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New Orleans

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News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

Blue Lion Karate Academy Celebrates Blue Blue Day



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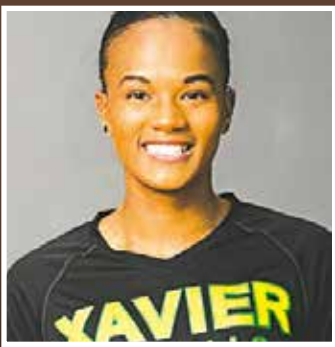
A Data News Weekly Exclusive



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South Broad Business Coalition

Rebuilding and Renewing a Community



Pictured is the historic Bohn Motor Co. located at Broad Street and Washington. The blighted building was purchased in 2005 by the Rhodes family and is to become a mixed use building featuring offices and restaurants. This is an example of the tremendous opportunity for revitalization, renewal and economic development that is in the heart of Broadmoor.

By Edwin Buggage
Features Writer

SBBC Focuses on Economic Development

During this election season, there are many challenges this City will continue to face regardless of

who is elected after the ballots have been cast. In this crucial election, it is important that in the end, the new mayor will work on behalf of all of the people regardless of race, class and zip code.

On Thursday September 21, 2017, the coalition will hold a forum for mayoral candidates at the Rhodes Pavilion, located at 3933 Washington Ave

from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM, moderated by former WDSU Anchor Camille Whitworth. The forum will focus on issues that are important to both the local business community and neighborhood residents. The event is sponsored by Data News Weekly and Cumulus Radio Old School 106.7.

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DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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Please call 504-309-9913 for subscription information or to obtain a back issue of the paper ONLY.
Dated material two weeks in advance. Not responsible for publishing or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photos.

Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

Candidate Forum and Question for the Next Mayor

On Thursday September 21, 2017, the coalition will hold a forum for mayoral candidates at the Rhodes Pavilion, located at 3933 Washington Ave. from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM, moderated by former WDSU Anchor Camille Whitworth. The forum will focus on issues that are important to both the local business community and neighborhood residents.

Speaking on some of the things she would like to see improved Rhodes says, "I would like to see the next administration helping to develop communities that haven't received the same attention as others after Hurricane Katrina." Continuing she says, speaking of quality of life issues, "We would like to see better streetscapes to change the look of the neutral grounds and more plants that would help beautify our neighborhood."

In the "New" New Orleans, All Zip Codes Should Matter

Ms. Rhodes' concerns echo what some residents feel; that the City's priorities of which areas to develop or re-develop resources have not been equally distributed, although, there have been improvements in some areas. "Cleanup has been much better post Katrina; the Sanitation Department is much better and we commend them for the job they are doing and we want that to continue."

As we look around some neighborhoods post Katrina; you see the seeds of gentrification being planted. While some may see this as a negative occurrence, Rhodes feels if urban renewal is done effectively it can benefit the entire community. "What we are looking at as far as Washington and S. Broad, is that it becomes as important as St. Charles and S. Carrollton and when I say that I mean dollars are set aside for our streetscape, and that we have the kind of police

presence and protection that other areas have. Additionally, we would like more neighborhood engagement and programs for our youth." Continuing, she said, "we want the Washington and South Broad Corridor to look like Oretha Castle Haley looks like right now which is an example of what is possible when urban renewal is done right when all the stakeholders in the community work together."

A Better Community When People Work Together

While driving, walking or more recently biking through Broadmoor there are notable changes that Rhodes says are for the better and the South Broad Street Coalition is promoting these positive changes on its website SBBC@squarspace.com and on social media. "We have a website for the organization; where we feature some the businesses on the website, we have a Facebook page that talks about the activities we have going on. And Propeller, a non-profit busi-

ness incubator that's located in the corridor has done an excellent job reaching out to the businesses in the coalition. They are a very good resource that helps businesses with marketing, website design and they have been a real critical part in our organization being re-energized."

Rhodes speaks optimistically about the future of the corridor and says people working together from community, elected and business leaders is a key factor in continuing to make the area more attractive for people to come to live, work and shop. "After the mayoral forum, our next meeting will be October 19th at 5:30 at the Rhodes Pavilion, located on 3933 Washington Avenue; we want people to know that we are working on our vision for 2018, so once we get past the forum we will be formulating our 2018 vision that will be revealed at the beginning of the year. We also would like people to know we would like their input in our quarterly meetings that are open to the public."

