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New Orleans

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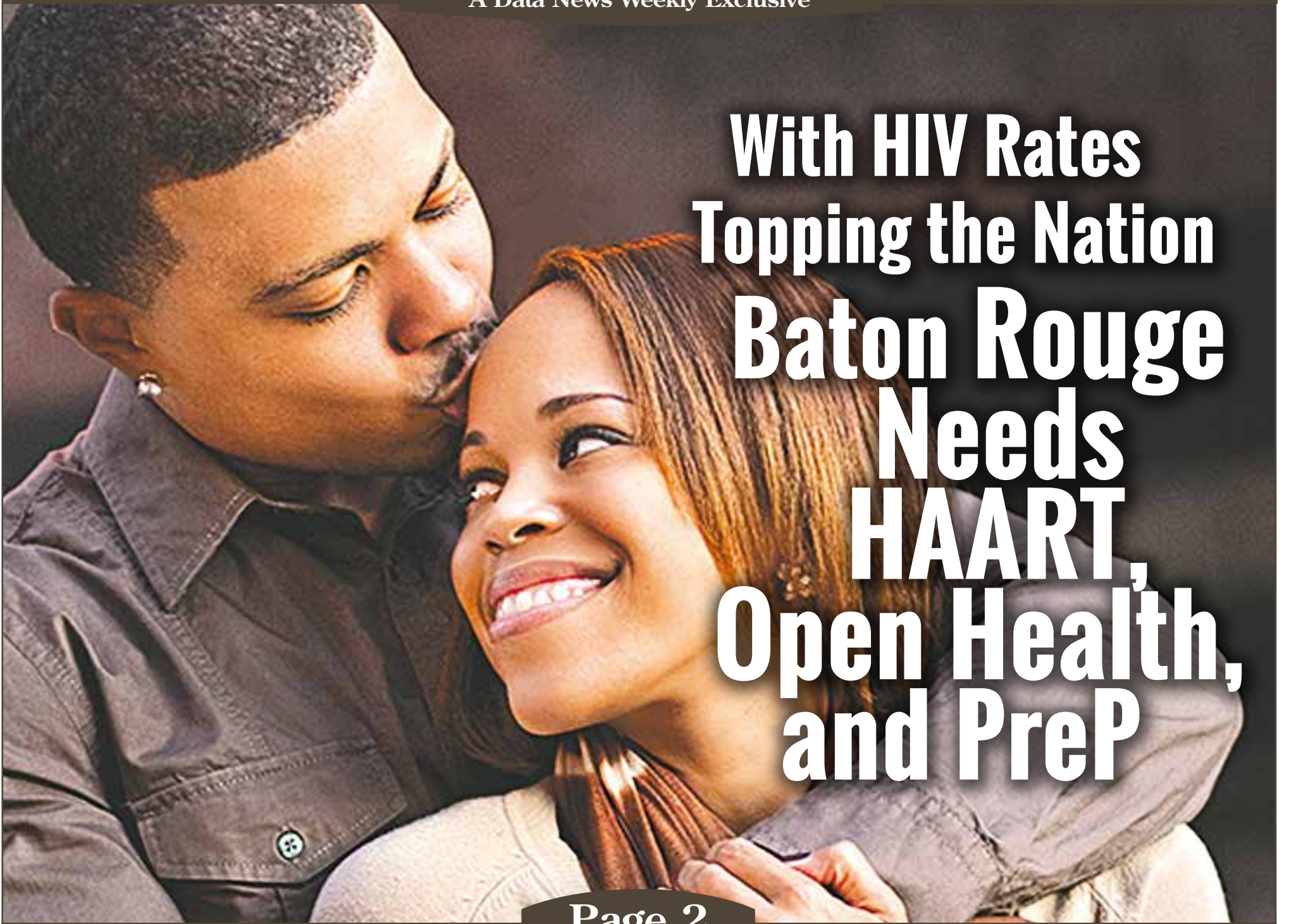
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With HIV Rates Topping the Nation, Baton Rouge Needs HAART, Open Health, and PreP



Eugene Collins, Director of Prevention for HAART

By Candace J. Semien
Data News Weekly Contributor / The DRUM Newspaper

BATON ROUGE—The HIV AIDS Alliance for Region Two, Inc., or HAART, is the 19th largest nonprofit in the state, with a budget of more than \$25 million.

But with an HIV AIDS population of more than 5,000 people in the nine-parish Baton Rouge region, and more than 20,000 people in state, the need for HAART services far surpasses its budget.

“We have been assisting those with HIV for nearly three decades and it’s been an uphill challenge from the beginning,” said Tim Young, HAART CEO.

In 1995 when HAART first opened its doors, the medical community was focused on keeping people with HIV alive. Since then, doctors and researchers have learned to treat HIV more effectively, which means fewer people are dying and people are living longer with their disease, said Young.

“When I began working at HAART, new medica-

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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

tions were literally getting people out of their death beds," he said.

Many people were seeing health improvements from the new medications that were becoming available, but many still were not, and even those who did often experienced serious side effects. Today, the medications are so effective that someone who acquires HIV can have a normal life expectancy if they adhere to an effective medication regimen.

"Now, we are learning how to assist people who have been living with HIV for as long as HAART has been in existence. That's an amazing advancement. We assist many to cope with the challenges of helping to raise their grandchildren, something many thought would never be possible," Young said.

HAART's original role was to anticipate the services people living with HIV needed and weren't receiving and to serve as the fiscal agent for Ryan White Funding in the Baton Rouge area with other organizations to provide direct services. "The first thing we did was to recognize the need for a larger network of providers to serve an increasing number of people who were living with HIV disease with the advent of new effective medications. In the late '90s, we added Volunteers of America, Family Service of Greater Baton Rouge, and Care South to the network of Ryan White funded providers."

