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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

2018 Essence Festival

The Party With a
Purpose Shines
Bright Under New
Leadership

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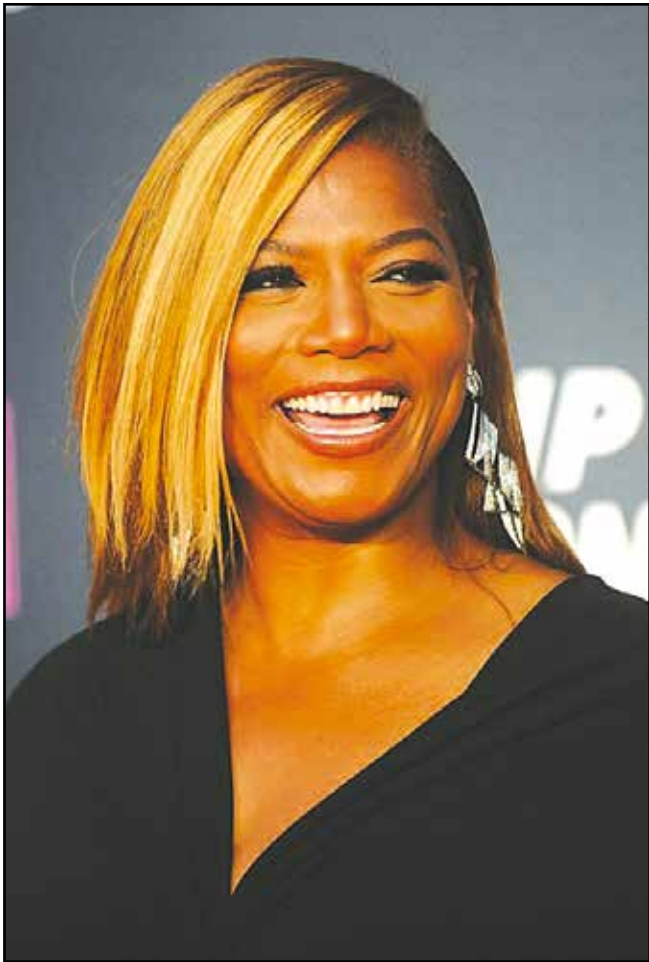
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Essence 2018

The Party With a Purpose Returns Bigger and Better than Ever



Queen Latifah Presents “Ladies First” with Special Guests Missy Elliott, Remy Ma, MC Lyte, Nikki D and more.



The dynamic girl group, Xscape returns this year to Essence Festival which promises to be one of the best ever for music fans.

By Edwin Buggage
Data News Weekly Editor

It is that time a year again where a sea of ebony faces will converge on New Orleans from July 5th thru July 8th for the Party with a Purpose; yes, it is Essence Fest and this year it is bigger and better than ever. Additionally, this has been a year of change and growth where Essence is under new ownership and

is in a transition and headed in a new direction. Data News Weekly caught up with Joy Profet, Essence Communications General Manager and Cori Murray, Essence Entertainment Director, to speak about this year’s festival, the Essence brand, the importance of their platform for Black women, the MeToo Movement and the festival and its connection to New Orleans. Essence Fest continues to grow in its over two decade’s existence; becoming the Premier Summer Fes-

tival in the country and even serving as inspiration for the hit movie Girls Trip. “The festival has grown to four days. First day is our day of service communities throughout the City. We will also be giving out awards to heroines across the City at an event we are having the Ashe’ Cultural Center,” says Profet. Also, as the City recently elected its first Black Female Mayor LaToya Cantrell, Essence feels it is the

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beginning of a new chapter in the relationship with the City of New Orleans. "We are looking forward to Mayor Cantrell and a Kick-off Celebration. The first Black Female Mayor a reader of essence and our platform and we are looking forward to that relationship," remarks Profet of the City's election of LaToya Cantrell to the City's highest office.

2018 Best of the Fest

Headlining acts for this year include Janet Jackson, Mary J. Blige, Erykah Badu, Jill Scott and the Roots an all-female hip-hop set featuring Queen Latifah, Missy Elliott, Remy Ma and MC Lyte. Also, standout artists who have become festival staples Ledisi and Xscape. New Orleans will be represented by DJ Jubilee and Big Freedia who have both taken Bounce Music to new heights, also on deck is the alt hip-hop artist Pell and R&B Newcomer Daniel Caesar, who has taken the music industry by a storm. The festival as always has something for everybody's musical palate and is a blend of classic artist along with new comers who will be



Essence Communications General Manager, Joy Profet

taking the stage in the New Orleans Superdome over the three nights of shows that will always delight.

Since this is a Party with a Purpose, the day programming is meant to inspire, entertain as well as give festival goers a chance to support African-American businesses that are from all over the country. This year's keynote speakers include, Rev. Al Sharpton, Michael Eric Dyson, Tarana Burke, Founder of the MeToo Movement and plenty of others that will leave those in attendance empowered.

