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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

# Women Organizations of New Orleans

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# Recognizing Local Women Organizations in New Orleans



The Link, Inc. New Orleans chapter has served the city for over 60 years.

**Eric M Craig**  
**Multimedia Editor**

As Black History Month and Mardi Gras come to a close at the end of February, Women’s History Month takes center stage in March. Throughout the month of March, the moment can be used as a reflection on the several contributions women have had in the City of New Orleans.

However, it is worth noting that Women’s History Month has not always been widely celebrated in the United States.

While women have been recognized for their contribution to modern history in the western hemisphere,

Women’s History Month stemmed from the idea of an International Women’s Day in 1911. In 1980, then-President Jimmy Carter signed a proclamation, stating the United States would observe a Women’s History Month during the week of the International Women’s Day, which is March 8th.

By 1986, several states have independently motioned to recognize March as Women’s History Month. In 1987 the U.S. Congress, after being petitioned by the National Women’s History Project, passed a public law that recognized March as Women’s History Month.

Women’s History Month is celebrated in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia in March.

### Recognizing Local Women Organizations

Throughout the United States, there are several organizations that are tasked with the empowerment and recognition of women in local and national communities. In New Orleans, there is also several women organization that recognize the many local leaders in the City.

In honor of Women’s History Month, these are three—of the many—women-centered organizations that are positively impacting New Orleans.

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on page 4.

Cover photo via GirlTrek

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Cover Story, Continued from page 4.



Girl Trek encourages women to walk to bring attention to lifestyle and community concerns.



President of League of Women Voters New Orleans, Rosalind Blanco Cook, City Councilmember LaToya Cantrell and previous-president Francine Giugno

### Girl Trek

Girl Trek lives by the mantra that “when Black women walk, things change.” The national organization is a movement and organization tasked with the mission of promoting healthy lifestyles for African-American Women. According to Girl Trek, 82 percent of African-American Women are overweight.

Consequently, Black women are more likely to die from preventable diseases than any other group of women in the United States.

Beyond preventable diseases, Black women may also be subject to generational poverty, chronic stress, addiction and unemployment. As a form of healing, Girl Trek encourages its women to walk

away the stresses of life. According to GirlTrek, walking is the first step in bringing attention to problems in lifestyle and communities.

Currently, over 94,000 members have taken the pledge to walk with Girl Trek. Girl Trek has over 438 teams of women that walk in over 108 parks around the City.

### League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters is a non-profit organization that encourages women around the nation to become informed and active voters. The national organization conducts several studies, and actively opposes policies that act against the public's interest. The league is a staunch supporter of Equal Pay for Women in New Orleans, and across all of its national branches.

The League of Women Voters has an active branch in New Orleans, and played a critical role in disseminating crucial information to all voters in the 2016 general election. The League of Women Voters has been instrumental in encouraging voter registration, and providing pertinent information to the general public.

Currently, the New Orleans Branch has aggregated information about the upcoming March 25th election for Orleans Parish. The organization will provide nonpartisan information about the Judge for Court of Appeal 4th Circuit Race and Judge of Civil District Court Race.

### New Orleans Links

The Links is a national not-for-profit corporation created in 1946, tasked with the economic and cultural uplift of African-American Women in the United States. Ac-

cording to The Links, the organization is one of the oldest and largest volunteer service organizations in the nation. The Links has 283 chapters with over 14,000 participating members across 41 states, D.C and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. The Links have over 5 million service hours on record.

The Links chartered the New Orleans Chapter of The Links in 1957, the first chapter in the State of Louisiana. Since chartered, the New Orleans Branch advocates for educational, civic and intercultural activities across the City.

The Links New Orleans Branch is consistently participating in programs to help all people across the City. The organization volunteers in areas, including service to youth between the grades of pre-kindergarten to college; Advocating and tending to the advancement of visual arts in the local community; Eliminating disparities between groups of people through education and leadership, both locally and internationally; and volunteering efforts to bring awareness and help assist in the treating of chronic illnesses that plague communities in New Orleans.