These relationships aid HAART in providing medical treatment, medication assistance, and case management to assist patients in navigating the Health Care System. HAART also provides medical transportation, dental services, and mental health services.

HAART has established Baton Rouge's Open Health Care Clinic, located at 3801 North Blvd., to expand medical services and serve the wider community. "Over the past three decades we've built an enduring community asset and positioned it to become an integral part of the Health Care Network for decades to come," Young said. "HAART has grown from a small organization, coordinating funding for a network of providers for a single disease, to one of the largest Community Health Centers in the state, poised to grow its own net-



The newest weapon against HIV is a one-a-day pill called PrEP. This Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis pill is a daily dosage of the HIV medication Truvada.



Tim Young, CEO of Open Health Clinic and HIV/AIDS Alliance for Region Two Inc, talks with nurse at the Baton Rouge based clinic.

work of clinics across the city, serving both children and adults from every walk of life."

"The day of novel treatments is actually already here. Early on, patients had a complex medication regimen that was difficult to achieve and often had side effects, some almost as serious as the disease itself. Multiple pills, some with and some without food, every four hours meaning interrupted sleep and other complications were nor-

mal. Now, for most with HIV, treatment is one pill once a day. That's remarkable when you consider how far we've come in a relatively short period of time, although a lifetime for some and sadly too late for others. And they achieve complete viral suppression, so no more damage can be done to themselves by the virus and they can't transmit it to others," Young said.

But, in a city with the highest rates of newly diagnosed HIV cases

in the nation, is HAART positioned to slow down the spread of the virus that cause AIDS? Young explained, "Despite the educational messages, many continue to participate in risky behaviors which expose themselves and others to HIV transmission. We've always relied on people changing their behavior and now we have a bio-medical preventative that can protect them even if they don't take other measures to protect themselves.

HIV Medication

"It works a little like birth control (pills) where a person takes it every day to stop the virus from attaching to the immune system if they become exposed," said Eugene Collins, Director of Prevention for HAART.

"HIV disease is not just a threat to those who acquire it, but to potentially much larger numbers of people if left unchecked. It's our responsibility to assist persons with HIV, not only to improve their personal health, but to ensure they don't pass it on to others," Young said.

After testing positive, Baton Rouge residents are provided services through HAART's Red-Carpet Linkage Program that gets them connected "immediately" with medical and mental health appointments, employment assistance, and housing. "We provide a total continuum of care, medically and socially," said Collins.

According to Young, the strongest tools for HAART are the dedication and commitments of the non-profit's board and staff. "We bring strong technical skills in the areas of medicine, psychology, finance, and marketing to bring awareness about the epidemic in our community and the solutions to limit and reduce its growth. Our new PrEP Program, our new Opioid-Abuse Outreach Program and the broad spectrum of health and wellness services we bring to our patients are our strengths, thereby strengthening the community," he said.

HAART has survived for 22-years despite the constantly changing health care environment, and HIV care changes even more than health care in general.

"We've been successful as a health care resource because we've been guided by a strong community-based board of directors, made up of experienced professionals who help us to look ahead and chart a successful vision for the future. Health care will continue to evolve, and HAART will adapt to change so we may continue to pursue our mission and commitment to our community. I'm confident of that," said Young who is also CEO of the Open Health Clinic.

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NOLA City Council Honors Tim Green



Photos by Kichea S. Burt
Data News Weekly Contributor

The family of the late Saxophonist Tim Green, member of the Neville Brothers receive proclamations from the New Orleans City Council on October 4, 2018.

Jerome Smith Addresses Trump's Disrespect Before NOLA City Council



Photos by Kichea S. Burt
Data News Weekly Contributor

Jerome Smith of Tambourine and Fan, a community group in New Orleans working with youth, speaks to the NOLA City Council about the recent disrespect displayed by President Donald Trump, towards black boys and their mothers', by making very derogatory statements in reference to young black football players on playgrounds. Mr. Smith requested the Council address this issue, and also make sure the children of the city know what the Council has done and will do in this situation.



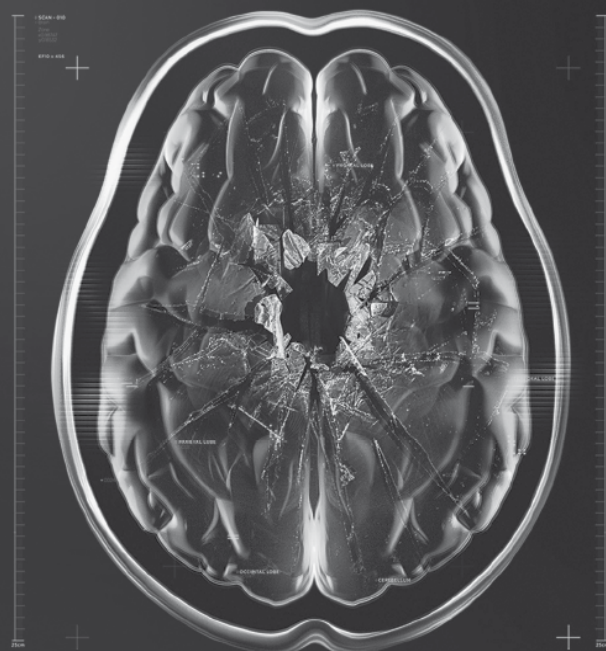
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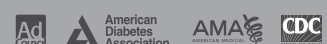
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Telling Black Stories Through Poetry

By Piper Thurman
Data News Weekly
Contributor

As a child in between, born into an interracial family, Poet Michele Reese knew she wanted to write about the Black experience with works that delved into African American history, from very early on.

She bared the words from her soul in front of a room full of young writers with her son sitting in the front row as she read from her first published book of poems, *Following Phia*, which indirectly focuses on her journey through life, sexuality, race, motherhood, and other topics.

