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Nakita Shavers

From Tragedy to Triumph

Sister of Hot 8 Brass Band Founding Member Dinerral Shavers Speaks on How His Death Motivated Her Life's Work to Inspire Young People



Nakita Shavers is dedicating her life to making the City of New Orleans a better place for all its citizens and inspiring hope in young people.

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

New Orleans a Tale of Two Cities

The City of New Orleans is a place rich in culture; it is something that keeps people coming back year after year. But in spite of all the things that are amaz-

ing, splendid and enchanting about the City, it is one that finds itself as many urban cities rife with crime and violence.

It is one where too many lives (mostly African American Males) are cut short by gunfire and lack of access to the ladders of success leading to lack of aspirations. Nevertheless, in spite of these obstacles there are many citizens who have tried to become a bridge;

inspiring the youth of New Orleans that there is in fact, hope and opportunities to live lives free of guns and violence.

On the Frontlines

One of those persons who is on the frontlines of this battle is Nakita Shavers, her name may be familiar to some, for she is the younger sister of Dinerral Shav-

On the Cover: Photo by Glenn Summers

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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

ers, who was a renowned drummer and one of the founding members of the Hot 8 Brass Band in addition to being a band instructor; who was gunned down in 2006. His death along with the shooting death of Helen Hill, led to thousands of people to march on City Hall demanding that the City do a better job combating the problems of crime and gun violence.

Shavers is a woman with a big personality and is all New Orleans in her manner of speech and demeanor. She is warm, inviting, caring, compassionate and transparent when speaking of her journey from tragedy to discovering her life's purpose where she is dedicating her life to help in stopping the senseless violence that plagues the City of New Orleans.

A Drum Major for Change: Remembering Dinerral Shavers

It's been over a decade since Nakita lost her brother in a barrage of bullets ending his life right before the New Year. When speaking of her brother there is a slight quaver in her voice when speaking of Dinerral.

Heaping praise on him she notes, "He was always the most popular person, everybody loved him. He was outgoing his whole life. He started playing music in his early teens 14 or 15 and that grew into him becoming a professional musician and also that led to him becoming an educator."

Continuing she speaks of the work he did with young people which is something that continues to inspire her in the work she does. "At the time of his death he'd just began to create the first marching band at L.E. Rabouin High School which was a school known for vocational education. But he thought to have a marching band would be a great experience for the kids where many of them look forward to marching in Mardi Gras parades."

In a deep moment of emotion, she recounts, "He brought together 100 kids to be part of this marching unit and on the weekend, he was murdered that Thursday Dec. 28, 2006; the following Monday the instruments and uniforms for the kids came in."

She says the principal of the school cried opening up the packages and vowing that the kids would get their chance to march in the Mardi Gras Parades. And in true New Orleans spirit musicians from around the City came together and the band marched that Mardi Gras season and it was a beautiful thing.

Speaking of the qualities that made him special she says, "He was a loving and kind individual who wanted to help people and change



Nakita Shavers, who's been chosen as a YLC Role Model speaks of the importance of role models and why she chose it as this year's essay topic. "I recently had a few people in my life that's stood out to me as role models. I thought it would be interesting to hear from young people and who inspires them to be a better person," says Shavers.



In a deep moment of emotion she recounts, "He brought together 100 kids to be part of this marching unit and on the weekend he was murdered that Thursday Dec. 28, 2006; the following Monday the instruments and uniforms for the kids came in." She says the principal of the school cried opening up the packages and vowing that the kids would get their chance to march in the Mardi Gras Parades. And in true New Orleans spirit musicians from around the City came together and the band marched that Mardi Gras season and it was a beautiful thing.



The Dinerral Shavers Educational Fund (DSEF) is an Educational initiative giving an outlet to young people and alternatives to violence.

the world. He always had a big heart especially post-Katrina in that short year he lived. He was mission driven to make an impact on the kids and to his City and I believe he was successful at doing that. Years later many of the people's lives he touched tell me how important he was to them as a mentor, teacher and friend."

Making a Better Community

Since her brother's death, she's spearheaded several efforts to help those in need and inspire a community to be better. She is a true example of giving back, by not giving a handout, but a hand up.