Additionally, the Links New Orleans Branch presents a Linkage Award, recognizing leadership and individual excellence in the New Orleans Community.

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# Spears Group to Launch New Experimental Dining Series

**Harvey Brown**  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

Known for Dinner En Blanc, the Millennial Awards and the Fried Chicken Festival, The Spears Group, a New Orleans-based Public Relations Firm is hosting another special event, centered around sharing experiences through food.

The new event, deemed Savor, is a Luxury Dining Event crafted for those who are both food enthusiasts and adventurers. The event will feature a cocktail hour, live entertainment, and food crafted by Chefs around the world. The dishes made at Savor will be the product of a one-time collaboration between two to four renowned chefs who will master new or experimental dishes.

Dinners served can range from a six-course meal to robust four-



Tickets for the March Savor go on sale March 2, 2017.

course family style meals. No dinner at Savor will ever be repeated,

according to The Spears Group.

The Savor Events will also show-

case well-known Mixologist during its cocktail hour, served before the main cuisine.

Over the next year, Savor will be held in March 2017, June of 2017, September of 2017 and November of 2017. The first Savor will be held on Saturday, March 25th. Tickets for the first Savor go on sale March 2, 2017. To sign up for Savor, visit [savnola.com](http://savnola.com)

The locations and will be disclosed 24 hours before dining begins. The dates for the other three Savor Events will be disclosed a month ahead of time. The cuisine served for the evening will remain undisclosed until the start of the event.

For the first four Savors, the event will be contained in New Orleans. According to the Spears Group, the event could span across the region in 2017.

The upcoming March Savor will showcase a one-time collaboration between two renowned, New Orleans-based chefs: Chef Tariq Hanna, Founder and Leading Chef at Sucre, New Orleans' Leading Desert Boutique; and, Chef Philip Lopez, Owner, Creative Director, and Executive Chef of Rebel Restaurant Group in New Orleans.

"We do events because we enjoy bringing people together and get great satisfaction from it. Nothing brings people together like great food," said Cleveland Spears, III, Founder of Savor. "Savor is unlike anything we've ever done, but we believe everyone will embrace it."

The Spears Group partnered with Liberty Kitchen for the Savor Events. During the event, Liberty Kitchen students will serve and maintain the dining areas.

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# 2017 Coronation Zulu Ball

**Eric M Craig**  
Multimedia Editor

On Friday, February 24th, the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club held its Annual Zulu Coronation Ball at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. At the coronation, Adonis Expose' was crowned 2017 King Zulu, and Donna Glapion was crowned 2017 Queen Zulu. Thousands of people were in attendance of the night's events, including New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, Congressman Cedric Richmond, Councilwomen Nadine Ramsey and Susan Guidry, Orleans Parish Sheriff Marlin Gusman, Police Chief Michael Harrison, and several other leaders in the New Orleans Community.

Old School 106.7 present the O'jays with an Achievement Award after their performance at the Zulu Ball.



Visit [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com) for more photos from these events





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# Activist Empowers Black Women to Celebrate Daily Victories, Defy the Odds

**Tyra Johnson**  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

The originator of the phrase 'Black Women Are for Grown Ups' Stevona Elem Rogers wrapped up a three-speaker series of young, up-and-coming Black Activists at Xavier University for Black History Month. Rogers, who is an Author, Teacher, and Notable Black Feminist, spoke to students and faculty on Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2017, on the relevancy and importance of Black Women in Society.

In her speech, Rogers examined the quote: "All the women are White, all Black are men, but some of us are brave." Whenever women are brought up in conversations, she told the audience, White women are usually the intended topic. And when Black people are a topic of discussion, it is often about the Black man, she added. But the last group who are not named in the quote, Rogers explained, are in face Black women – the ones who are brave. Rogers said it has been Black women who have used their voices to fight against dishonor, in-



New Orleans-based Activist Stevona Elem Rogers discusses the Black Woman's Experience in America for Xavier's Black History Month Speaker Series Event on Feb. 22, 2017. Photo by Tyra Johnson.

justice and stereotypes.