"My home sits in sandy soil, where once indigo was caked in lye, I've painted my children's walls haint blue to keep them safe from mosquitoes and restless spirits," she said. "They have been fed from my breasts, bathed in tepid water to bring down fevers, inoculated, taught to swim... I have done all the things that mothers do to tether their children," Reese read at Xavier University's Fall Literary Reading series on Oct. 4th.

Reese started her writing journey very similarly to other writers. It was one of her own teachers in middle school that inspired her to pick up the pen and write what she was feeling, whether it was about what she ate that morning, or how she was feeling about rainy mornings in West Virginia. All she knew was that she had to write.

"It was my own English teacher in seventh grade that made me write a poem," she said, "I'm pretty sure it was for an assignment, but I haven't stopped writing ever since. I had no clue it would be paying my bills today," Reese said.

As the daughter of a Jamaican Immigrant, Reese began to tell stories through her poetry that dealt with race, intersection, gender, sexuality, slavery, and much more. These very stories where things not just about slaves and their struggles, but also about her own Jamaican family heritage.

Although she grew up in West Virginia, a mostly White-populated state, Reese never lost sight of her Jamaican roots. She was determined to begin writing poetry that dealt with African-American history, symbolism, and culture. It helped her to connect with the



Poet Michele Reese reads from her 2018 book of poems, *Following Phia* on Oct. 4. (Photo by Piper Thurman)

Black experience.

"I am tired of being beneath him. I cannot wait to escape," Reese read from one of her poems, discussing the rapes of African-American enslaved women.

Although these topics were not always so easy to discuss, read, or write about, that did not stop her from writing about them. These were messages she believed needed to be talked about, especially ones about race and gender. She felt drawn to these topics because of the Jamaican blood running through her veins.

As a way to branch out and get away from West Virginia, the poet went to the University of Southern California, where she earned a bachelor's degree in creative writing/poetry and print journalism in 1994. She then went on to graduate school and then earned her doctorate in 2000. The poet's latest work, *Following Phia*, was published earlier this year and focuses on the journey of her life, both spiritually and intellectually. Reese discusses her travels, her love of being a mother, her heritage, and much more throughout the book.

"As the child of an immigrant, a Jamaican Immigrant at that, race was something I really wanted to tackle in my writing," Reese said.

She often wished she had poems that were light-hearted, and a little less serious, but she never stopped writing them because she knew the Black experience is never an easy

subject. She wanted her readers to really connect with the struggles and the joys of being Black.

"I wish I had some more funny poems," Reese said. "But a poet named Pat Parker wrote a powerful piece titled, 'Where Would I Be,' and that kind of made me realize we have to have the courage to stand up for what we believe in and as a writer I think that's very important," she said.

Some of Reese's poems have been published in several journals like *The Oklahoma Review*, *Poetry Midwest*, *The Tulane Review*, and *Hand in Hand: Poets among others*. She also is a former writer for *The Watering Hole*. The organization, founded by Candace G. Wiley, a Clemson University Professor in 2009, first started off as a small Facebook group. Since then, it has attracted dozens of members and


their writers have earned numerous awards.

As a writer, there is a very slim chance your work will get published, Reese said, because someone must find it and fall in love with it.

"If you are a writer, even if you just started, do not give up. Believe in yourself and in your writing, even if no one else does," Reese said. "Continue telling those stories that people are afraid to tell because they deserve to be heard. Just like news reporters, poets tell stories," she added.

Young writers like David Evans, a Xavier student, said that as a frequent writer himself, he couldn't help but feel touched not only by Reese's work, but by her sincerity as a writer.

State & Local,
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Gentilly Fest October 12th thru 14th Showcasing the Best of New Orleans Music, Food and Fun for the Entire Family to Enjoy

Edwin Buggage
Editor

Pontchartrain Park in New Orleans is a historic Neighborhood, where middle-class African-Americans live, love and prosper. Today this is still a thriving community that is a source of great pride in the Crescent City.

For the last decade the Gentilly Fest, brings people from around the City into this historic community for a weekend of food fun and music. This year on October 12th -14th will bring together thousands of people for the three-day event.

"It began as a fundraiser immediately following Hurricane Katrina to support first responders and neighborhood playgrounds," says festival founder Gretchen Bradford. "But we soon found out it was much greater than that. It's a celebration, but it is also a reunion, uniting family and friends back together former residents who have moved away have made Gentilly Fest a vacation destination as well for people to re-connect."

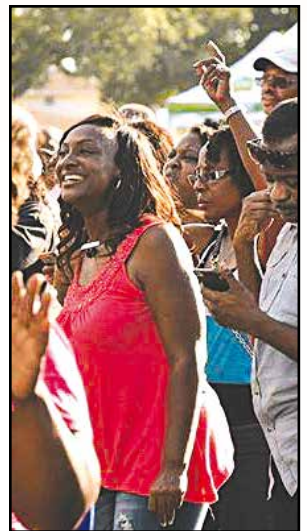
As are all festivals in New Orleans, there will be food and plenty of it. There are over 20 local vendors that will be serving up a variety of dishes



guaranteed to please the palate of festival goers.

Bradford says there will be all types of food for people to enjoy, "Just some of the delicious food we will have includes: Grilled Blue Crabs, Oysters, Soft shell crab & fried shrimp po'boys, Seafood loaded fries, Curry Goat, Vegan Tacos, Fried Chicken wings, greens, butter beans, Deep fried Oreos, Beignets and so much more."

Last Year's fest was cancelled due to inclement weather, but



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this year there will be many new things happening at the fest, "Because of the cancellation last year we are combining our 10th & 11th Year Anniversary," says Bradford. "Also, on Saturday, October 13th starting at 11am, we are kicking off with a celebration parade starting at Walmart parading all the way to the Festival. We are also highlighting our 10th Year Commemorative Anniversary Poster. Also, before our closing act on Saturday night we will have a spectacular fireworks display."