100 Percent Black:
New Ownership and
Direction for Essence

Earlier this year Essence, both its magazine and parent lifestyle brand were sold by Time Inc. to a holding company owned by Shea Moisture and Sundial Founder Richelieu Denis. "This acquisition of Essence represents the beginning of an exciting transformation of our iconic brand," said the company's President, Michelle Ebanks, in a press release.

Also, the company now being entirely Black-owned and indepen-

dent is in a position to do new and exciting things with a brand that's been serving African-American women for 50 years. "We are excited to be able to return this culturally relevant and historically significant platform to ownership by people and the consumers whom it serves," said Denis in a press release about his company's acquisition and future plans for Essence.

Joy Profet talks about the synergy between the new owner and the Essence Brand, something that is poised to make the company stronger moving forward. "At the beginning of the year an independent entrepreneur Richelieu Denis, who had a history of working integrally with our community, as the Owner of Shea Moisture Brand and the Sundial slew of Brands. Before he became our owner, he was a client and deeply admired Essence. Additionally, he has five daughters who are fans of Essence and a wife who is a fan as well."

Continuing speaking of the new owner she says, "His entire life been about creating products for women

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of color, so it is great for Essence to join forces of his network of entrepreneurs, promotional platforms into this rich audience of women's network of expertise. They understand the brand and how to invest in brand and its audience which is about, Black women and for Black women. The goal of building an audience of Black women globally. It is existing as we are about the beginning of stages. They are all coming to New Orleans and we look forward to taking the Essence Brand to the next level, making it more relevant and reaching more people."

**Empowerment: The
Essence of what it means
to be a Black woman
in the 21st Century**

Throughout its rich history Essence has been about giving voice to excellence in Black women. "We want to put the spotlight on Black Female Entrepreneurs which is one of the faster growing segments of business owners in America," explains Cori Murray, Essence Entertainment Director while recently in New Orleans. Continuing she says, "We want to continue to tell stories that celebrate women in business, but also talk about their spirituality, self-care, personal finance and how to be beautiful and most of all empowered Black women."

Echoing this holistic approach to telling the story of Black women Profet says, "Our brand is about inspiration and being an advocate for women of color. She has such a weight on her shoulders and this is the voice of her aspirations to tell those stories to be an advocate for Black women in nearly our 50-year period not just at festivals but across the pages of the magazine and all of our platforms."

**New Orleans and the
Future of Essence Fest**

Essence Fest and New Orleans have come to be synonymous with one another over its 24-year history. What was planned as a one-time event has become the go to summer festival last year drawing



New Orleans' fan favorite, Doug E. Fresh returns with Kool Moe Dee, Dres, Whodini, Lady of Rage, YoYo and DJ Captain Charles.

470,000 people to the City, with 200 million dollars in economic impact for the City.

"We have a great relationship with the City. We are positioned quite well, and we will renegotiate our contract with the City in 2019. This will also allow the mayor to have her inaugural this year and help us to create something spectacular for the 25th Anniversary of the fest next year," excitedly says Joy Profet.

Murray also talked about the special connection between Essence Fest and New Orleans and sees no other City as a better fit. "Essence and New Orleans have been connected for 23 of the 24 years we have been doing this festival and it's been a strong bond. New Orleans is such an amazing City with so much history; it is the birthplace of Jazz, you have the food, the vibe of the people and the energy of the City. It is just a great City to walk around and be in. It is a true spiritual connection we have to New Orleans and I don't think we can be any place else."



Essence Entertainment Director, Cori Murray

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The Flavor of New Orleans at Essence Fest

By Edwin Buggage
Data News Weekly Editor

People from all over the globe will be in New Orleans for the Essence Music Festival; they will always leave fed with the spirit of America's most interesting and international City.

During this weekend the City that gave the world Jazz and more recently Bounce Music will be on full display during the Essence Fest.

Percy "Master P" Gives Back to New Orleans

The Party with a Purpose will kick off on Thursday July 5th with a day of service and celebrity basketball game at Xavier University Convocation Center, doors open at 4 PM.

For the second year in a row Entertainment Mogul and Philanthropist Percy "Master P" Miller, through his organization Team Hope NOLA returns to his hometown to give back, inspire and uplift.

Team Hope NOLA will partner with Essence to do a beautification project at the Guste Homes located in Central City, which accommodates 2000 elderly residents. Also, Team Hope NOLA will be honoring Mayor LaToya Cantrell for her dedication and commitment to the community.

Kristi "DJ Sugar Cookie" Coleman keeping the Essence Daytime Experience Lit

On deck during the Essence Daytime Experience is Kristi Coleman, who is most known as the morning Traffic Reporter on Fox 8.

But this beautiful New Orleans sista wears another hat, keeping it lit as DJ Sugar Cookie. She is an event DJ and Personality on New Orleans Cumulus Radio Station Hip-Hop and R&B Power 102.9 She will be at the Convention Center during the Essence Daytime Experience every day during the fest.