Kathleen Rhodes on SBBC and Rebuilding and Renewing a Community

As the oldest business in the South Broad Street Corridor since 1969, the Rhodes Family today is still going strong as a new generation carrier on the family's legacy that began in the early 20th Century by the company's founder, Duplain W. Rhodes Sr. Today, they are at the forefront of a coalition whose aim is the rebuilding and renewal of a neighborhood that is home to businesses both old and new. "In the corridor, there is economic activity present but we at Rhodes and the businesses that are part of SBBC would like to see it expanded because we know there is potential for greater investment and people coming from all over the City to support our businesses and activities that go on in the corridor. It would not be only good for our businesses and the neighborhood, but good for the entire City."

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Mayor Landrieu, National Basketball Players Association Award First-Ever Midnight Basketball Scholarships to Participants

Data News Staff Report

NEW ORLEANS – On Saturday, Sept. 16, 2017, Mayor Landrieu and the National Basketball Players Association Foundation (NBPA Foundation) presented the first round of Midnight Basketball scholarships to three Season 15 participants at the final game of the season. The scholarships will assist recipients with improving job readiness and educational advancement.

“Across 15 seasons, Midnight Basketball has engaged over 13,000 participants providing access to jobs, educational opportunities, workforce training and community role models,” said Mayor Mitch Landrieu. “We are grateful to partner with the National Basketball Players Associations Foundation to expand the efforts of Midnight Basketball to impact the lives of countless young men and women by connecting them to services.”

Season 15 Midnight Basketball Scholarship recipients include Cornell Parquet, Narvin Reed and Trenton Anderson. Parquet will use the scholarship funds to help pay for his tuition at Southern University of New Orleans and will intern



Pictured above Mayor Mitch Landrieu congratulates Season 15 Midnight Basketball Scholarship recipients Cornell Parquet, Narvin Reed and Trenton Anderson.

with Elevate Next, learning sports training and educational strategies. Reed will apply his scholarship toward acquiring his Information Technology credentials and will intern with the City of New Orleans' Office of Information Technology and Innovation. Lastly, Anderson will use his scholarship toward his tuition at the University of New Orleans and will intern with ResCare

in the Human Resources Department.

National Basketball Players Association Foundation Executive Director Sherrie Deans said, “Participants in Midnight Basketball enjoy the competition and sheer fun of playing basketball, while giving themselves the ability to connect with resources for education, job training and other tools that they

can use to enhance the success of their lives. This is why our players are so proud to support Midnight Basketball and to provide these scholarships. We look forward to continuing our involvement with this unique and valuable program in the coming years.”

During the 2017 NBA All-Star Weekend, the NBPA Foundation made a scholarship commitment to



The Midnight Basketball scholarships will assist recipients with improving job readiness and educational advancement.

Midnight Basketball of \$50,000 per year for the next three years. The NBPA Foundation's commitment will provide select Midnight Basketball participants the opportunity for education and training programs in New Orleans.

For more information about the scholarship program, visit www.nola.gov.



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XULA wins 2 titles at HBCU National Championships

Data Staff Report

COLLEGE PARK, Ga. — Charlene Goreau and Catalin Fifea won singles titles for Xavier University of Louisiana Saturday at the HBCU National Tennis Championships.

Goreau defeated Jackson State's Tyler Smith 6-4, 7-5 to win the main draw of the women's A-bracket. Fifea won the men's A-bracket consolation title with an 8-1 decision against Alabama A&M's Nishangan Nadaraja.

Goreau and Fifea were NAIA All-Americans for XULA last season. Goreau earned that honor for the second straight year.

“Charlene played phenomenally,” XULA Coach Alan Green said. “She showed that her fitness level is better than last year, and she's playing with more confidence.”

Goreau gained revenge for a 6-4, 7-5 loss to Smith in a dual match at JSU this past April.

Fifea won three consecutive con-



Charlene Goreau

solation matches after losing in a super-tiebreaker in the main draw Thursday.