The festival grounds will also feature over 30 vendors who will have for sale jewelry, art, clothing and much more. The festival will also feature three stages of live music ranging from R&B, Gospel, Jazz, Hip-Hop, Bounce and much more.

Given this is a family friendly event there will be a Kid's stage that will feature various dance teams and local musicians. In the Kid's Village activities will also include: horseback riding, rock climbing, storytelling and much more.

It is a festival that is truly something that's been created for local people to come out and enjoy a weekend of family fun. "This festival is unique because it is homegrown and produced by passionate volunteers who are residents of Gentilly and who care about maintaining and sharing the rich culture of this rich and historic community."

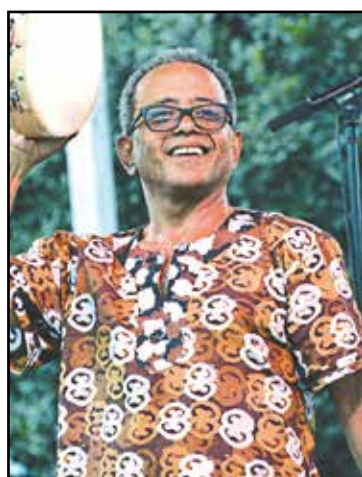
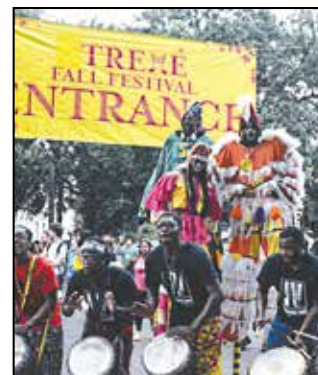
Tremé Fall Festival at St Augustine Church

Photos by Kichea S. Burt
Data News Weekly Contributor

The 2018 Tremé Fall Festival at St. Augustine Church took place last weekend. New Orleanians came out to experience some of the best in local music New Orleans has to offer. Performers included Flashpoint featuring Sharon Martin, Kid Merv & All That Jazz, the Tremé All Stars, Hot 8 Brass Band, The St Augustine Soulful Voices, St. Peter Claver Choir and many more.

Tremé Fall Festival is produced by the Historic Faubourg Tremé Association (HFTA) to support the architecture, culture, and history of Tremé as well as fight blight, crime, and grime. HFTA is a not-for-profit 501c3 organization.

HFTA has provided over \$50,000 to help restore the nation's oldest African-American church, St. Augustine Catholic Church, now celebrating its 176th anniversary this October. As always, Data was there!



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

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Jesse Louis Jackson is Our Civil Rights Icon



Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

Rev. Jesse Louis Jackson turned 77 on October 8, 2018. Nobody has led a less storied life. He first took a public stand for civil rights when he was just a kid attempting to use the library in his hometown of Greenville, South Carolina. His activism brought him to the attention of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and he served Dr. King for years before his assassination. From then, Rev. Jackson founded and led Operation Breadbasket, the Rainbow Coalition, and the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition. Along the way he ran for President twice, gaining millions of multiracial votes and enough support to provide him with significant influence on Democratic platforms.

“Jackson changed the way that African American people saw ourselves politically. Before him, we thought we could not make a difference. Because of him, we know that we can. Before him, we did not believe, in his words, that ‘the hands that picked peaches could pick Presidents.’”

One of the most important things about Rev. Jackson is the way that he empowered others. When I listened to the “Colored Girls” – Minyon Moore, Yolanda Caraway, Leah Daughtry and Donna Brazile – speak their truth at the National Museum of African American History and Culture on October 1, I was reminded that Jackson has been

pivotal in the lives of so many African American political figures. We can call the roll, and name names, but I won’t do that for fear of leaving someone out. What I will say is that there would be no President Barack Obama were there not a Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm who ran for President in 1972, nor a Rev. Jesse Louis Jackson, who ran

for President in 1984 and 1988.

Jackson changed the way that African American people saw ourselves politically. Before him, we thought we could not make a difference. Because of him, we know that we can. Before him, we did not believe, in his words, that “the hands that picked peaches could pick Presidents.” Because of him Stacy Abrams is a possible winner (if we vote) as governor of Georgia; Andrew Gillum is a possible winner as governor of Florida, and unlikely candidates for Congress are poised to win. Thanks to Rev. Jesse Jackson, African American people claimed political audacity. We don’t have to wait our turn, follow the rules, and defer to the status quo. We can, like Ayanna S. Pressley, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Lucy McBath, just buck up against the system and decide to do it our way. We don’t have to climb up the ladder of a broken party system or wait for the blessing of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Instead, we can step out when the time is right, and the possibilities are there.

Nearly 45 years after his historic run for President, Rev. Jesse Louis Jackson is engaged in multiple fights. He is fighting for social and economic justice, as he always has, ever since he defied library protocol and insisted on his right to have access to a taxpayer funded public library. He is fighting police brutality and the unnecessary murders of young black men like Chicago’s own LaQuan McDonald. He is fighting for young people to thrive in a nation that is biased against them. And he is in the personal fight of his life, fighting Parkinson’s disease as passionately as he fights injustice.

Those of us who know Rev. well are excited by his good days and concerned by the days that are not so good. We see the occasional slowed gait, shaking hands and slurred speech, but we also see the days when his rhetorical representation is as excellent as it ever was, and then we cheer. WE know that this is an indefatigable leader, one who will be no more slowed by a physical impediment than he has

Commentary, Continued on page 9.

Time Stopped For Me on September 27th



Bill Fletcher, Jr.
NNPA Columnist

I did not intend to watch Dr. Christine Blasey Ford’s testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee regarding her allegations of sexual assault on the part of Judge Brent Kavanaugh. I was busy preparing to head out of town. I figured that I would get the relevant parts of her testimony later in the day on-line. And, at the end of the day, I knew what she was going to allege.