The Soulful Sounds of Ledisi Kicks off Essence Fest

The night events begin on the main stage Friday featuring New Orleans own Ledisi, who's in her two decades long career is one of the most talented and versatile vocalists of her generation.



Percy "Master P"



Hip-Hop Legend, Mia X

Hip-Hop Legend Mia X Returns to Essence

After taking part in the Essence Fest last year as part of Master P that showcased the classic hits of NO Limit Records.

The first lady of New Orleans hip-hop Mia X will join rap legend Doug E. Fresh onstage on July 6th.

Pell: Alt Hip-Hop Star Essence Debut

Pell is a New Orleans native who has become an underground hip-hop sensation building a global audience with his infectious brand of alternative hip-hop. Last year he returned to the City of his birth blazing the stage at Voodoo Fest. He will be appearing at the fest on Friday July 6th.

The music that's been around for more than two decades is now finding its place among the top stars in the industry sampling the sounds and dances of New Orleans own Bounce Music.

DJ Jubilee: Bounce Music Pioneer take the Essence Stage

Bounce Music has been making people of NOLA, dance, twerk and shake their thing for over two decades.

This exciting genre is finding itself on the stage at the Essence Fest as one of the pioneers of the music DJ Jubilee is guaranteed to get the party started.

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on page 11.

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Senate Finds Russia did Interfere to Help Trump Win.

Data Staff Edited Report

WASHINGTON — The Senate Intelligence Committee, rejecting doubts conveyed by President Trump as recently as last week, has become the latest body to officially conclude that the Russian government conducted a wide-ranging campaign — including cyberattacks — to influence the 2016 presidential election.

An unclassified seven-page report, released by the committee Tuesday with full bipartisan support, was based on an extensive, year-and-a-half-long investigation into the U.S. intelligence community's January 2017 assessment that the Kremlin carried out its campaign in part for the purpose of promoting Trump's candidacy and discrediting Hillary Clinton.

The committee's conclusion:

The assessment, which had been ordered by President Obama, is a "sound intelligence product" that was prepared by analysts who "were under no politically motivated pressure to reach any conclusions" and was based on a "range of all-source reporting," albeit much of it still classified.

The panel's findings are hardly a surprise. All of those who have reviewed the January 2017 intelligence community assessment — including the most senior officials of the Trump administration — have endorsed the conclusions that the Russians hacked the Democratic National Committee and undertook a wide variety of other measures to interfere in the U.S. election.

The only outlier continues to be the president who, in a tweet written shortly after the announcement he will meet Russian Presi-



An unclassified seven-page report, released by the committee Tuesday with full bipartisan support, was based on an extensive, year-and-a-half-long investigation into the U.S. intelligence community's January 2017 assessment that the Kremlin carried out its campaign in part for the purpose of promoting Trump's candidacy and discrediting Hillary Clinton.

the sources, tradecraft and analytic work underpinning the Intelligence Community Assessment and sees no reason to dispute the conclusions," said Sen. Richard Burr, the panel's Republican chairman. Sen. Mark Warner, the committee's Democratic vice chair, called the intelligence community findings "accurate and on point," adding that the Russian effort was "extensive and sophisticated." Indeed, the committee said that it has learned about new intelligence and analysis that has strengthened the case against the Kremlin's election meddling, including additional information about Russia's attempts to infiltrate state election systems and manipulate social media platforms.

But the report still is likely to frustrate those looking for additional insights into the classified intelligence that led to the intelligence community's original findings. The committee's report provides no insights into the sourcing for the January 2017 document, saying that will be discussed in a classified report, portions of which the panel hopes can be publicly released at a later date.

The disclosure on Tuesday is the second publicly released report growing out of the decision in January 2017 to launch a full-scale investigation into Russia's meddling in the 2016 election and any possible links to the Trump campaign. Its findings about alleged collusion with the Trump campaign, clearly the most controversial part of its inquiry, won't be released for months. What remains unclear is whether the panel will be able to reach a bipartisan consensus on that issue. But the new seven-page report did include a brief reference to the role that the so-called dossier, prepared by former British spy Christopher Steele and alleging extensive collusion between Trump and Russia, played in the intelligence community assessment. The dossier, the committee report said, "did not in any way" inform the intelligence community assessment "because it was unverified information and had not been disseminated as serialized intelligence reporting."

dent Vladimir Putin this month at a summit in Helsinki, once again cast doubt on the findings of his own government.

.... "Russia continues to say they had nothing to do with meddling in our Election!" Trump tweeted on June 28.

In his tweet, he went on to raise questions about the failure of the FBI under former Director James Comey ("Shady James Comey" he called him) to take possession of the DNC's server and then asked: "Why isn't Hillary/Russia being looked at? So many questions, so much corruption."

Whether the new report by the Senate Intelligence Committee will make any dent in the president's view of the matter seems doubtful, in the view of one top Russia expert. "Are you kidding?" replied John Sipher, a former deputy chief of the CIA's Russian operations division. "You think he's going to listen to the senators any more than he'll listen to his own intelligence community?"