This was the first XULA event of the 2017-18 Academic Year. The Gold Rush and Gold Nuggets will return to the Atlanta area for the ITA NAIA South Regional Championships, a three-day tournament which will begin Friday at Lawrenceville, Ga.

Big Chief Roderick "Bald Eagle" Sylvas Wild Tchoupitoulas

By: Glenn Jones
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Timeline:

1968 – 1980 Big Chief George "Jolly" Landry
1981 – 1982 Big Chief Norman Bell
1983 – 1984 Big Chief Thomas Landry
1986 – 1989 Big Chief Johnny Diggs
2000 – Present Big Chief Roderick "Bald Eagle" Sylvas



Pictured above is Big Chief Roderick "Bald Eagle" Sylvas of the legendary Wild Tchoupitoulas.

Big Chief Bald Eagle is Chief of the world renowned Wild Tchoupitoulas, brought to the streets by the legendary Big Chief George "Jolly" Landry, Uncle of the Neville Brothers. The world owes a great gratitude to this team consisting of Big Chief Jolly, Big Chief Bo Dollas of the Wild Magnolias and Big Chief Monk Boudreaux of the Golden Eagles Tribe. It's amazing to think that all of these legends were in one tribe at one point in history. "The music of this culture has always been there" as Chief Roderick says, but these men were responsible for bringing it to the world. Like his cousin Big Chief Klik of the Young Black Seminoles, Chief Roderick is very humble and speaks sparingly about his position as Big Chief of the historic Wild Tchoupitoulas. As his tribal chief name Bald Eagle denotes, Chief Roderick soars above small talk and focuses on the big picture. He is focused on preserving Indigenous Black Masking Culture through his daughter and third Chief Justin Harris. The ritual of passing down the culture runs deeper than the Wild Tchoupitoulas. Chief Roderick is in the direct bloodline of the Choctaw of Bayou LaCombe's native people whose bloodlines are descendants of the Washita Yamasee Moors. Simply put, descendants of the aboriginal Olmec's of the now Americas.

This is why Big Chief is offset by the question of who he is pay-

ing homage to when he suits up? As he says "this masking thing I don't know when that came about, and why they say we are masking, but I understand what they are saying. Because you had a blending of cultures. Everybody was not indigenous to the Americas (Turtle Island) and you had West African introduced into the area. When I say I'm standing on those ancestors, both of those ancestors influenced the music, the drums, the tambourine, the sound just the overall culture as we do things." He continues, "It's like a blending and this is what we have now. We've been doing it over 300 years. We had Indians at one time that would have a parade and amongst the havoc they would go in the French Quarter and steal stuff and cause havoc. Just a wild time for them, they would do it every year. In the 1700 hundreds leading into the 1800 hundreds." Roderick Sylvas is not just a Big Chief he is a true to life "Culture Barrier."

Q) What was your experience with the Black Masking Culture?

A) My first encounter with the culture, like I said, my uncle was Trail Chief (Charles Booker originally of Black Eagles Tribe than forming the Wild Tchoupitoulas with Big Chief Jolly), I saw the Indian suits on his bed when I went at his

house but it still didn't click in my mind what that was. I was like, Uncle Booker got a bunch of feathers and some beads and jewels on the bed. He always kept it covered up, anybody came in the house you will never see it laying on the bed. It was a secret type thing. My first time actually seeing an Indian come down the street was my uncle coming down Cadiz Street from off Tchoupitoulas. When he was coming down the street I didn't know it was him. Like I've told this story before I compare that to Jesus coming into town. That's how he would come with a bunch of people behind him beating a tambourine. They said that your Uncle Booker he's an Indian. That whole thing inspired at the age of 6 or 7.

Q) How do we get more community involvement in the Indian community?

A) You've got some people that it just comes to them. They just automatically want to participate because it's in their blood. You've got other people so wrapped up in westernized culture they can't see nothing else. They want the same thing that Europeans have. Instead of getting your own they rather go work for somebody

else. I'm really not into going to work for somebody else. I'm used to producing my own stuff, working for myself. If I can. If I can't and I've just got to go out and do it, then that's what I'll do.