For reasons that I cannot explain, something led me to turn on the television to watch the testi-

mony. I found myself glued to the screen. Everything else seemed to get blocked out as she spoke, very convincingly and very passionately, about her experience. I fumed when she was asked questions by Republican hired gun and prosecutor Rachel Mitchell. Despite her pretend appearance as a sympathetic inquisitor, at the end of the day, as demonstrated this past Sunday in her memo on the case, she turned out to be anything but sympathetic.

Due to my schedule I was unable to listen to Kavanaugh’s response. Yet what struck me was the immediate response to Dr. Ford’s testimony by so many people across the political spectrum. Several commentators immediately noted that her testimony was devastating for the Republicans. Despite that, and true to form, the Republican propaganda machine went to work at once attempting to reverse the current, suggesting that Dr. Ford’s testimony and other al-

“...the continuous suggestion that there must have been something wrong with Dr. Ford and others who have brought forward allegations against Judge Kavanaugh because they failed to raise their concerns earlier is specious. It is an allegation that can only be made by someone(s) who has not faced ridicule, harassment and self-doubt in response to their experiences with sexual harassment or assault.”

legations against Kavanaugh, were aimed at destroying the reputation of a good man.

But what about the good woman? What about someone who is facing

death threats for coming forward? What about the person who has been ridiculed by the political Right?

As I wrote last week, the continuous suggestion that there must

have been something wrong with Dr. Ford and others who have brought forward allegations against Judge Kavanaugh because they failed to raise their concerns earlier is specious. It is an allegation that can only be made by someone(s) who has not faced ridicule, harassment and self-doubt in response to their experiences with sexual harassment or assault.

And, to top this all off, Trump worries that the #MeToo movement and those who aligned with it, constitute a threat to powerful men.

Maybe Trump is correct. Indeed, maybe rich and powerful men who believe that they are the masters of the universe and masters over the bodies of women should be worried.

Bill Fletcher, Jr. is the former president of TransAfrica Forum. Follow him on Twitter, Facebook and at www.billfletcherjr.com.

Spiritually Speaking: Being a Good 'Steward' Requires Action



James A. Washington
NNPA News Wire
Columnist

My word for today is "Steward" or "Stewardship." I haven't found this very important word in the bible yet, but I have heard many a pastor preach on it.

From the pulpit I've heard the question asked, "Are we good stewards of our own sexuality?"

I have personally received the message of stewardship as it relates to tithing. However, I must admit,

that it wasn't until I heard someone ask the Lord (in prayer) to be a good steward of His Word, that the term really hit home.

On many occasion I have prayed to be a worthy vessel for the Holy Spirit. Face down in prayer, I've asked my Lord and Savior to empty me of all of those human characteristics that would prohibit the Holy Spirit from residing in me.

My thought was and continues to be that any (and I do mean any) space in my soul or my heart that could actually be good enough for a dwelling place for Him, would in some way be an indication of my effort to live a good Christian life.

It is my way of asking God for help. I am often reminded that I'll never be worthy of such a request but, God loves me so much, that He has already given me this great and

wonderful gift. It's just very hard for me to accept it. But as you can see, I'm working on it.

My point is that "stewardship" or being a good "steward" is an action. It calls for an effort. When I heard the prayer calling on the Lord to be a good steward of His Word, I immediately thought about what that would mean for me.

I came to the conclusion that if one was a good steward for God's Word, then that Word should be nurtured and cultivated for one purpose and one purpose only; to bear fruit.

I'm declaring that you cannot be a good steward of God's Word and not bear some kind of fruit. In this case, that fruit should be given in such a manner, that others at least recognize that you are a vendor for that fruit.

Somebody should see your fruit stand. Either through your behavior, your attitude, your verbal praise, your prayers or via some other outward manifestation. The world should be able to see God's Word operating in you. Some say people should see the Christ in you. When you are viewed by others, there should be no question as to who you are and whose you are.

I'm just now more convinced than ever, that stewardship is a verb. The Word cannot reside in you quietly. It cannot be a secret only between you and God, nor can it be selectively used when it suits you. The Word is what it is. Like water, it cannot be held back; nor should it be. Once again I submit to you, that if you are a child of God, people need to hear you say that you know who your Dad is, with

pride and boldness.

I believe that is what is meant by the saying 'being a good steward.' It demands personal recognition that we acknowledge and share the truth that is in us. It requires action; the kind that makes those around us know, without a shadow of a doubt, that we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior and God Almighty as the one true God.

If those around you know that, then you are indeed a good steward in the business of bearing fruit. If no one around you knows this, then maybe you need to go shopping.

May God bless and keep you always.

James Washington is a father, husband, Christian and writer. James is also the owner and publisher of the multimedia company The Dallas Weekly. You can follow James on Twitter at @JAWS_215.

Commentary, Continued from page 8.

been by structural racism. And so, we cheer whenever we see him stand up, whether he is standing on his own might, or whether he is assisted. We cheer the long and fruitful life of a civil rights icon who has made the world better for so many people and opened the door for hundreds of African American politicians.

I am writing this from a profoundly biased space. I met Rev. Jackson nearly 50 years ago, when I was an Essence Magazine intern super-

vised by Chicagoan Leniece Taylor, who was a friend of Rev. Jackson's. I've been connected since then, as a delegate in 1984, a campaign surrogate in 1988, a family friend, and most recently President of PUSH/EXCEL the education arm of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition. I could not have been more delighted than when the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation bestowed upon Rev. Jesse and Mrs. Jacqueline Jackson a lifetime achievement award, both because they deserve it, but also because Mrs. Jackie doesn't often get the recognition she should get

as "the wind beneath his wings." I'm biased, y'all, and that's just that.