"Black Women Are for Grown-Ups," Rogers said. "We are complex," she added. Where the world

sees Black woman to be weak and vulnerable, a genuine grown-up would understand what others seem to overlook, she said.

Society generalizes the perception of a Black woman to fit into three categories, she told the audience: the mammy, the sapphire,

and the jezebel. The 'mammy' dates to slavery when Black women worked as mothers in White people's homes, she said. Rogers said the 'sapphire' sexualizes the smart-mouthed Black woman with an attitude and an unwelcoming facial expression. A 'jezebel' sexualizes the physique of the Black woman as having a large buttocks and heavy breasts, she said. These degrading stereotypes are superficial, she told the audience, and do not exemplify the true identity of Black women.

"Don't get pegged into stereotypes. You won't make me a jezebel. You won't make me a mammy. You won't make me a sapphire," she said.

These stereotypes permeate society and media, she added. She used the example of the character Cookie on Fox's Television Show, *Empire*, who is played by Actress Taraji P. Henson, as well as Beyoncé, and Serena Williams, as examples of women pegged by stereotypes but who defy those stereotypes as well.

To read the full story, visit [LA-Datanews.com](http://LA-Datanews.com)

## Jerrelda Sanders *Carrying the Torch*

**Rachel Carrico**  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

To commemorate its Fifth-Year Anniversary, the Ice Divas Social Aid & Pleasure Club will present its First Queen: Jerrelda Sanders.

This will not be Sanders' first parade with the Ice Divas; in fact, she's a founding member. But on March 12th, she will preside over the procession from atop her float, where she hopes to continue modeling "where hard work and dedication can get you."

Sanders, who takes the term "role model" very seriously, has dedicated her life to service. Readers may recall that Data News



Jerrelda Sanders will be crowned Queen of Ice Divas Social Aid & Pleasure Club on March 12, 2017.

Weekly honored her as a Trailblazer in 2012. She belongs to several non-profit and volunteer groups and founded Mother's Helpers Learning Center—which started around her kitchen table—to serve high-needs youth and their families. All the while she continues to advance her education, earning multiple master's degrees and now pursuing a Ph.D. in Behavioral Health.

Not surprisingly,

Sanders' introduction to second-lining occurred while working in public service. As a Legislative Aide for City Council, she assisted in issuing second-line permits. At first, "it was a job, but it became a passion." That passion was ignited on June 27, 2005, when Allison "Tootie" Montana, Big Chief of the Yellow Pocohontas, suffered a fatal heart attack while pleading that City Council stop the police harassment of Mardi Gras Indians.

"I was actually in the chambers when Tootie Montana died," Sanders recalls. "He died standing up for something he believed in, which was the freedom of organizations to go out and celebrate and

let that culture shine through."

Following Hurricane Katrina, when Sanders witnessed New Orleans' culture threatened in new ways, her appreciation for it grew even deeper. Before long, her mission to serve found a new outlet: one that combines social aid with pleasure.

The Ice Divas Social Aid & Pleasure Club (of which this writer is a member) holds its Crowning Ceremony on March 4, 2017, 6-10 PM at the Chateau Ballroom, 8726 Chef Mentour Highway. Tickets \$25.00; Tables \$250 (504-421-1025). Their Annual Second-Line Parade will roll with KeepN It Real Social Aid & Pleasure Club on March 12th.



# Researchers Share both Tragic and Resilient Tale of Slavery in Louisiana

**Naomi Hill**  
Data News Contributor

In the 1800s, African-American Slaves lost their culture, religion, and pursuit of happiness while doing forced unpaid labor in the sweltering sun every single day. Along with terrible conditions and gruesome punishments, slaves also lost family records for countless generations. The Whitney Plantation Museum Directors are working to reverse these impacts of slavery in Louisiana through studying the lives of slaves in Louisiana, and even tracing their origins back to Africa.