Q) What are your thoughts on the economics of this City squeezing out this culture and the natives of this City?

A) That's in part the creole culture of this City. We have been struggling with this light skin, dark skin thing here in New Orleans for the longest. You've got people that have gotten the education, rose up to the level of City Council Member or Mayor and they haven't reached back and helped the people in the community. They've just done the status quo, without addressing the concerns of the community. We're the ones going to jail. We're the ones that don't have a job. So, if you don't have jobs, they're still going to get the money. That's been our downfall in this City. There are too many of us living in this City, that we can't put together our own money and get some of this economic development that's going on. We've got thousands, we've got millions of people that come here to have a good time and we are the entertainment. Yet, we're the lowest paid people besides the housekeepers.

Q) What spirit do you bring or evoke when you mask?

A) I feel a range of emotions. Sometimes, I feel humble, sometimes I feel war like. It depends on that drum beat. Sometimes, that drum beat brings you to another place. It's just when the spirit hits you. When you put that suit on you're gonna be a different person automatic. Whether you're humble or not. It's the call of the drums.

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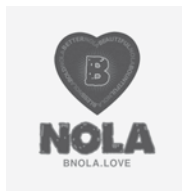
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Blue Lion Karate Academy Celebrates Blue Blue Day

Photos by Terry Jones

It was Blue Blue Day at Blue Lion Karate Academy on Saturday, September 16th. Special guests from NOPD, NOFD, A Women's Place, Arise Academy, musical talents Aaliyah and T-Lions, as well as the sponsors, vendors and political leaders came out to support the Blue Lion Karate kids. Guests were treated to spectacular karate demonstrations by the Blue Lion Karate students. Activities of the day included, a visit with an NOPD horse, learning about hoses on the fire truck, jumping in the spacewalk, and having their professional photos taken. It was a fantastic day of unity in the community. And Data was there!



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

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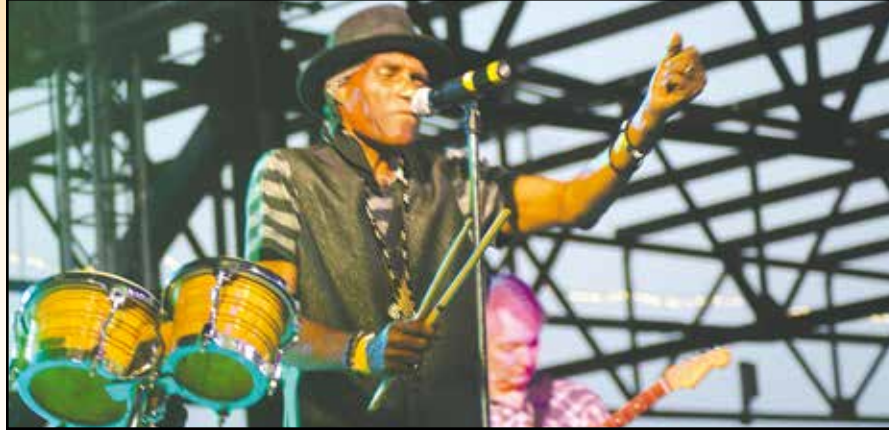
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Jazz in the Park 2017 Season Opens with "Burger Fest"

Photos by Effram Hill

Emmanuel Lain Jr., founder of People United for Armstrong Park recently held the first annual Jazz at the Park "Burger Fest" featuring nationally renowned artists Stephanie Mills and Denise Williams. During this two day event, local legend Cyril Neville also hit the stage along with Los Hombres Caliente, featuring Irvin Mayfield and Bill Summers along with many others at Crescent Park along the Mississippi River. It was a weekend full of food, fun and music and Data News Weekly was there.