The committee, in a press release about the report, emphasized the extent of its inquiry into the issue and the bipartisan nature of its findings. "The committee has spent the last 16 months reviewing



Black-Owned Businesses Are Part of the Fabric of New Orleans

New Orleans welcomes millions of visitors every year who come for the city's food, music, architecture, and world-renowned culture.

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Whether you're a visitor or a local, we encourage you to support one of the many Black-owned businesses across the Crescent City that make New Orleans special.

For a list, scan below or visit NewOrleans.com/blackbusiness.



New Orleans' Legendary Pianist Henry Butler Dead At 69

Data News Weekly Staff Edited
Photos Courtesy of
www.henrybutler.com

Henry Butler, a pianist, singer and cornerstone of the New Orleans sound, died of cancer Monday morning in the Bronx, New York. His death was confirmed by his agent, Maurice Montoya. Butler was 69 years old.

Born Sept. 21, 1948 in New Orleans, La., But-

ler was a prime force in the city's piano tradition — gifted with an exuberant touch and a keen, razor-sharp musicality.

Blind since birth, Butler grew up in the city's Calliope Projects, and taught himself piano by ear. He went on to study classical music at the Louisiana State School for the Blind, where he memorized scores written in Braille and at Southern University, he majored in voice and minored in piano. He also studied with such



exemplars of New Orleans piano as Professor Longhair and James Booker.

Musically, Butler was the heir to his birth city's vital piano tradition, and he passed that tradition along. He taught across the United States and developed a summer camp for visually impaired teenage musicians. That program was depicted in a documentary film that aired on PBS stations in 2010.

Away from the piano, Butler was an enthusiastic photographer — shooting images of scenes described by friends — and pursued that passion for more than three decades, exhibiting his work around the world.

Butler's piano and music collection, along with much of his other possessions, were ruined during Hurricane Katrina. He left his beloved city, and eventually resettled in Brooklyn. But home, in his heart and under his fingers, was always New Orleans.

Butler was diagnosed with advanced-stage cancer last year. All through his illness, however, he kept playing: This May and June, he performed in Beijing, Melbourne and New York, with tour dates scheduled in France and Vienna for later this month.

"His approach was, 'I'm going to keep playing until this thing overtakes me,'" his agent, Maurice Montoya, said. "He was committed to the band, and to the music, and advocating for the art form. That's who Henry is."

Rest in Peace Henry Butler.

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Essence Music Fest Night Time Schedule



Data Staff Edited Report

Friday July 6, 2018

Main Stage

7:00 Doug E Fresh with Special Guest Mia
7:00 Ledisi

Superlounges

7:05 Pell
7:15 Lloyd
7:30 Damien Escobar

Main Stage

7:45 Miguel

Superlounges

8:00 Mykia Jovan
8:30 Doug E Fresh Curation feat. Kool Moe Dee, Dres, Whodini, Lady of Rage, YoYo, DJ Captain Charles
8:30 H.E.R.
8:45 Kelly Price "For the Love of R&B feat. Keke Wyatt and Vaughn Willis
9:00 MC Lyte

Main Stage

9:00 Snoop Dogg
10:00 Erykah Badu, Jill Scott and more in a special curation by the Roots

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New Orleans Must Keep Looking Forward in Education



Walter Isaacson
Professor, Tulane University



Patrick Dobard
CEO, New Schools
for New Orleans

Throughout its history, our hometown of New Orleans, like much of America, has faced a persistent problem: grave educational inequity. In the past thirteen years, New Orleans' educators have decided to tackle it head-on. This summer marks the latest development in New Orleans' educational story—the City reimagining what a school district can be.

We've come a long way in just over a decade. In 2005, Academic Performance in New Orleans was

far behind the rest of the nation, and facilities were crumbling. A few years before, one high school had no working fire alarm system, and had to hire people as “fire watchers” to monitor for signs of flame. Another lost nearly all its textbooks to a leak in the ceiling. Of 68 parishes in Louisiana, New Orleans ranked 67th in performance.

Racial injustice played no small part in the problem; resources were unevenly divided, and students suffered. On the 2004 state standardized test, the gap between Black and White students' scores in New Orleans was double the size of the gap statewide. We needed change.

When Hurricane Katrina hit, the problem grew deeper. Schools were flooded, and materials washed away—damage to buildings alone was estimated at over \$800 million. Sixty-four thousand students were displaced.

The fall of 2005, schools began to reopen. In November, the Recovery School District, or RSD, launched in 2003 to support Louisiana's underperforming schools, received oversight of most of New Orleans' schools. In the years that followed, many became charters—public, open-enrollment schools organized around a “charter” that laid out its vision. They were accountable to the district but governed by their

own board.