At a Black History Month Lecture at Xavier University titled "Afro-Louisiana Slavery and Real Django's" on Feb. 20th, Ibrahima Seck, the Director of Research, and Joy Banner, the Director of Marketing, spoke about their experience in revealing slave family records



Dr. Ibrahima Seck, a Senegalese Historian, speaks at "Afro-Louisiana Slavery and Real Django's" Lecture at Xavier University. Photo by Naomi Hill.

and properly interpreting slave records to connect broken families.

Both Seck and Banner narrated the History at the Whitney Plantation,

located on River Road in Wallace, Louisiana, and founded by Am-

broise Heidel, a German Settler in 1750.

Banner spent her childhood growing up one-minute away from Whitney Plantation. Despite her relative closeness to a slave plantation, the concept of slavery was not often discussed in Banner's home, simply because slavery was a hard concept for people to talk about deeply, she said. She now promotes the Whitney Plantation to New Orleans residents and tourist because she said Whitney is different, because it provides a very raw, yet eye-opening perspective of the day in the life of a slave.

"Tourists want to party and have fun, it's an understood aspect of tourism. Yet many visitors want educational experiences as well as fun, it's important to take a moment to learn," Banner said.

To read the full story, visit [LA-DataNews.com](http://LA-DataNews.com)

## NOMTOC Parade Celebrates Black Beauty *Draws Diverse, Large Crowds*

**Dimond Hall**  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

As the only Black Krewe in its area, the Krewe of "New Orleans Most Talked About Club," also known as NOMTOC, rolled through the Westbank of Orleans Parish on Feb. 25th. While the music was bumping and the Cajun food was sizzling, members said the Krewe of NOMTOC drew one of the biggest crowds in the history of the club.

The club remains a staple since it was started by the Jugs Social Club in 1970, and quickly became a household name throughout the Black community in New Orleans. This year's floats celebrated Black beauty with the faces of Black people of every mix, shade, and style. Predominantly Black dance teams and school bands accompanied the Krewe of NOMTOC, as it attracted spectators not looking for the typi-



The Krewe of NOMTOC rolled Saturday, Feb. 25th.

cal Mardi Gras experience.

"This is an inspiration to the Black community. We always see White parades flourishing and being talked about but NOMTOC is for us," said Chaz Alexis, a Retail Store Manager in a Westbank mall.

"Other than Zulu, we have all Black everything and I love it."

Since Zulu features on the Uptown route, residents said NOMTOC is convenient for families across the river. "It also helps that it's on the Westbank," Alexis said.

"Everyone out here knows everyone, so parking is always easy."

College students from near and far travelled to New Orleans to experience Mardi Gras Day. But some students said they wanted to experience parades outside of the com-

mon Uptown route. NOMTOC, the only parade that runs down General Meyer Avenue turns under the Crescent City Connection.

"I came to Mardi Gras with my friend Jason who's from here and always told me about this amazing parade called 'NOMTOC,'" said Kristopher Powell, who attends Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi. "I told him that was one parade I have never heard of being in Texas so I thought 'What the heck? Let's go!'" he said.

The parade surpassed Powell's expectations, proving to be just as grand as any Uptown parade. "I was honestly shocked with the generosity I experienced during this parade. I danced with strangers, met some beautiful people and was also offered amazing Cajun Seafood from people I didn't even know," Powell said. "I will definitely be coming here every year moving forward."



# Spring Fashion Blooms



**Delaney George**  
Fashion Columnist

As Black History Month and Carnival come to an end, so does the winter fashion. It's out with coats and scarves, and in with the skirts and sandals. As spring approaches, florals and bright colors will become popular picks for retailers across the nation. Here are a few tips on how to restock your closet with the most stylish spring attire.