"The Dinerral Shavers Educational Fund (DSEF) is an Educational Initiative giving an outlet to young people and alternatives to violence. We have a Back to School Extravaganza that's grown over the past 10 years. We partner with Tulane University and Ashe' Cultural Center. We distribute school supplies, there's also en-

tertainment, and we have health screenings and other things. It's a hub where these services are available to youth and their families. It will take place at Ashe' Cultural Center September 28th."

This is not the only way Shavers chooses to serve, she explains, "There is a music and education curriculum I developed with the culture bearers from across the city. Basically, we partner with schools and community centers. Students are taught New Orleans history, taught by people who actually produce the culture, (Mardi Gras Indian, Musicians, Dancers, Drummers, etc.) The goal is to help them appreciate the rich culture in which they live and that they continue to celebrate and practice these traditions."

Having a slew of programs aimed at various populations; Shavers believes that to make the City better it will take a multi-pronged approach. We have Girls Nola which is another program and is a Reproductive Health and Sex Ed Curriculum that



Dinerral Shavers, founding member Hot 8 Brass Band, his legacy lives on through his sister Nakita Shavers.

cover mental, physical emotional and sexual health. We partner with schools and community organizations to implement this curriculum."

"Also, there is Operation Give Back where we partner with Unity of Greater New Orleans to help the City's homeless population. Every year we do a citywide household drive where we encourage people to donate furniture, and household

items to Unity and we feed the homeless and we adopt a few families during the holidays."

Essay Contest: The Need for Role Models

Without a map to excellence, many young people fall through the cracks and become susceptible to the twin vices of crime and violence. As a consequence, the community as a whole suffers, as so many young people never reach their full potential and accept mediocrity as the norm. Shavers who's been chosen as a YLC Role Model speaks of the importance of role models and why she chose it as this year's essay topic.

"I recently had a few people in my life that's stood out to me as role models. I thought it would be interesting to hear from young people about who inspires them to be a better person."

No Easy Answers: Solving the Problem Crime and Violence in New Orleans

Nakita Shavers is a young woman dedicated to making her City better, but as she's grown, she realizes that she cannot do it alone and that all hands must be on deck.

"When I was about 18, I was very optimistic about the work we were doing thinking it would be an immediate solution for the violence in our community. I soon realized I was being naïve looking for simple answers to something so complex. That there was other contributing factor, socioeconomic and historical structural inequality to opportunities that led to some turning to crime."

"For a time when I did not see results, I became discouraged. But as I've gotten older and wiser, I know it's not just the work that I do but what everyone does as a cohesive unit and what we can all do to contribute to a better society, but it won't happen overnight."

Shavers in speaking of how all people can help young people aspire to having a better quality of life and not falling prey to low expectations and not reaching their full potential says, "They're many opportunities across the city to mentor youth, every young person needs a role model and just having someone tell you what your options can be can change the possibilities of what their lives can become."

Nakita is working to keep the dreams of her brother Dinerral Shavers alive by helping people all across the city. A journey that began in tragedy, but she's triumphed and living a life with greater purpose and meaning showing that we all can make a difference in making New Orleans a better city and safer City for all.

The Improved Benevolent & Protective Order of the Elks of the World (IBPOEW) meeting in New Orleans



Top Left: Rev. Dr. Ellsworth Harris, Jr. Chairperson and the La. State President, Grand Exalted Ruler Leonard Polk, Jr. Bottom Right: Senator Diana Bajoie PGDR and Co-Chair, Grand Daughter Ruler Margaret Scott, Louisiana Daughter Johnnie G. Cobbins

Camille Whitworth

It didn't take long for members of the Improved Benevolent & Protective Order of the Elks of the World to make their impact on New Orleans.

The group of more than 2000, led by Grand Exalted Ruler Leonard J. Polk Jr., Esq. and Grand Daughter Ruler Margaret D. Scott, gave back

to the Crescent City during their annual convention.

The organization was in town August 2nd through August 8th. While in town they got straight to the work of making a difference. During the grand opening ceremonies, Mayor LaToya Cantrell was given the "Grand Exalted Ruler's Award of Prominence" for her contributions to the city. Also,

State Representative

Joseph Bouie, District 97 was honored with Elijah P. Lovejoy Award during the Civil Liberties Luncheon. Rep. Bouie said, "I over my humble appreciation to this historic organization for this honor."