With more flexibility to use funds and design programming, many schools flourished and grew. Teachers created innovative classroom models. School leaders tried out new designs for the school day. Families and alumni got involved, bringing the best of tradition alongside big hopes for the future. Things weren't perfect, but there was undeniable progress.

In 2004, for instance, 60% of New Orleans' students went to a school ranked in the bottom tenth of performance statewide. In 2017, only 11% did. In 2005, just 37% of high school graduates enrolled in college in the fall. Last year, that number was up to 61%.

These numbers mark growth, but not victory. All students must attend great schools, and all seniors should graduate ready for college or a career. This summer, we take a critical step in building that reality—by unifying all the City's public schools back to local control.

On July 1st, the RSD returns New Orleans' Schools to the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB). In doing so, they create a powerful new governing structure, one that's replicable nationally.

In the new OPSB, funding and focus moves closest to children themselves. Ninety-eight percent of their

funds go straight to schools—compared to just eighty-five or ninety percent in many districts nationwide, who spend more on central office administration.

OPSB will be smaller than before, because teachers teach students—bureaucracy doesn't. Going forward, charter boards and school teams will continue to manage the day-to-day operations of their own schools. The remaining roles for the elected Orleans Parish School Board and district leadership target what they'll do best. They'll follow a clear plan to manage enrollment, resources, and facilities. They'll authorize new charters and expand successful ones. They'll set standards and make sure schools hold up their end of the bargain. They'll help expand early childhood programs and special education services.

They will also harness community resources to support students beyond the classroom. This is critical. Reports have shown that New Orleans' young people show symptoms of PTSD at a rate three times the national average, and that 83% of our public-school students are economically disadvantaged, compared to roughly half nationwide.

The new OPSB will lean on a network of resources to support our young people. They'll leverage or-

ganizations that work with students with mental health challenges or those involved in the justice system. They'll connect with partners that help students find internships and career opportunities.

The OPSB is poised for success. Next, the unified system of schools must use its structure as platform for more change. We must ready students to reach their dreams beyond our classrooms. When schools return to local control in July, we bring that day closer by drawing on the greatest experts we have—educators, parents and students themselves.

In a rebuilding effort filled with local, national, and global leaders, our students have impressed us most of all. They are brilliant. They are brave. They are generous. Not so long from now, they'll usher in an era of innovation we can't imagine yet.

We owe them schools that prepare them to lead the way.

Walter Isaacson, former CEO of the Aspen Institute, is a professor of history at Tulane University and a member of the New Orleans Planning Commission. He served on the Louisiana Recovery Authority after Hurricane Katrina.

Patrick Dobard, former superintendent of the Recovery School District, is CEO of New Schools for New Orleans.

Newsmaker, Continued
from page 5.

Big Freedia: Diva of Bounce, Get Ready for a Twerk-Out

This year will also feature New Orleans own Big Freedia, who will perform two shows in the Super Lounge on the July 8th. Over the past few years Freedia's name have become synonymous with Bounce Music and is the ambassador for the music across the globe.

Freedia has also a legion won legions of fans including that's led to collaborations with chart topping artists Beyonce' and Drake.

Freedia also has a top-rated TV show on the Fuse Network. Essence Fest will witness the high energy of a Freedia Show for the first time. It will be a twerk out to the sounds that while familiar to New Orleans-



Big Freedia

ans is now sweeping the nation and the world.

While you are at the Essence

Fest Data News says check out some of the local flavor and enjoy your time in New Orleans.



Pell

A Letter from America's Children

By Ron Harris
NNPA Newswire Guest
Columnist

Dear U.S. Media, Democrats, Republicans, Independents and to the concerned Americans who poured out into the streets to protest Donald Trump's cruel and faulty immigration policies,

What about us?

We understand and applaud your response to this administration's malevolent separation of immigrant families from their children—policies and practices so un-American and shocking that they have come to dominate the national conversation. Your immediate, visceral response to evil spurred you into action.

But there is another evil, a pervasive, chronic and unrelenting wickedness that we, your children, live with every day. We are being shot down on the nation's streets, locked away in juvenile facilities, poisoned by dangerous drinking water, threatened and harassed by neighborhood gangs, left homeless, either alone from abuse or



with parents that cannot afford to put a roof over our heads. We live in neighborhoods bereft of adequate food sources and with fathers and mothers so wrought with financial and psychological instability they can't provide our needs.

And because our nation has lived with this reality so long, it has be-

come almost accepted. It has become quietly and unconsciously perceived as part of the norm, part of the landscape, like the air we breathe, until little by little it becomes so caustic that it kills us or chokes us into action. Unfortunately for us, your children, you haven't reached that point.

There are 408,000 of us, American children, who also have been separated from our families and placed in the care of others, like the 2,000 immigrant children who you took to the streets to protect. Many of us languish in foster care with little hope of ever being united with our parents or extended families.

As we watched the huge crowds that stretched across 700 U.S. cities Saturday. We saw the signs proudly held high that read, "Family Separations Are Cruel." And we thought, "Yes, they are." What about us? Where is our march? Where is our media coverage?