## Prepare for the Hot in the Cold

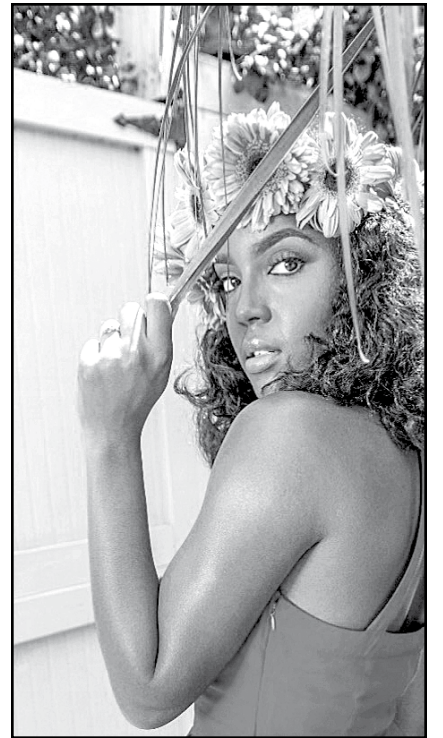
Shopping for spring clothes in the winter may seem counterintuitive, but the best spring gear goes on sale in the winter. During transition period, stores move their winter ensembles to the front of the store while stashing stylish spring gems in the back. Taking a trip to the hidden sales rack to stock up on the best spring fashion finds can be worthwhile.



## Think Bright & Loud

Navy blues, hunter greens, and burned oranges are colors of the past after winter. This spring, lime greens, neon's, and hot pinks, will brighten any aesthetic. Along with the colors, you can't go wrong with any floral or abstract print ensembles.

For more tips on how to stock a spring friendly closet this season, email [delinke@yahoo.com](mailto:delinke@yahoo.com) or visit @Delannii on Instagram.



Left: Model Delaney George skates freely in her neon yellow body suit. Shot by: Shelby Ursu. Center: Model Mizani Ball shops to find the perfect spring outfit while wearing a baby blue spring dress. Right: Model Delaney George poses in a hot pink dress paired with a hot pink floral headband. Shot by: Nefer Media.

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# Getting in Touch with Your Curly Roots is Not Always Easy



**Destiny Johnson**  
Natural Hair Columnist

Learning about how to take care of my natural hair has always been an individual journey. Around my teenage years, I noticed that I had a unique hair type. My mother, grandmother and brothers did not have the same curl pattern that I did. My father's hair was characterized by loose, jet black waves that could grow in spirals if long. My mother had tightly curled hair that carried more of a sheen than a shine if worn natural.

As a child, I was not allowed to wear my hair natural due to its thickness and inability to be tossed into two ponytails while my mom rushed to get to work. I remember asking my mom if I could wear my hair like "Scary Spice"



from a girl group named The Spice Girls. The singer had voluminous, springy curls all over her head. I hoped that my natural hair would in some way mimic hers if my mother would let me skip the blow drying and pressing for once. I remember being told that I "didn't have hair like her" which made me believe that my hair was too difficult to manage.

As a college student, I began to straighten my hair less often. I was surprised that my hair had such beautiful spirals at all. My hair could be twisted, braided and worn down with ease. Although it was very thick and took a lot of elbow grease to put it in a simple bun, I loved the versatility of my hair.

My hair was a lot like my mother's with its tight, frizzy coils. However, I can comb my hair back and see defined waves just like my father. My curls are uniquely mine and do not totally fit into any category. I no longer try to force my hair to look like someone else's. I have become comfortable with my own texture while embracing the beauty that I have always had.

Follow me @seekyourcurls

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If you are interested, please email your resume and 3 writing samples to: [terrybjones@bellsouth.net](mailto:terrybjones@bellsouth.net) and [datanewseditor@bellsouth.net](mailto:datanewseditor@bellsouth.net).

We can't wait to hear from you!

### MCDONOGH 35

The National McDonogh 35 High School Alumni Association is reaching out to all graduates as it begins the celebration of the school's Centennial Celebration (1917 to 2017).

If you are a graduate or if you know of someone who graduated from the school, contact the alumni association at [mcdonogh35alumni-association@yahoo.com](mailto:mcdonogh35alumni-association@yahoo.com), [mcdonogh35alumniassociation.org](http://mcdonogh35alumniassociation.org), or write to McDonogh 35 Alumni Association, P.O. Box 50306, New Orleans, LA 70122, ATT: Alumni Association.