ASK OUR CANDIDATES AT MAYORAL FORUM



SBBC SOUTH BROAD
BUSINESS COALITION

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Moderator: Camille Whitworth

In collaboration with

Contact: Olivia Seideman
504 323-4751



Rhodes Pavilion
3933 Washington Ave.
4:00-6:00 PM
Refreshments to follow

Reinstate DACA And Protect Dreamers



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

"As the leaders of communities across the country—individuals and institutions that have seen these young people grow up in our communities—we recognize how they have enriched and strengthened our cities, states, schools, businesses, congregations, and families. We believe it is a moral imperative that the administration and the country know

we are with them. We also join together to send our assurances to Dreamers: we see you, we value you, and we are ready to defend you." – open letter signed by more than 1,800 governors, attorneys general, mayors, state representatives, judges, police chiefs and other leaders

An overwhelming majority of voters – about 85% – are opposed to deporting immigrants who are eligible for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. These "Dreamers," as they are known, were brought into the United States as children, most of them younger than 7. About 90 percent of Dreamers are employed, more than 70 percent have attended college.

Despite widespread support for allowing Dreamers to remain,

the Trump Administration has acquiesced to 10 state attorneys general who threatened to sue if it did not end the program. But even President Trump does not want to deport Dreamers. "Does anybody really want to throw out good, educated and accomplished young people who have jobs, some serving in the military?" he wrote on Twitter. "Really!....."

Sadly, many of the people who voted for him do, and voted for him because he said he would do it. But even among the most hard-core supporters of the President, those who say they "strongly approve" of his performance, only a third favor deportation of Dreamers.

With this kind of support, it's hard to understand why 800,000 hard-working, law-abiding contributing members of society are

in danger of being wrenched from the only country they've ever known. Many do not even speak the language of the countries of their birth.

In addition to the human catastrophe deportation of Dreamers represents, the U.S. would lose about \$460 billion in GDP over the next 10 years and about 700,000 people could lose their jobs.

Earlier this month, fifteen states and the District of Columbia filed a suit seeking to stop the repeal of DACA. Last week, California filed a separate lawsuit, which was joined by Maine, Minnesota, and Maryland. Meanwhile, President Trump has struck a tentative agreement from the House and Senate Minority Leaders to support legislation protecting Dreamers in exchange for enhanced border security

While there is a chance that deportations of Dreamers will not occur, it's shameful that they should be in a position to fear it at all. Dreamers trusted the United States government in enrolling in the program, now that very trust could be used against them. There is no justification for ending the program even as a legislative solution is sought.

Protecting Dreamers is quite simply the right thing to do. It is the moral thing to do. It's the economically sound thing to do. And even though it shouldn't matter, it's the popular thing to do. We urge Congress to immediately pass legislation protecting Dreamers and call upon the Trump administration to reinstate DACA so no Dreamer has to fear deportation from the home they love.

Ask Alma

My Flamboyant Co-Worker Gets on My Nerves



Alma Gill
NNPA Newswire Columnist

Dear Alma,

I come to you as humbly as I know how, because I'm really at an interesting professional intersection. I currently work at a summer camp teaching kids how to cook and my co-teacher is tawdry. We will call this person "Calvin." So, Calvin has been cooking for a while and has a lot of life experiences that add life and joy to our program. If something goes wrong, Calvin is normally the first to help find a solution to keep the integrity of the lesson going. My biggest issue with Calvin is that he is the "King of Change." I feel like he's changing things, just to be included. If we are doing an experiment and we hand the worksheets out first then go outside, Calvin will suggest we go

outside first, then hand out the worksheets. It almost feels intentional. Just this week, we were making waffles and we had the students measuring the ingredients. After lunch Calvin starts pouring unmeasured ingredients in the bowl. I told him I wanted the kids to do that, so they get the chance to be included in the lesson. He said, "Oh, well we can have them do the cinnamon." Then he asked me if he could lead the lesson. Now, this wouldn't normally be a problem, but he had already led the majority of lessons during this camp. He was already in my face and the students are in the classroom, so there wasn't really a chance to resolve the issue without it turning into something else, so, I decided to take break and come back at the end of the group's class period. With every person you meet, Calvin tries to figure out if they know someone there and it feels disingenuous. Sometimes, Calvin talks loud on his cell phone during class lessons, and comes to work with a bonnet on his head; sometimes he'll leave a roller in his hair for part of the day. Calvin just turned 50.

What can I do or say to Calvin? He is a great person, but I'm not sure,

if he's open to constructive criticism. How do I go about telling him how I feel with love and tact?