Half of us currently in foster will be homeless within six months after growing too old for the system. We are unprepared to live on our own. We have limited education and no social support. About a quarter of the rest will be homeless within two to four years of leaving the system. Some of us will become part of the 20,000 U.S. children annually forced into prostitution.

Another two million of us this year will be separated from our families and placed behind bars and in juvenile custody. Many of us, like Clarice, one of twin 14-year-old sisters in Montgomery County, Md., can't go home because there is no suitable home to go to. Her parents are homeless, and authorities can't release her to an unstable home. Other parents are dysfunctional or can't provide the guidance we need. So, we go behind bars because there are not enough treatment facilities for us.

We want a march, too, one for better schools for all, because you recognize how the hopelessness created by faulty education diminishes lives and leads to incarceration—that 32 percent of white males in juvenile custody dropped out of school, and that nearly half of African-American and Hispanic male youth behind bars also quit.

Media reported how families from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico are fleeing to the U.S. to escape gangs in their countries. Many of us live in gang-infested neighborhoods, too. In cities like St. Louis, Baltimore, New Orleans, Detroit, Cleveland, Las Vegas, Kansas City, Mo., Memphis, Newark and Chicago, the 10 U.S. cities with the highest murder rate, we have long understood their terror. We understand their fear.

In Chicago, a city rife with street gangs and where at least 16 children have been murdered in the first six months of this year, more than 50,000 people demonstrated for the rights of immigrants fleeing gangs in countries few of them have ever visited.

Commentary,
Continued on page 14.

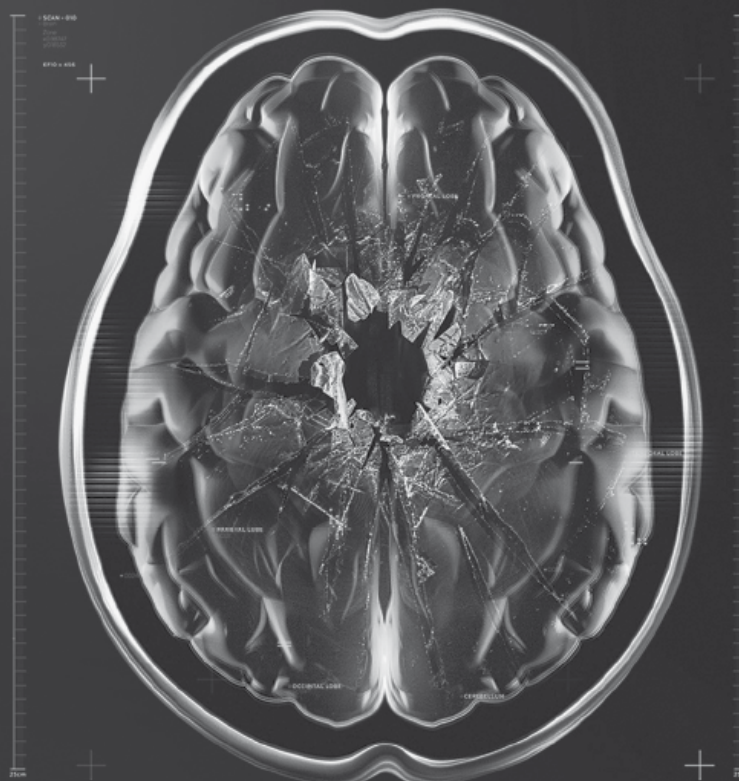
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Giffords Endorses Representative Cedric Richmond for Reelection

The Endorsement Comes as Part of Giffords' #VoteCourage Campaign to Elect Gun Reform Candidates Nationwide

Data Staff Edited Report

Giffords, the Gun Safety Organization founded by former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and Captain Mark Kelly, announced its endorsement of Congressman Cedric Richmond for reelection. Richmond now joins a growing list of endorsed candidates supported by Giffords in 2018, as part of the organization's #VoteCourage campaign, an effort to elect gun safety champions. The organization expects to announce additional endorsements in the weeks and months to come.

Former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, co-founder of Giffords:

"America experienced three of the deadliest mass shootings in modern history in just the past year. Over 38,000 people in our country were killed by a gun. Louisiana has not been immune to this deadly crisis: somebody is killed by a gun in Louisiana every 8 hours. Despite this devastating reality, the gun lobby has used its cash and influence to stifle any attempts to pass laws on Capitol Hill to make our schools, streets, and communities more safe.

"The American people are outraged and tired of inaction. They



Congressman Cedric Richmond (LA-02)

are ready to use their power to demand that the leaders we elect to represent us are committed to creating a world where gun violence is not a daily problem. Voters are calling for leaders who will always put protecting the safety of our communities first, not themselves, and certainly not the gun lobby.

"Representative Richmond has

acknowledged the devastating toll of our nation's gun violence crisis, and he is working tirelessly to combat it. His passion, leadership, and dedication as a leading gun safety champion will be critical for our next victories in Congress to save lives and prevent future tragedies.