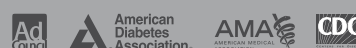
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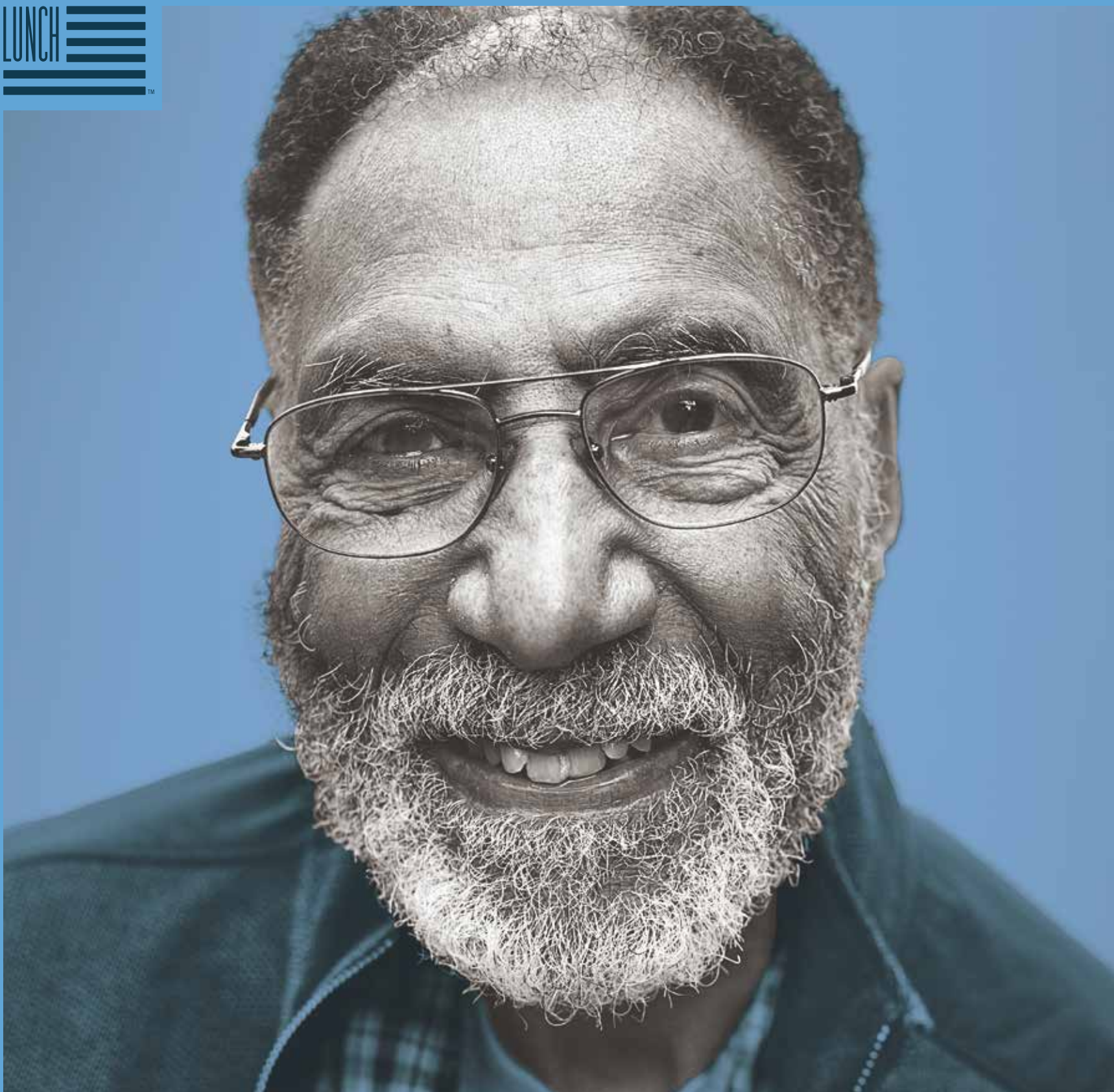


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