Our icon, our leader, is celebrating another birthday, and that's a great thing! He is fighting, as he always has, injustice; but he is also fighting Parkinson's. And he is not

yielding space in either fight. If you appreciate Rev. Jackson as much as I do, let him know! You can go to the Rainbow website, www.rainbowpush.org to send a note, or you can hit him up on Facebook. Let's rain this brother down with birth-

day blessings for his 77 years of service.

Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist. Her latest book "Are We Better Off? Race, Obama and Public Policy" is available via www.amazon.com for booking, wholesale inquiries or for more info visit www.juliannemalveaux.com

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"You can tell her writing comes from a place of realness," Evans said, "As a writer, I felt the urge to pick my pencil up and start writing those things I'm so scared to write about because we all have a voice, even through ink and paper."

He said he is grateful that Reese took the time to inspire another generation of writers with her story.

"Writing has no limits. It is all about what you feel and sometimes even about what you have been through," he said.

Young Black writers don't always get to see themselves in poetry, according to Biljana Obradovic, the English Department Head at Xavier. She wanted her students to have more knowledge on how to publish

their work and to be exposed to different types of work. Not only did Reese come and just share her work, she gave aspiring writers an even greater message to leave with: to believe in themselves, their voice, and in their writing

"She is an amazing writer because her writing is sincere," said Obradovic, who met Reese six years ago during a teaching trip to Italy.

"Her writing speaks to the soul, and her writing speaks for a lot of minorities with similar views, similar heritage and those who have faced similar adversities. I am able to teach students that come from all over the world, and at an HBCU, I think it is so important for students in general to use their voice," Obradovic said.



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A Five Hundred Year Old Shared History

The Transatlantic Slave Trade Part III: Africans Are Transported as Cargo

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

"It started with slave ships... There are more records of slave ships than one would dream. It seems inconceivable until you reflect that for 200 years ships sailed carrying cargo of slaves. How can man be nonviolent... in the face of the... violence that we've been experiencing for the past (500) years is actually doing our people a disservice in fact, it's a crime, it's a crime." — Public Enemy- "Can't Truss It."

The transatlantic slave trade is often regarded as the first system of globalization and lasted from the 16th century through much of the 19th century. Slavery, and the global political, socio-economic and banking systems that supported it, constitutes one of the greatest tragedies in the history of humanity both in terms of scale and duration.

The transatlantic slave trade was the largest mass deportation of humans in history and a determining factor in the world economy of the 18th century where millions of Africans were torn from their homes, deported to the American continent and sold as slaves, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – or UNESCO.

The transatlantic slave trade that began about 500 years ago connected the economies of three continents with Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, England and France acting as the primary trading countries.

"The transatlantic slave trade transformed the Americas," wrote Dr. Alan Rice, a Reader in American Cultural Studies at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston in the United Kingdom.

"Three factors combined to cause this transformation. Large amounts of land had been seized from Native Americans and were not being used," Rice said. "Europeans were looking for somewhere to invest their money and very cheap labor was available in the form of enslaved Africans [thus] the Americas became a booming new economy."

The transatlantic slave trade also formed an essential bridge between Europe's New World and its Asia trade and, as such, it was a crucial element in the development of the global economy in the 18th century, Professor Robert Harms wrote for Yale University's "Global Yale."



Harms, a professor of History at Yale and chair of the Council on African Studies continued:

"There was one basic economic fact – little noticed by historians – that provides the key to the relationship between the direct trade and the circuit trade.

"When a French ship arrived in the New World with a load of slaves to be bartered for sugar, the value of the slaves equaled about twice as much sugar as the ship could carry back to France. For that reason, the most common form of slave contract called for fifty percent of the sugar to be delivered immediately and the remainder to be delivered a year later.

"The second delivery carried no interest penalty, and so the slave sellers were in effect giving the buyers an interest-free loan."

In total, UNESCO estimates that between 25 to 30 million people — men, women and children — were deported from their homes and sold as slaves in the different slave trading systems.

More than half – 17 million – were deported and sold during the transatlantic slave trade, a figure that UNESCO historians said doesn't include those who died aboard the ships and during the course of wars and raids connected to the slave.

The trade proceeded in three steps. The ships left Western Europe for Africa loaded with goods which were to be exchanged for slaves.

Upon their arrival in Africa, the captains traded their merchandise for captive slaves. Weapons and gun powder were the most important commodities but textiles, pearls and other manufactured goods, as well as rum, were also in high demand.

The exchange could last from one week to several months.

The second step was the crossing of the Atlantic. Africans were transported to America to be sold throughout the continent.

The third step connected America to Europe.

The slave traders brought back mostly agricultural products, produced by the slaves. The main product was sugar, followed by cotton, coffee, tobacco and rice.

The circuit lasted approximately eighteen months and, in order to be able to transport the maximum number of slaves, the ship's steerage was frequently removed, historians said.

Many researchers are convinced that the slave trade had more to do with economics than racism. "Slavery was not born of racism, rather racism was the consequence of slavery," historian Eric Williams wrote in his study, "Capitalism & Slavery."

"Unfree labor in the New World was brown, white, black, and yellow; Catholic, Protestant, and pagan. The origin of Negro slavery? The reason was economic, not racial, it had to do not with the color of the laborer, but the cheapness of

the labor," Williams said.

Also, contrary to "the popular portrayal of African slaves as primitive, ignorant and stupid, the reality is that not only were Africans skilled laborers, they were also experts in tropical agriculture," said editor and social media and communications expert, Michael Roberts.

In a dissertation for op-ed news earlier this year, Roberts said, Africans were well-suited for plantation agriculture in the Caribbean and South America.

Also, the high immunity of Africans to malaria and yellow fever, compared to white Europeans and the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean and South America, meant Africans were more suitable for tropical labor.