Sincerely,
Can't Wait 'Til Friday

Dear Friday,

I was working this thing out in my brain and I thought I was on the right track, until I got to this sentence: Calvin just turned 50. Hit the brakes. Hol' up, hol' up, this changes everything. Your story about Calvin reminds of that over-the-top character from the "Martin" sitcom: "I said, Jerome's in the house, watch yo' mouth! Who you talking 'bout, an old school playa from the Himalayas?" Calvin has been doing his thing for a long, long time. Take a seat young one, watch and unlearn. This is summer camp, so you're only in it for a minute, on your way to bigger and better things.

You say Calvin is tawdry, I say Calvin's non-swag is none of your business. Okay, he likes to wear a roller or an earring every now and again. What if Beyoncé did it, you'd call it a trend. LOL.

I have a feeling you are always slammed, glammed and got it going on—on the regular. That's a wonderful thing, this world requires all kinds, but that's not Calvin. Does that mean he can't do his job? No. Does that mean he won't ever be the boss? Yes and that's all right with him.

Calvin sounds like he won't be wearing any skinny jeans any time soon. I ain't mad at him and you've got bigger fish to fry, you are clearly passing through. On those tough "I don't think I can make it days," those kids, potential foodies, chefs,

restaurant entrepreneurs will remember your directions, professionalism and ability to make it look good while you're doing it. I commend you for that. On those "this is too hard, I'm gonna quit days," they'll think about Calvin and say to themselves, if he can do it, I can do it too, face washed, teeth brushed, without a roller in their hair.

Alma Gill's newsroom experience spans more than 25 years, including various roles at USA Today, Newsday and The Washington Post. Email questions to: alwaysaskalma@gmail.com. Follow her on Facebook at "Ask Alma" and Twitter @almaaskalma.



STAR® Honored with the Legal Service Innovation Award

Data Staff Report

The Louisiana State Bar Association announced that Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response®, or STAR®, will be honored with this year's Legal Service Innovation Award. The organization's approach of providing legal services to sexual assault survivors exemplifies innovation in a holistic and comprehensive way of addressing a gap need in services.

STAR launched its legal services program in April of 2015 after being awarded the Legal Assistance for Victims (LAV) Grant from the Office on Violence Against Women. This funding, in the amount of \$500,000 for three years, allowed STAR to develop its specialized legal services geared towards serv-

ing non-intimate partner sexual assault survivors, as well as partner with the LSU Law Center to develop a clinical education course for law students to provide legal representation to sexual assault survivors. This clinic was the first of its kind in the country.

STAR attorneys provide consultation and legal representation to survivors of sexual trauma in the areas of education, employment, family/juvenile law matters, housing, immigration, privacy, public benefits, victim rights, and safety issues. Through its first two years of existence, STAR's legal team has assisted over 230 survivors of sexual violence in over 400 legal matters.

The legal services program at STAR is spearheaded by its vision-



Cherita McNeal, Esq.



Brittany Tassin, Esq.

ary Legal Director, Morgan Laman-dre, Esq., and includes two incredible staff attorneys, Cherita McNeal, Esq. and Brittany Tassin, Esq., all graduates of Southern University Law Center, who work tirelessly to serve survivors of sexual assault throughout the Capital and Greater New Orleans Areas.

In September of 2017, STAR was notified that it was awarded a continuation of LAV funding for the next three years. This grant will allow STAR to continue its exemplary legal program and expand its legal services to the Central Louisiana Region.

The Legal Service Innovation Award will be presented to STAR at the Louisiana Justice Community Conference on Friday, October 13th in Baton Rouge.

Fair Housing Center Files Suit Over Insurance Discrimination Against Voucher Landlords

Data Staff Report

The Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center (GNOFHAC) and a New Orleans landlord filed suit on Monday against Covington Specialty Insurance Company, Mesa Underwriters Specialty Insurance Company, and Hull & Company, Inc. in federal court. The suit alleges the insurance companies discriminate against New Orleans landlords who rent to families utilizing Housing Choice Vouchers (informally known as "Section 8" vouchers). This policy has the effect of making it harder for Housing Choice Voucher holders—who are disproportionately African American, female-headed, and families with children—to access housing.