In addition to giving local leaders special recognition, the IBPOEW visited the senior center Tuesday for a great lunch, bingo and hours



Visiting the Senior Center

of fellowship. About

100 members spent the afternoon enjoying the local seniors and making new friends.



That's not all. Also, while in town, members gave contributions to cancer organizations, the Light House for the Blind, they provided financial assistance to a Family Crisis Organization worked with local agencies to help feed the homeless. There was an oratorical contest held which awarded a deserving student a \$10,000 scholarship. The Temptations wowed the crowd with their familiar tunes during a concert at


the Hilton Riverside Hotel.

This year's, convention was chaired by Louisiana State President Rev. Ellsworth Harris, Jr., and co-chaired by Senator Diana Bajoie.

The IBPOEW held their 120th Grand Lodge and 116th Grand Temple International Convention in New Orleans, all activities taking place at the Hilton Riverside Hotel.

This is one of the largest African American Fraternal Organizations in the world. The group is dedicated to providing financial, spiritual and emotional aid to the New Orleans community.



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City Leaders and Tourism Officials Launch New Healthy Hospitality Initiative

City of New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS - Today, Mayor LaToya Cantrell and the New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation (NOTMC) in partnership with 504HealthNet, launched the new Healthy Hospitality Initiative at the Jazz and Heritage Center.

Tourism leaders and 504HealthNet have worked on this initiative over the past year to provide New Orleans Hospitality Workers access to high-quality, affordable health-care. Tourism and Health Care Agencies collaborated and held listening sessions with hospitality workers to ensure the program addresses their needs. The initiative includes a new website, extended clinic hours, and a dedicated team that works directly with the city's hospitality workers.

"As someone who came up through the ranks in the hotel industry, from laundry to front desk to night auditor, right here in New Orleans, I know firsthand the need that exists here," said Mayor Cantrell. "I would like to thank our Health Director, Dr. Avegno, the New Orleans City Council, and our partners here today for their unwavering support of our hospitality workers. The City of New Orleans, under my leadership, will always be committed to better outcomes for the people who make our City what she says truly is by giving everything that they have for our industry, tourists, and all of us who call New Orleans home. We will not stand down. Through partnerships like this, we will continue to stand tall and ensure all of our people have affordable and accessible healthcare."

There are 17 participating Health Care Organizations, operating 58 clinic sites, and one hospital system with five sites that are a part of this initiative. The initiative was introduced with a press conference and a community event for hospitality workers, which included free glucose testing, blood pressure screenings, massages, STD testing, and more.

"We are very excited to announce the Healthy Hospitality Initiative for the great men and women in the hospitality industry that provide our visitors and locals with



District C Councilmember Kristen Gisleson Palmer (center), speaks at the Healthy Hospitality Initiative launch event on Tuesday, August 6, alongside Councilmember-At-Large Jason Williams (left) and District B Councilman Jay H. Banks (right). (photo by Justen Williams, 343 Media)



Mayor LaToya Cantrell speaks at the Healthy Hospitality Initiative launch event on Tuesday, August 6, 2019. (photo by Justen Williams, 343 Media)

an authentic New Orleans experience," said Mark Romig, NOTMC President and CEO. "Following a proactive year of convening, working alongside partners and a year's work of testing with hospitality workers, we are proud to stand here today."

504HealthNet developed and implemented a systems-level approach to build stronger community-clinical linkages for the hos-

pitality industry that will decrease barriers for workers to access health care.

"By answering the call to action, we were able to work with data and clinic networks to provide more services, such as concierge services that are culturally competent for hospitality workers, as well as hiring a dedicated navigator for support," said Tiffany Netters, Executive Director of 504HealthNet.

The Healthy Hospitality Initiative will ensure hospitality workers have access to the health care services needed to sustain their quality of life.

"Hospitality workers are at the heart of our city, and by providing high-quality and affordable health care, we can better take care of our citizens, their families and the future of our hospitality industry," said Councilmember Jason Williams.

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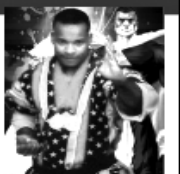


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First Friday

Glenn Summers
Data News Photographer

The First Friday Old School Dance Party hosted by Gilda Lewis, is a Networking Event Celebrating Entrepreneurship in the community where small businesses come together to reinforce empowerment and sustainability. Additionally, it promotes the need for wealth building among businesses in the African-American community. Data News Weekly was there for this amazing event!!!