"While Native Americans' labor were initially used, Africans were the final solution to the acute labor problem in the New World," Roberts said.

"The slave trade was one of the most important business enterprises of the 17th century. The undisputed fact is that the nation states of Europe stabilized themselves and developed their economies mainly at the expense of millions of Black African people," he said.

During the 16th Century, when Europeans first made regular contact, West Africa had highly developed civilizations and Africans were keen to trade their gold, silver, copper, Ivory and spices for European pots, pans, cloth and guns.

However, Europeans soon became more interested in exploiting the people of Africa and forcing them into slave labor.

Most of the slaves were taken from the West coast, but some were kidnapped further inland from the interior.

"The biggest lesson to be learned from this dark and evil chapter in human history is that exploiting fellow humans for cheap labor never pays off in the long run," said Pablo Solomon, an internationally recognized artist and designer who's been featured in 29 books and in newspapers, magazines, television, radio and film.

"The acts of using fellow humans as beasts of burden to save a few bucks always ends up costing more in the long run both in real money and in societal decay," Solomon said.

"Any rationalization of misusing fellow humans is both evil and ignorant," he said.

One aspect of the transatlantic slave trade that would greatly enhance its understanding is that the English began to enslave and export Irish persons to the Caribbean in the time of Oliver Cromwell, said Heather Miller, an educator and writer with expertise in the teaching of reading and writing, who holds graduate degrees from Harvard and MIT.

Cromwell was known for his campaign in Ireland that centered on ethnic cleansing and the transportation of slave labor to the Barbados.

"Irish enslaved persons worked alongside African enslaved persons in the Caribbean," Miller said.

However, historians generally agree that the most cruel and exploitative people have been the African.

"From the moment when Europeans took their slaves from a race different from their own, which many of them considered inferior to other human races, and assimilation with whom they all regarded with horror, they assumed that slavery would be eternal," historian Winthrop D. Jordan wrote in his dissertation, "White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro."

While tribal leaders assisted in the capturing of some African slaves, its without any doubt that

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**Special, Continued
from page 10.**

foreigners were overwhelming the most egregious in their pursuit of men, women and children who would be placed in the horrors of forced labor and inhumane treatment.

The transatlantic slave trade would become the largest forced migration in history.

It started at the beginning of the sixteenth century and, until the mid-17th century, Spanish America and Portuguese Brazil were the major slave markets for European slave traders.

The Dutch participation in the transatlantic slave trade started in the 1630s and ended at the beginning of the nineteenth century, according to Henk den Heijer, professor emeritus in Maritime History at the Leiden University in Germany.

During that period, the Dutch shipped 600,000 Africans to the colonies in the New World.

"Initially, the Dutch were against slavery which was considered to be a catholic heresy. This antislavery point of view can be easily explained," den Heijer said.

"Dutch seafarers first ventured across the Atlantic without the intention of enslaving anyone. They were mainly interested in the trade in Atlantic products like salt, sugar, wax and dye wood. At the beginning of the 17th century, however, the Dutch established small plantation colonies on the coast of Guyana, the area between the Orinoco and Amazon rivers," he said.

"Most of the early settlements were populated with Dutch colonists and a few indigenous slaves. The Dutch embraced the slave trade and slavery on a large scale for the first time in Brazil."

The slave trade also brought a great deal of wealth to the British ports that were involved.

Researchers noted the count of slaves and slave ships that came through the main British ports in 1771, when the average working person earned \$35 in British currency per year and a single slave in

good condition could be sold in the Caribbean for \$25.

Liverpool had 107 ships and transported 29,250 slaves, historians noted.

London had 58 ships carrying 8,136 slaves while Bristol had 23

Captives were often in poor health from the physical and mental abuse they suffered.

The air in the hold was foul and putrid, according to historians.

From the lack of sanitation, there was a constant threat of dis-

the captives, historians said.

The surgeons, often unqualified, were paid head-money to keep captives alive. By about 1800 records show that the number of Africans who died had declined to about one in 18.

When enslaved Africans arrived in the Americas, they were often alone, separated from their family and community, unable to communicate with those around them.

"When we arrived, many merchants and planters came on board and examined us. We were then taken to the merchant's yard, where we were all pent up together like sheep in a fold," according to a published description from "The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano."

"On a signal the buyers rushed forward and chose those slaves they liked best."

Sold, branded and issued with a new name, the enslaved Africans were separated and stripped of their identity.

In a deliberate process, meant to break their will power and make them totally passive and subservient, the enslaved Africans were "seasoned," which meant that, for a period of two to three years, they were trained to endure their work and conditions – obey or receive the lash.

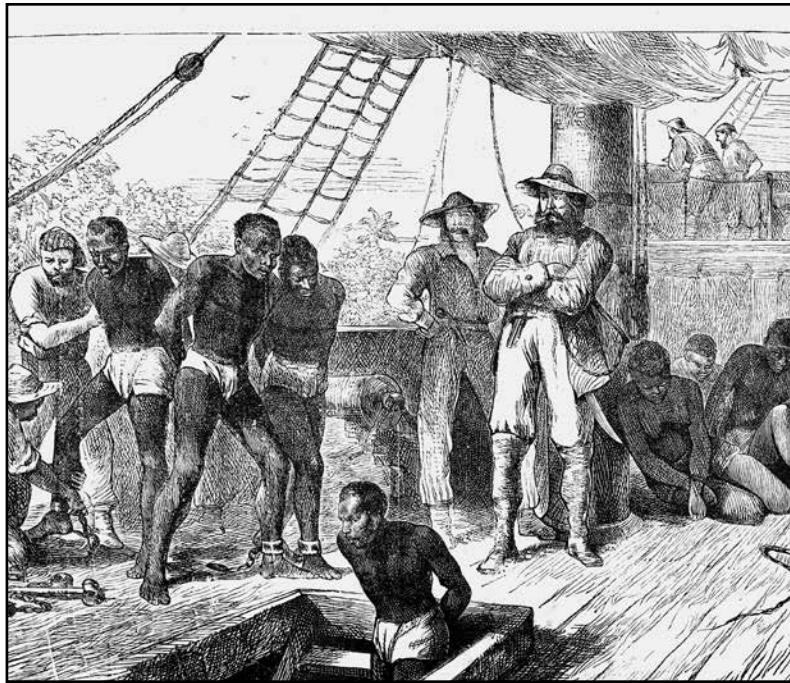
It was mental and physical torture.