Giffords is proud to endorse Cedric Richmond, a leader who has the courage stand up to the corporate gun lobby and who will never stop working to make Louisiana communities safer."

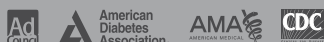
Congressman Cedric Richmond (LA-02) was a member of


the Louisiana House of Representatives for 10 years, during which he sponsored a bill to ban assault weapons. Richmond was elected to Congress in 2011, where he currently serves as Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus. Congressman Richmond supports expanding background checks, restarting federal research into gun violence, and banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. Congressman Richmond also voted against concealed carry reciprocity legislation, voting to protect public safety by preventing permit holders from carrying hidden, loaded guns across state lines. We are proud to endorse Congressman Cedric Richmond for Congress in 2018.

Giffords' #VoteCourage campaign aims to elect gun safety advocates to Congress and defeat politicians who have historically worked against gun reform, or done nothing at all to prevent gun violence. The political program targets incumbents in mostly suburban districts and uses a mixture of TV and digital advertising, on-the-ground organizing, and a voter registration push to create momentum for meaningful progress on gun safety.

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Moody's Investors Service Raises Outlook on State's Credit to Stable

BATON ROUGE, LA - Moody's Investors Service has raised the outlook on the state's credit from negative to stable, according to State Treasurer John M. Schroder.

In a report issued today, Moody's said the state's outlook improved because of "the recent stabilization of the state's economic base and recurring, albeit time-limited solutions to large structural budget gaps."

"This is good news, but we have much more work to do to implement structural reforms to our budget," said Treasurer Schroder. "The fiscal cliff was mainly solved on the revenue side, now it's time to get to work on the spending side of the problem. Extending temporary taxes for the next seven years with no real structural reforms doesn't



sit well with me."

Moody's stated that factors that could lead to a rating upgrade include a significant increase in budgetary reserves, a sustained trend of structural budget balance, and long-term growth and diversification of Louisiana's economy.

The state's bond rating is similar to an individual's credit rating. The better the rating, the cheaper it is for the state to borrow money for infrastructure and other projects.

The state's bonds are currently rated Aa3 with a stable outlook from Moody's.

Commentary, Continued from page 12.

Ironically, they never marched for the children slain this year in a city they traverse every day: Maysia Woodard, 12 mos.; Damarcus Wilson, 16; Deshawn James, 17; Rhomel Wellington, 17; Mateo Nathan Aguayo, 2; Joseph Smith, 16; Jose Aguilar, 14; Jayton Jones, 17; Erin Carey, 17; She'Vaughn O'Flynn, 12; Jechon Anderson, 11; China Lyons-Upshaw, 17; David Thomas 16; Parris Purdis, 17; Kyle McGowan, 17, and Jazmyn Jester, 15, who was among four people murdered and 13 others shot over 17 hours on a Tuesday and a Wednesday in May.

Where do families like theirs emigrate to escape the violence?

Many of us live in poverty, one of every four children in Arizona, Georgia, California, Kentucky, Texas, Nevada, New Mexico and New York, one in three in the nation's capital. At least 2.5 million of us will spend some period of life this year homeless; maybe a month, maybe six months or maybe the whole year. Most of us will spend at least one day every month without food.

Look at us. Pivot your cameras and microphones to us, as well. We are your children, and there is real evil that plagues us too.

What about us?

Ron Harris is a Journalist, Adjunct Professor at Howard University and co-author of the new book *The Black and The Blue, A Cop Reveals Crimes, Racism and Injustice in America's Law Enforcement*.

Night Time, Continued from page 10.

Saturday July 7, 2018

Mainstage

7:00 Doug E Fresh with Special Guest V. Bozeman

Superlounges

7:00 Ella Mai
7:15 Kelela
7:30 Yanina
7:45 Jussie Smollett

Main Stage

7:45 Xscape

Superlounges

8:05 Serani
8:15 Daniel Ceasar
8:30 For the Soul featuring Kevin Ross, Major and Marsha Ambrosius

Main Stage

8:40 Queen Latifah Presents "Ladies First" with Special Guests Missy Elliott, Remy Ma, MC Lyte, Nikki D and More

Superlounges

9:00 Idris Elba

Main Stage

10:10 Mary J. Blige

Sunday July 8, 2018

Main Stage

7:00 Doug E. Fresh

Superlounges

7:10 DJ Jubilee
7:15 Ro James
7:30 Louis York

Main Stage

7:45 Teddy Riley New
Jack Swing Curation
featuring SWV,
Blackstreet, Guy and
more

Superlounges

8:00 Victory Boyd
8:15 Mali Music
8:30 Big Freedia
8:50 DVSN
9:40 Big Freedia

Main Stage

9:55 Fantasia
10:40 Janet Jackson



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AND DRIVERS.**

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NNPA Honors Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr., with Lifetime Legacy Award

“Conscience of the Nation” Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr., Honored with 2018 Lifetime Legacy Award

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Reverend Jesse L. Jackson Sr. received the highest honor presented by the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) at its annual convention in Norfolk, Virginia.