Data Zone, Continued on page 7.



AUDUBON NATURE INSTITUTE EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

TRAMERA LEE
RECEPTIONIST, AUDUBON ZOO

Tramera is the receptionist for Audubon Zoo — the first smiling face guests see and friendly voice they hear when they contact Audubon Nature Institute. Tramera is active in the local dance community, dancing, teaching kids, choreographing, and working with Buku Talent agency. She enjoys interacting with so many different types of people in her role at Audubon and is pursuing a degree in Business Administration to further her career.

Celebrating the Wonders of Nature

Be a part of the Audubon Team: AudubonNatureInstitute.org/Careers



Data Zone, Continued from page 6.



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

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To Be Equal

Toni Morrison's Passing is a Loss for the Racial Justice Community as Well as the Literary World



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

NEW YORK - A few years after being awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, for a body of work known for centering the Black American experience, Toni Morrison was asked by a white reporter when she would "incorporate white lives" into her books "in a substantial way."

"You can't understand how powerfully racist that question is, can you?" she asked. "You could never ask a white author, 'When

are you going to write about Black people?' Whether he did or not, or she did or not. Even the inquiry comes from a position of being in the center."

Morrison likened herself to a Russian author, writing in Russian, about Russia. "The fact that it gets translated and read by other people is a benefit, it's a plus, but he's not obliged to ever consider writing about French people, or Americans, or anybody."

Morrison's death this week, at the age of 88, is a loss not only to the literary world, but to the cause of racial justice and civil rights. And it comes at a time when her unique voice is especially relevant.

Shortly after the election of Donald Trump in 2016, she published an essay entitled "Make America White Again," in which she argued that white America's loss of "the

conviction of their natural superiority" had led to its debasement. The slaughter of unarmed men and women of color at the hands of police and racially-motivated mass murder, the bombing of Black churches – and white America's apparent tolerance for all of it – she asserted, were part of the death knell of white superiority.

"If it weren't so ignorant and pitiful, one could mourn this collapse of dignity in service to an evil cause," she wrote.

It is telling that what the interviewer noticed most about Morrison's work was the absence of white characters; white privilege can be like air or light, notable only when it is absent. And according to Morrison, white voters were beginning to feel it ebb away.

"Toni Morrison" may have been as much a creation as her

novels; she said she regretted using the nickname, derived from her chosen confirmation name, Anthony, and always thought of as Chloe, her given name. She grew up in the integrated town of Lorain, Ohio, and was disillusioned by what she saw as rampant colorism when she arrived at Howard University in 1949. Unlike classmates who had grown up in the south, she experienced legal segregation for the first time in Washington, D.C., but could not believe it was real.

"I think it's a theatrical thing," she told the New York Times. "I always felt that everything else was the theater. They didn't really mean that. How could they? It was too stupid."

When Morrison won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993, it had been more than 30 years since an

American-born author had won, but her status as the first Black woman honored overshadowed her Americanness.

And while she had complained that her work was more likely to be taught in women's studies or African-American studies classes than in English classes, she hoped her work "fit first into African-American traditions and, second of all, this whole thing called literature."

Today, even high-school students across the country are familiar with her work, reading her alongside Nathaniel Hawthorne and Mark Twain. She has staked out the African-American experience as part of the broader American experience.

As politicians seek to divide us and racial violence swirls around us, it is this lesson – that Black America is America, that we must keep firmly in our hearts.

White Women versus Black Women

Who will decide the governor's race in Louisiana?

Jeff Thomas
Publisher Think504.COM

Not only is John Bel Edwards the only Democrat who holds a statewide office, but the Louisiana Governor is the only Democratic Governor of any Southern State. And currently, this rarest of birds is seeking re-election. Edwards was able to defeat an extremely flawed opponent to capture the office, but his bid for a second term is a decidedly different race with a new and more volatile set of dynamics to be negotiated. Though Edwards is a conservative Democrat, his opponents are far to his right and pose real threats to his chances to be re-elected in the deep south.