Dr. Andre Baugh and GNOFHAC are plaintiffs in the litigation. The litigation arose after Covington Specialty Insurance Company canceled Dr. Baugh's liability policy because he disclosed that Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) families occupied five of his eight rental units. Covington, without doing any particular risk analysis, explained

through their agent that it was "not in the business of doing Section 8." Dr. Baugh then sought out a new policy from Mesa Underwriters Specialty Insurance Company only to find that the policy was significantly more expensive than the Covington policy, and that Mesa specifically charged higher rates to insure properties with HCV families than those without. Like Covington, Mesa did not seek any other information about Dr. Baugh's tenants to understand actual risk, and instead relied on broad stereotypes about families receiving housing subsidies. Defendant Hull & Company issued and administered Dr. Baugh's policies with both Covington and Mesa.

After finally securing insurance, Dr. Baugh contacted GNOFHAC, which undertook significant public education and outreach efforts to counteract the insurers' discriminatory policies.

Despite negative stereotypes, New Orleans data shows HCV families are far less transient and are more stable than market-rate renters. According to U.S. Census and

HUD data, 22% of all New Orleans renter households moved in the last year compared to only 7% of HCV families, who stay in their units for an average of over six years.

The HCV Program provides housing subsidies to low-income families seeking housing in the private rental market. In New Orleans, HCV families are concentrated in African American neighborhoods, ensuring that the insurance companies' policies have a discriminatory effect on individual families and entire swaths of the city.

"Stereotypes and assumptions are simply not a valid reason to perpetuate segregation or deny families housing," said GNOFHAC executive director, Cashauna Hill. "We commend Dr. Baugh for coming forward with this complaint and encourage anyone else who suspects they may have been a victim of housing discrimination to contact the Fair Housing Action Center."

GNOFHAC and Dr. Baugh are represented by Relman, Dane & Colfax PLLC, and Dr. Baugh is also represented by Scott, Vicknair, Hair, and Checki, LLC.

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What You Should Know About the Equifax Data Breach

Equifax Data Breach Leaves at least 143 Million Consumers at Risk

By Charlene Crowell
NNPA Newswire

Record-breaking, back-to-back hurricanes in Houston and Florida brought unprecedented winds and rains affecting millions of Americans. Yet another storm just as brutal, but financial in nature, is raging and affects at least 143 million Americans: that's the Equifax data breach that took place from mid-May to July of this year.

On July 29, Equifax, one of the three major credit reporting corporations, discovered that unauthorized data access had occurred. Yet it was not until September 7 when the multinational data breach was announced publicly. This massive cybersecurity breach includes federal income tax records, as well as employee records for government employees and those of Fortune 500 firms. Even recipients of major government programs like Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security are affected.

For consumers, the personal information exposed to fraud and identity theft could mean a lifetime of closely monitoring and defending personal data to fight theft, fines and more. For businesses, questions will emerge as to whether millions of credit accounts were fraudulently opened and additionally whether they will be held partially responsible for its perpetuation.

In reaction to this cybercrime, a surge of federal class action lawsuits are going after Equifax. As many as 50 have been filed in at least 14 states and the District of Columbia as of September 12. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is reportedly examining what went wrong from a criminal perspective. On the civil side of the law, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) is beginning its own independent investigation.



The Equifax data breach affected 143 million Americans. (Wikimedia Commons)

Now a growing number of bipartisan inquiries from Capitol Hill are demanding to know why these breaches of personally identifiable information (PII) came about, what actions Equifax took, and what the global firm intends to do on behalf of consumers whose names, birth dates, addresses, Social Security numbers and drivers' licenses are all in jeopardy. Equifax also knew that an estimated 209,000 credit card holders and some 182,000 consumers in the U.S. who have a dispute on file with a creditor also had comprised PII.

"This hack into sensitive information compiled and maintained by Equifax is one of the largest data breaches in our nation's history and someone has to be held accountable," said Congresswoman Maxine Waters, the Ranking Member of the House Financial Services Committee in an article for "Business Insider."

"Given the important role credit scores play in the lives and financial futures of hardworking Americans, Congress must diligently examine the way our credit reporting agencies are operating and impose additional statutory and regulatory reforms to protect the integrity of the country's credit reporting system," Waters continued.