The legendary activist received the NNPA Lifetime Legacy Award for his decades of service as one of the country's foremost civil rights, religious and political figures.

After a video tribute that chronicled Jackson's life and a surprise solo performance of “Hero,” by Jackson favorite, Audrey DuBois Harris, the iconic preacher accepted the award from NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., and NNPA Chairman Dorothy R. Leavell.

“I'm not easy to surprise,” Jackson told the crowd, which gave him a standing ovation as he headed to the podium to accept the honor.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom winner, Jackson has been called the “Conscience of the Nation,” and “The Great Unifier,” challenging America to be inclusive and to establish just and humane priorities for the benefit of all.

Born in 1941 in Greenville, South Carolina, Jackson began his theological studies at Chicago Theological Seminary, but deferred his studies when he began working full time in the Civil Rights Movement alongside Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“This honor takes on a special meaning for me because my first job was selling the ‘Norfolk Journal and Guide’ newspaper and then the ‘Baltimore AFRO-American’ and then the ‘Pittsburgh Courier,’” Jackson said of the iconic Black-owned



Reverend Jesse Jackson, Sr. (center) accepts the 2018 NNPA Lifetime Legacy Award from NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. (left) and NNPA Chairman Dorothy Leavell, during the 2018 NNPA Lifetime Legacy Award Black Tie Gala in Norfolk, Va. (Freddie Allen/AMG/NNPA)

newspapers. “We couldn't see the other side of Jackie Robinson. We couldn't see the other side of Sugar Ray Robinson,” he said, noting that the Black Press told the full stories of those sports heroes.

He reminisced about the fateful night in Memphis in 1968 when an assassin's bullet cut down King.

“I was with Dr. King on that chilly night in Memphis and I went to the phone to talk to Mrs. King. I couldn't really talk,” he said. “I told her, ‘I think Dr. King was shot in the shoulder,’ even though I knew he was shot in the neck. I just couldn't say it.”

During the General Motors-sponsored ceremony, Leavell and Chavis said Jackson has carried King's legacy well.

“We still need him,” Leavell said of Jackson.

Chavis called Jackson a “long-distance runner who's made a difference not only in this country, but all over the world.”

Leavell recalled Jackson's his-

toric run for the presidency in 1984 in a campaign that registered more than 1 million new voters and catapulting Democrats in their successful effort to regain control of the Senate.

Four years later, Jackson ran again, this time registering more than 2 million new voters and earning 7 million popular votes.

“It's a wonder that my neighbors didn't call the police the night he gave that iconic speech at the Democratic National Convention [in 1984],” said Leavell, whom Jackson presided over her wedding ceremony more than 40 years ago. “There was so much emotion that night that I felt, they told me that I could be anything that I wanted to be,” Leavell said, pointing to Jackson and photographers flocked to take pictures of the civil rights leader while holding his coveted NNPA award.

Dubois Harris said Jackson is a “King of a man,” and, although she had been under the weather all

week, nothing would stop her from attending Jackson's big night, she said.

“We stand on his shoulders,” DuBois Harris said. “He continues to be a pioneer of civil rights and humanity and he's all that's good and right in the world.”

Over decades, Jackson has earned the respect and trust of presidents and dignitaries and his Rainbow PUSH organization has aided countless Black and minority families with various struggles.

But his work not only has helped the poor or minorities.

In 1984, Jackson secured the release of captured Navy Lt. Robert Goodman from Syria, and he also help shepherd the release of 48 Cuban and Cuban-American prisoners in Cuba.

Jackson was the first American to bring home citizens from the United Kingdom, France, and other countries who were held as human shields by Saddam Hussein in Kuwait and Iraq in 1990.

He also negotiated the release of U.S. soldiers held hostage in Kosovo and, in 2000, Jackson helped negotiate the release of four journalists working on a documentary for Britain's Channel 4 network who were held in Liberia.

Jackson said President Trump should and can be defeated, with the aid of the Black Press, who this year has led a drive to register 5 million new African-American voters.

“The first time I saw an image of Black achievement was in the Black Press,” Jackson said. “Today, the Black Press is more important than ever. This is the season of ‘Fake News,’ but we need the truth now more than ever.”

This article was originally published at BlackPressUSA.com.

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The wait is over! Chevrolet and the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) are proud to announce our six Fellows selected for Discover the Unexpected (DTU) 2018 - a life-changing journalism fellowship.

Chosen from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) nationwide, our DTU 2018 Fellows each receive a \$10,000 scholarship, \$5,000 stipend and a journalism adventure in the 2018 Chevrolet Equinox.

Our DTU 2018 Fellows are geared up and ready to go discover stories of inspiration and innovation in our African American communities. Follow us and show our HBCU students some love along the way. The journey begins!



NNPA.ORG/DTU

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