The remarkability of his tenure is significantly overshadowed by the precariousness of his political position. And the unusual conditions that enabled his electability to have been transformed into a minefield of political calculations that could not only diminish Edwards' viability but boost the likelihood that a conservative Republican wins the race. How Edwards is able to motivate progressive voters while simultaneously lean-



ing into his conservative values is a balancing act that will be Cirque du Soleil worthy.

Facing two conservative Republicans, early on Edwards' campaign is leaning right with commercials touting his personal military background and his family's dedication to law and order. And signing the anti-abortion legislation this summer was a major nod to Republican voters. Yet his rivals will claim their allegiance to President Trump and wedge immigration, race, taxes and every other hot button issue to invigorate Louisiana's conservative electorate.

White Women Voters

Many of the White women voters who either did not vote or even

supported Edwards over the sex scandal ridden David Vitter, will have no such inclination in this election. In fact, Ralph Abraham is a stand-up guy and offers none of the Vitter slime that catapulted Edwards in the last election. And Eddie Rispone's love for all things Trump will attract others. Both are furiously campaigning to capture the White women's votes. Not only can Edwards expect to lose a large percentage of these voters, but if either of his opponents electrifies the White women base, Edwards ability to win re-election is significantly damaged. Edwards will have no choice but to try to motivate African American women voters. And that's the tricky part.



African American Women Voters

Edwards received over 95% of the African American women's vote in the last gubernatorial election. But his current campaign messaging ignores issues that would engage and motivate them to vote. And while older African American women tend to be chronic voters, younger AA women voters are irregular – mainly high-profile election - voters. Yet as Edwards tilts right to attract White voters, he antagonizes the women who helped elect him in the first place.

How Edwards pivots and seeks to attract women of color while simultaneously appeasing conservative White women is the conun-

drum. Issues that women share – early childhood education and access to affordable healthcare – allow the governor to thread the needle, but other issues that will attract and motivate Black women like increasing the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and increasing funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) will create a schism between the voting blocs.

Even though these challengers are lower profile than David Vitter, their threat to Edwards candidacy is more significant. If either Abraham or Rispone catches fire, he could burn down the Edwards campaign, unless Edwards is able to balance disparate factions with a clean message.

Batiste Family performs at BB King’s Club New Orleans every Tuesday at 5:00 & 8:00 PM

Data News Staff Edited
Report

NEW ORLEANS - Select members of the Batiste Family will perform regularly on Tuesday evenings at the BB King’s Blues Club in New Orleans, 1104 Decatur Street. The sets which are powered by Damon J. Batiste & NOSACONN Inc. are 5:00 PM and 8:00 PM nightly (subject to change).

“B.B. King’s is the best restaurant, bar, and live music club in the French Quarter. We’re more than the Blues at BB King’s. We’re classic soul, rock and roll, and great signature drinks that will get your party rolling.”

At last week’s show; Michael Batiste, the father of Jon Batiste who serves as band director of The Late Show With Stephen Colbert sat in for a couple of numbers with the family brought back fond memories of the group’s performance from the 80’s. And on one number, the musical chair exchange between Jamal and Russell on a single drum kit was simply magical!

Headed by Louisiana Hall of Fame inductee David Batiste (Da-







Jamal, Damon, Russell, Christopher, David, and Ryan Batiste.

vid Batiste and The Gladiators) who was a pioneer of “New Orleans funk” will be joined by sons Damon, Russell, Ryan, and Jamal Batiste; and a new edition in grandson Christopher Prosper Batiste on select nights for a blast of down-home funk and Rhythm ‘n Blues at the Club. With approximately 25 members performing professionally, the Batiste family boasts of being “Louisiana’s largest musical family.”

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School Zone Cameras go Back into Operation

City of New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS – The City of New Orleans reminds residents that school zone cameras will be turned on for the new school year on Monday, Aug. 12, at 7 a.m. School zone hours are between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. and between 2:45 p.m. and 4:45 p.m. Motorists are advised to carefully observe posted speed limits, and to exercise caution in school zones.



Choppa, Cheeky Blakk, DJ Jubilee, David Kunian Headlines Panel on BOUNCE @ Cutting Edge CE



Bounce Royalty, Choppa, Cheeky Black and DJ Jubilee

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Bounce: The Creation of a New Music Genre; The Evolution of Bounce from the Street Parades of New Orleans to the Sidelines of the National Football League

Data News Staff Edited Report

Bounce Music has evolved since its early origins in New Orleans in the early 90's and now is a global phenomenon influencing popular music and culture. It is the latest music that's originated from America's most musical city.