In a September 11 letter to Richard F. Smith, Equifax's Chairman and Chief Executive Office, the Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee went further to pose a series of questions to be answered by September 26. Issues raised in the letter include binding arbitration clauses that deny affected consumers the right of class action lawsuits, the firm's security systems and controls, how consumers can expect to be officially notified, and what, if any, protections Equifax will offer to affected consumers.

The following day, September 12, another letter to Equifax included questions on what data changes to Equifax's security plans and procedures were made as this breach now becomes its third one in only two years; the letter was signed by 24 Members of Congress, who serve on the House Energy and Commerce Committee and represent 15 states. Three are also members of the Congressional Black Caucus: Representatives G.K. Butterfield of North Carolina, Brooklyn's Yvette Clarke and Bobby L. Rush of Chicago.

"Your company profits from collecting highly sensitive personal information from American consumers—it should take seriously its responsibility to keep data safe and to inform consumers when its protections fail," wrote the representatives.

"The massive Equifax data breach is one of the largest in our

country's history, affecting half of the United States population and nearly three-quarters of consumers with credit reports," said Chi Chi Wu of the National Consumer Law Center. "A security freeze is the most effective measure against 'new account' identity theft, because it stops thieves from using the consumer's stolen information."

To follow Wu's advice, consumers will need to contact all three of the major credit reporting bureaus and request that no new accounts be opened in their names. Once requested, consumers will not be able to easily apply for new credit accounts or apply for a loan. An additional layer of precaution would be to contact every creditor and request that respective accounts be flagged for unusual or new credit activity. Detailed information on how consumers caught in the Equifax breach can take these and other steps to protect their credit is available on the Federal Trade Commission's website.

Congresswoman Waters prefers a legislative approach – one that will ensure this type of financial disaster from happening again. "I have long advocated for an overhaul of our nation's credit reporting system," said Waters, "and I will reintroduce legislation that will enhance consumer protection tools available to minimize harm caused by identity theft."

Speaking directly to consumers, Senator Elizabeth Warren said, "Equifax proves why we must protect your right to join class actions."

Charlene Crowell, the communications deputy director for the Center for Responsible Lending, reports on the Equifax data breach which affected 143 million Americans.

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New York Fashion Week Recap

Mad for Plaid and Patterns! Patterns! Patterns!



Delaney George
Data Fashion & Style
Columnist

This past week in the “Big Apple”, designers from all over the globe swarmed Manhattan to showcase the latest designs in fashion at New York Fashion Week (NYFW). Top designers like Gucci and Chanel were present at the highly anticipated showcase, as well as up and coming brands like Laquan Smith. NYFW brought out the top models, celebrities, and media to cover the fashion-filled two weeks. No theme is particularly followed each year, but in 2017, patterns were the trend of this NYFW Season, both on and off the runway. It seems that the entire fashion world went mad for plaid!

Plaids, stripes, even polka dots were on display on the runways at NYFW. Patterns galore were also on the streets of New York City in between and before shows. Many fashionistas and NYFW affiliates showed off their street style in patterns, classical designs and stripes. Plaid skirts, striped suits,



Lizzy Perridon steps out in style for NYFW wearing an all pink fur coat, grey and black plaid skirt, and a pair of black heels and a black mini purse to match.

and all things pattern was the look to have at this year's New York Fashion Week.

Designer Laquan Smith's entire line this year gave a throw-back school daze aesthetic which



Designer Eric Scholsberg debuts his NYFW 2017 line by dressing model in a baby blue plaid top, and a pleated neon yellow skirt to match. Photos by Delaney George and Lanes Lense

incorporated both patterns and plaids. Smith mixed his line with hints of plaid here and there while still involving solid pops of color. The color pops gave off a highlighting feel to the plaids, which



Designer Laquan Smith's NYFW ensemble. Model wears a yellow plaid top, an army skirt, and ruffled leggings/pants.

fit the trend of this year perfectly.

For more information on New York Fashion Week and the patterns trend, email Delinke@yahoo.com or direct message @Delannii via Instagram.

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