Sheriff's Parish Office sent a team to assist with residents in the affected parishes via rescue boats. Additionally, the Sheriff's office is holding a clothing drive to assist relief efforts.

"Anyone who survived Hurricane Katrina can understand the sense of loss our neighbors are experiencing right now," said Sheriff Marlin Gusman.

"We all need to pitch in and render aid to storm victims as soon as possible. Bring your usable clothing items to us and we will get them to official distribution points in the affected parishes," Gusman added.

The American Red Cross is currently sheltering over 8,000 people affected by the flood. The organization is also taking donations to help recent flood victims, and funding current initiatives in the Southeast Louisiana area.

To donate to American Red Cross, visit www.redcross.org. When submitting a donation, specify Louisiana Flood Victims in the selection menu.

Girl Scouts Use Tech To Make Joining, Volunteering Easier

Data News Staff Edited Report

As families prepare for the new school year and the array of activities from which to choose, they'll find that joining and volunteering for the local Girl Scout Organization a much easier and faster process, thanks to new technology and operating model.

Girl Scouts Louisiana East, which serves girls, grades K - 12, and adults in 23 parishes of Southeast Louisiana, launched its Customer Engagement Initiative in July, with a refreshed website, an all-new Membership Registration System and online Girl Scout Member Community, and a digital planning Toolkit for Girl Scout troop leaders.

"While before it could take weeks to place girls into Girl Scout



(CEI) Joining and volunteering for Girl Scouts has been made easier and faster through new technology and operating model.

troops, it can now be done online by viewing an opportunity catalog which will display troop vacancies, the date, time and general meeting locations, and whether volunteers are still needed," said Alisha Moore, Chief Customer Experience Officer.

According to Moore, there is also an opportunity catalog for adults interested in volunteering, which will

assist in the on-boarding process of volunteers.

The digital Volunteer Toolkit simplifies troop management, meeting planning and program experiences, with a link to program resources, and a parent portal that allows families to communicate with troop leaders, manage their daughter's schedule, and stay involved in her Girl Scout experience.



The local council began preparing for this large shift in its way of doing business last November, as part of a Nationwide Girl Scout Initiative, designed to ensure that customers are experiencing a nationally consistent Girl Scout experience. Almost one-half of the 112 councils have implemented the customer-centric initiative in their own council, with the rest scheduled for implementation by 2018.

Girl Scout membership is \$15 per year for girls and adults, making it a positive and affordable option for today's busy families. Some favorite areas of interest for girls and adults include camping, health and fitness, the arts, science and technology, travel, cookie-selling, and much more. More information about the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is available at www.gsle.org.



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Cover Story/ Continued from page 9.

MARCH 2016

TERRY WILLIAMS



"Make it happen and make it fun," is the motto Terry Williams, President of Airware Transportation and Logistics, lives by every day. Williams was born in Houma, Louisiana and has been a resident of New Orleans for over 35 years. Williams embodies the archetype of not only a family man, but a man of business and community service through Air-

ware, goodwill and membership of the Zulu Social Aid & Pleasure Club.

Williams story started in a small public school in Terrebonne Parish. He was noted as a prodigal student and an exceptional athlete. Graduating top of his class, he received a scholarship to attend Loyola University studying accounting. Once he graduated from

Loyola, he went on to attend Stanford University to obtain a Master's in Accounting. Williams, once graduated from Stanford, passed the Certified Public Accounting Exam and worked at the United Parcel Service, becoming an esteemed Accountant. Soon, Williams outgrew his position and undertook his ambitions to operate his own business: Williams would then go on to become President of Airware Transportations and Logistics.

Airware Transportations and Logistics was originally a spin off company that Williams created with a business partner. As Airware matured into a larger company, Williams began to shift his time and energy into operating the wing of the business that essentially became its own independent business. Currently, Airware has won the Federal Aviation Administration's Small Business of the Year Award in 2015 due to its unprecedented growth and unmatched performance. The company employs roughly 40 people. Despite its small size, under the work of Williams, the company has worked with over 37 airports domestically and

internationally, managing billions of dollars in projects.

While Airware is one of Williams' accomplishments, it is one of many efforts that he contributes to every day. Currently, Williams is a member of City Church in New Orleans, the National Black Chamber of Commerce Board of Trustees, the Airport Minority Advisory Council, the National Football League Youth Education Training and Kappa Alpha Psi Incorporated. Additionally, Williams is a part of the Zulu Social Aid & Pleasure Club, where he served on and sponsored numerous committees and initiatives.

Social Aid is what Williams thinks makes him a strong person today. Through Zulu, Williams participates in Toys for Tots, Night Out Against Crime, and working with Junior Zulus to create a path for New Orleans youth to be successful.

Most of all, Williams believes helping others is the best thing that anyone can do "The main thing here is about character in integrity to make sure they are afforded the right opportunities that others have."

APRIL, 2016

OLIVER THOMAS



Oliver Thomas is a name we know from his many years of service as an elected official on the New Orleans City Council, as well as being a stage actor and now as the host of the highly rated radio program The "Good Morning Show" on WBOK-1230 AM.

Throughout his life of many ups and some downs, he has always maintained a positive attitude and stayed true to his commitment to serving and uplifting others.

As an elected official Thomas led many efforts that was connected to helping the most vulnerable citizens of New Orleans. "I was the lead author of City's Domestic Violence Law. I thought it was important to protect women when I was part of the domestic violence committee." He also worked to preserve historic homes in African-American Communities.

Today, Thomas is hosting the top rated morning show on WBOK 1230-

AM, where he engages his viewers with thoughtful insightful conversation helping them understand the issues that affect them. Speaking of how he became involved with the station he says, "I started guest hosting for Gerod Stevens, I've tried to use my experience in politics and public policy and a lot of the issues in the community and try to share that with the public because I have a lot of insider information. I know how to connect the dots and I try to do a good job of letting folks know how issues connect to their lives. It's also been very rewarding, and I am also happy to say that not long ago we were recognized as the number one rated show on the station, and one of the most popular shows in the region."

Speaking of why he feels his show resonates with listeners he says, "The information that I present I do my homework. I study, I do not say anything that I cannot back up. Also I am open to dialog and I am a good listener." Continuing he says, "The biggest compliments we've gotten about the show is that the people we bring on to share information with the public they don't get a lot of other places."

Oliver Thomas has lived a life of extreme highs and lows, but forever the optimist he turned lemons into lemonade and says that the lows were teachable moments for him and hopefully a lesson for others. Saying of what others could learn from his life he says, "That down doesn't mean stay down. That in many cases it can be an opportunity to get better. There are other brothers and sisters just as talented as I am that deserve a second chance just like me. I am a reflection of them."

Thomas' words ring a chord of irrefutable truth, as all of us have had to deal with many of the trials and tribulations of life, but many of us have not had them play out in the public arena. Thomas says that he wants his life and its journey to inspire others. "Life doesn't really get good until you are tested, but when you get tested you better be connected to your faith. You better believe in yourself and all the things that God gave you that made you special. And remember the most special people God put on this earth are the ones who have survived failure or the ones who have survived after being knocked down or being put down. Those are the people who can help save this world."

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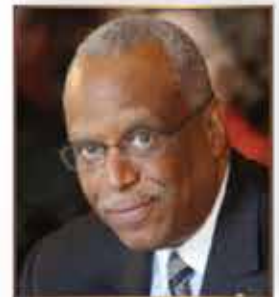
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