The often-sampled music that can be found in songs from artists such as Yo Gotti, Cardi B and Beyoncé, has its roots in New Orleans Street Parades (aka Secondlines), pea-popping and the Rhythms of Professor Longhair,

Eddie Bo and Earl King. This panel will host New Orleans "Bounce Royalty" and record entrepreneurs who are bringing it to the international entertainment world.

Date: Saturday, August 24, 2019
Time: 12:30 – 1:15 pm
Location: InterContinental New Orleans, Frenchmen Rm, 2nd Fl.

Speakers:

- Angela Woods aka Cheeky Blakk
- Jerome Temple aka DJ Jubilee
- Darwin Turner aka Choppa
- John Maximillion, Owner, Power504 Radio, Maximum Productions
- Phillip Ryan Block, Independent Ear Records
- David Kunian, Curator, New Orleans Jazz Museum, Producer radio Documentaries, Radio DJ (Panel Moderator)



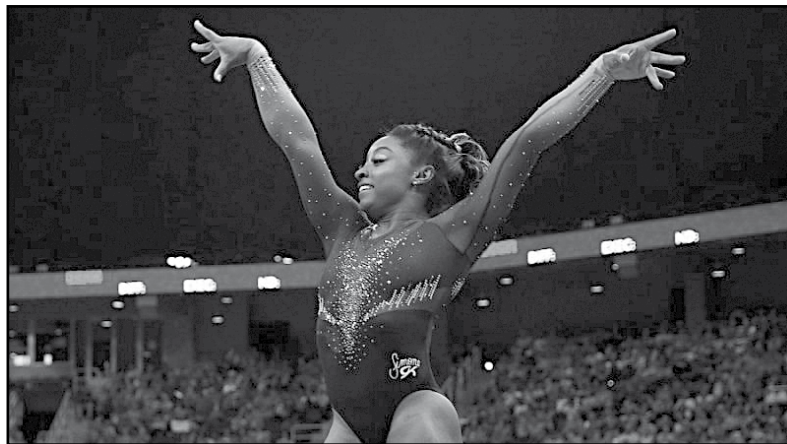
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Simone Biles Just Became the First Woman to Land Another Flip



At the U.S. Gymnastics Championships, Simone Biles, 22, made history as the first woman to land a clean triple-double — which involves two flips and three twists in the air — cleanly in competition in her floor routine (only two men in the world have successfully done the move, The Washington Post reported).



Biles continues to make history, breaking down barriers and setting new standards of excellence and being an inspiration for all people, but especially African-American girls that through hard work all things are possible.

Molly Longman
Writer Refinery29.com

Simone Biles is perfection. The Olympic gymnast has had our hearts for years. She was part of the “final five” gold-medal winning team at the 2016 Olympics. And she hasn’t lost her touch.

On Sunday at the U.S. Gymnastics Championships, Biles, 22, made history as the first woman to land a clean triple-double — which involves two flips and three twists in the air — cleanly in

competition in her floor routine (only two men in the world have successfully done the move, The Washington Post reported). People were in awe, and the Internet was on fire with praise for Biles. Even Dictionary.com weighed in on the dazzling athletic feat, tweeting the video of Biles, along with the definition of “flawless.”

Biles had attempted the triple-double earlier in the competition on Friday, but needed to use her hands when she landed to keep from falling down. When

she landed the cyclone-like move just two days later, she was thrilled. “I’m just happy that I landed it,” Biles said after the sticking the landing, according to The Washington Post. “After Night one, my confidence got shot down, so I was really worried about it going into today. That’s all I could worry about.”

Earlier in the competition, she performed a historic double-double dismount from the balance beam. She was the first person to ever attempt and land the tricky move.

Biles ultimately won the all-

around title at the championships for the sixth consecutive year, Deadspin reported. She said that the crowd cheering her on and the momentum she gained from landing her impressive balance beam move made it possible for her to complete the historic triple-double, according to ESPNW.

“I feel like you carry that momentum through the entire meet,” Biles said, according to ESPNW. “The other day, I was doing angry gymnastics, and I was just really upset. Then today, it was just like back to normal and happy.”