"The anniversary of the Transatlantic Slave Trade needs to be marked in some way, not celebrated, but recognized and memorialized because of the effects this decision had then that still affects the world today," said Dr. Jannette Dates, dean emerita at the School of Communications at Howard University in Washington, D.C.

"The Black Press continues to play its historic role in keeping issues of significance to African Americans in the forefront for black people's awareness, knowledge and better understanding of our history," Dr. Dates said.

Some European governments, such as the British and French, introduced laws to control conditions on board. They reduced the numbers of people allowed on board and required a surgeon to be carried.

The principal reason for taking action was concern for the crew, not



ships that transported 8,810 slaves.

Additionally, researchers said Lancaster had 4 ships that transported 950 slaves.

From 1791 to 1807, British ships carried 52 percent of all slaves taken from Africa while, from 1791 to 1800, British ships delivered 398,719 slaves to the Americas.

While it was the British who stood as the most progressive couriers of whatever was transported through the sea, many other countries chartered ships and descended upon African nations to capture slaves.

Ships sailed to Africa loaded with guns, tools, textiles and other manufactured goods and crews with guns went ashore to capture slaves and purchase slaves from tribal leaders.

Slave ships spent months traveling to different parts of the coast, according to historians who described the devastation on a webpage titled The Transatlantic Slave Trade.

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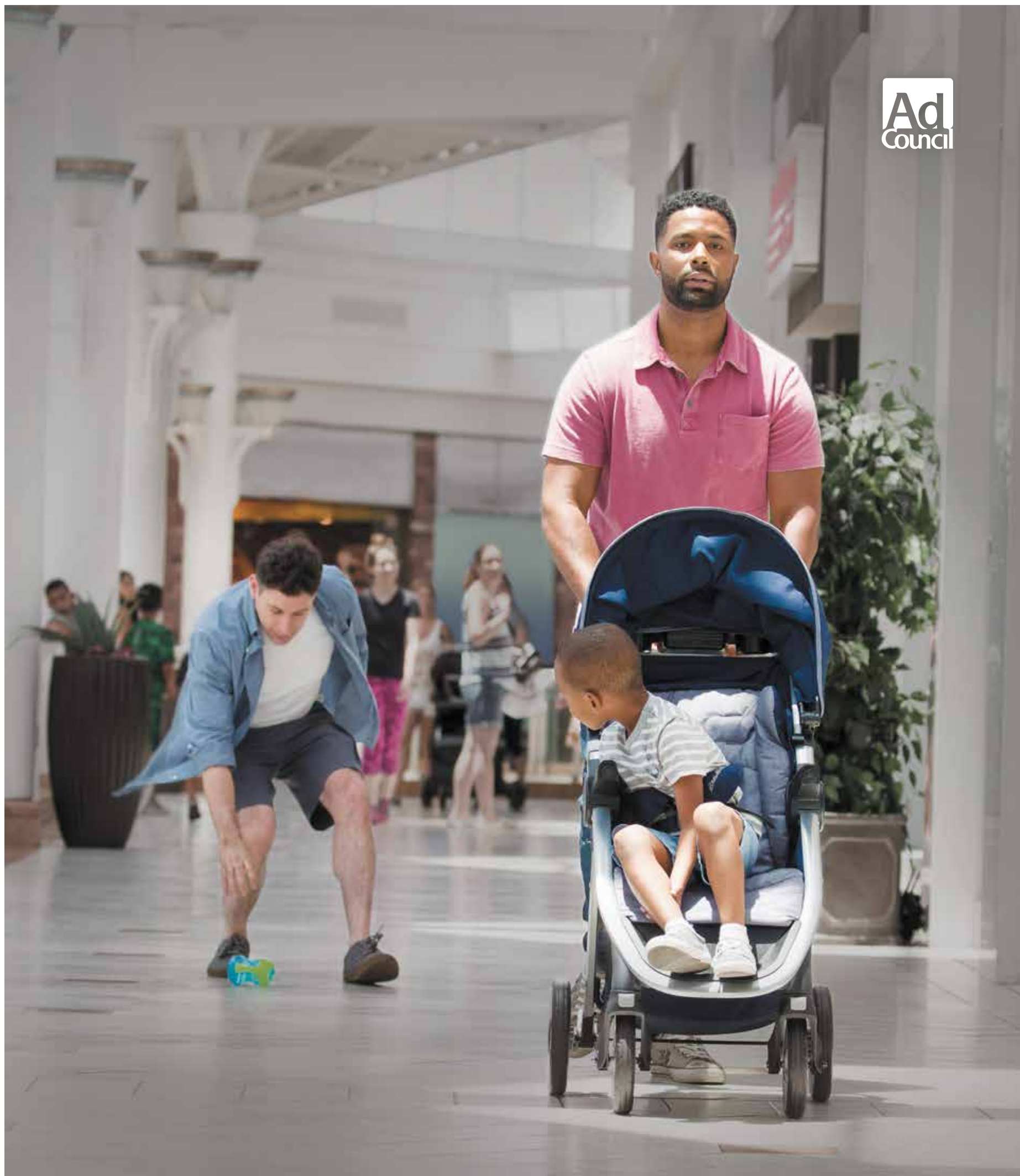
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