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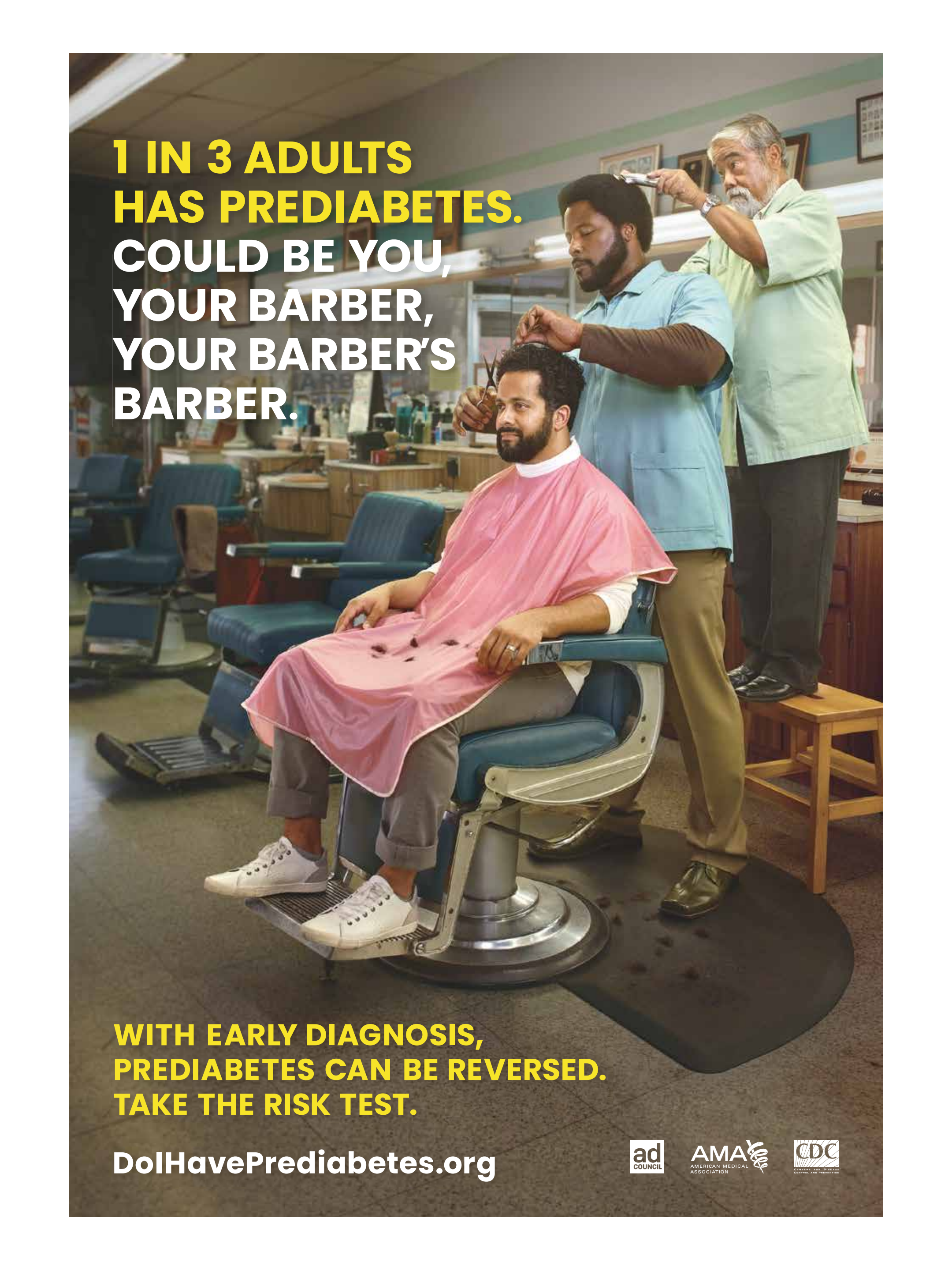
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A man with a beard and dark hair is sitting in a blue barber chair, wearing a pink protective cape. He is looking towards the camera. Two barbers are attending to him: one is standing behind him, using clippers on his hair, and the other is standing to his left, using scissors. The barbershop has a classic feel with wooden counters, blue chairs, and various grooming products. The lighting is warm and indoor.

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