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New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

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Everyday Heroes

Black Healthcare Workers Share Coronavirus Frontline Experiences



Alice Wilson, an Anesthesia Tech of Terrebonne General Medical Center in Houma, La.



Anissa Tyler, a Registered O.R. Travel Nurse of Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in Redwood City, Ca.

Zoe Trask
Data News Weekly Contributor

COVID-19 has disproportionately affected African Americans. About 30 percent of coronavirus cases in the United States are African Americans, and in cities like Houston and New Orleans it has been over 50 per-

cent. One of the groups at the frontline of caring for patients in the pandemic are Black Healthcare Workers. “At one point in time, 78 percent of our unit for at least two weeks were African-American males from 35 to 75 years old,” said Justin Bailey, an intensive-care unit, registered nurse at Baton Rouge General Medical Center, who noted the surge in African American

COVID-19 cases in his unit in the last two weeks. Bailey said that as essential workers who come in direct contact with infected patients, they must also work extremely hard to also protect themselves and their families through enhanced forms of sanitation and protection. Every aspect of their personal protection equip-

Photos courtesy Anissa Tyler, Justin Bailey, Alice Wilson, Gerica Sears

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Justin Bailey, an ICU Registered Nurse of Baton Rouge General in Baton Rouge, La.



Gerica Sears, a Certified Surgical First Medical Assistant (CSFA) of Terrebonne General Medical Center in Houma, La.

ment (PPE) is vital to their own prevention from infection, said Gerica Sears, a certified surgical first assistant (CSFA) at Terrebonne General Medical Center in Houma, La. As for hospitals with COVID-19 positive patients, medical officials in the state said that the PPE worn in the operating room is just as important as those in the emergency rooms. In fact, COVID-19 surgical procedures are quite out of the ordinary compared to other cases, and specialists said that there are even more enhanced

special processes of protection before, during, and after surgery that some patients may require as a result of secondary infections from the Coronavirus.

"When you're in that room, you have to put on the proper PPE," Sears said. "You have to wear a shield, gown, gloves, and an N95 mask with a regular mask on top," she added.

When health staff are assigned to COVID-19 cases, they have to remain isolated. They cannot leave the room until a runner (a ward

tech or nurse) decontaminates the instruments used and the patient is carefully transferred to a specific isolation room. After surgery, Sears said that they then must follow a system of post-sanitation.

"You dispose of the gown you have on, but not the N95 mask because that's all that you have. Then, you can go and change your scrubs," Sears said. "I'll wipe down my face and neck with alcohol as well," she added.

The disparities in healthcare access that many African Americans

face means that many patients arrive sick with several underlying diseases that are left untreated. Because of this, they are in need of ventilators and could be more susceptible of dying from Coronavirus, health experts said.

"We're finding young and old African American males with hidden underlying conditions. The older males are being attacked more seriously," Bailey said. "I hate to say it, but we aren't finding many African American males surviving this disease," Bailey added.

The sight of many patients that are ill or near-death has had an emotional impact on the workers just as much as the patients' loved ones. Alice Wilson, an anesthesia tech at Terrebonne General Hospital in Houma, La, emphasized that workers are overwhelmed, heartbroken, and afraid for their patients.

"It's kind of scary seeing those that are gasping for air and begging for help," Wilson said. "It can be a challenging situation, not just because of what they're going through, but it's challenging all over because it tests your faith, ability to care for someone," she added.

Medical workers are not only suffering from heartache, they are also losing their jobs. Anissa Tyler, a Registered Operating Room Travel Nurse at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in Redwood City, Calif. said that her nursing contract may be cut short due to the lack of need for surgeries other than COVID-19-related ones.

"Futuristically, this can affect my income because I'll be out of a job until this pandemic clears up. I'll have to be dependent on my savings to make ends meet," Tyler said.

Despite the negative impact COVID-19 may have on the income and well-being of healthcare workers, Wilson said she still urges her colleagues to stay positive.

"We have to come together, pray, and just hang in there because it's all gonna work out," Wilson said.



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The State of Louisiana and the City of New Orleans has a "Stay At Home Order" through May 15, 2020. Data News Weekly is encouraging all our readers to stay safe during the COVID-19 Pandemic that is affecting all of us. Because as many of us have already seen in reporting that it is our community that's being more impacted by the virus.

It is important for our community to do what is necessary to stop the spread of COVID-19. It is just a small step we have to take to save the lives of ourselves and our loved ones.

We at Data News Weekly continue to stand with our community as the People's Paper giving our citizens news they can use. We continue in our mission as "The People's Paper" and we will make it through this together.

MASKerade

The New Must-Have Fashion Accessory



Tracee Dundas
Fashion Stylist

As the Coronavirus Pandemic wreaks havoc on our city, New Orleans Fashion Designers are responding by pivoting from designing their fashion collections to playing a part in combating the spread of this contagious disease. Stemming from the public officials outcry about the shortage of mask, coupled with the CDC (Center for Disease Control) stressing the importance to cover up when outside confines of your home,



Designer: Jada Hunter



Designer: Pedram Couture

Mayor LaToya Cantrell on the Fight Against COVID-19

An Exclusive Message to the Readers of Data News Weekly

Forward together is how we started! And these are truly important and pivotal times for our city, state, nation and world in the face of the COVID-19 Pandemic. It is something that's changing all of our lives, where there is a new normal impacting us all. For us to win the fight against this invisible enemy that is claiming the lives of so many of our people, we the citizens of New Orleans must step up to the challenge. We must do our due diligence in protecting our most vulnerable and in assisting our medical community so that they can remain as vital and as viable as possible.



During this crisis, New Orleans has been hit extremely hard, but we are a resilient people who for over 300 years have overcome unfathomable obstacles and we have always done this by working together. This time is no different, because all of our lives depend on it.

In the fight against COVID-19, we have made great strides and we are pleased to report that we can see a flattening of the curve because so many of our citizens are doing their part abiding by our stay-at-home order, staying informed and taking the precautions necessary to remain safe. For that, I would like to thank all of you, but this is not the time to think we are out in the clear.

We have to remain vigilant in this fight against COVID-19 if we are to survive this pandemic. No matter your race, income, zip code or which ward you are from, we all have skin in the game and must do our part. New Orleans is an amazing city whose welcoming spirit is full of vibrancy, charm and unmistakable uniqueness. We look forward to sharing the warmth of our summers, the taste of our cuisine, the sights of our art and the excitement of our music with the world once again. We look forward to brighter days and as we forge ahead, with all of your help, we will get there soon!



Designer: Sylvester West

designers are stepping up and adding a fashionable touch to the "new [must-have] fashion accessory."

Designer Pedram Taheri – Renowned Couture Designer feels "everyone has a responsibility to help those who need it most." For this reason, he introduced a new collection of fashion face masks, La Vie, with the objective of proceeds from the sale of these high-end,

embellished masks will help fund the production of useable masks that will be donated to those on the frontline. Visit www.pedramcouture.com | Instagram @pedramcouture.

Designer Sylvester West – Twenty-year old West has made a strong mark as a designer having showcased on platforms such as Essence Beauty and Style Stage,

Data Zone, Continued on page 5.

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

Data Zone, Continued from page 4.



Designer: Jada Hunter



Designer: Sylvester West



Designer: Jada Hunter



Designer Pedram Couture

New Orleans Fashion Week's Top 10 Emerging Designer and worked as a seamstress on Drake's music video filmed in New Orleans last year. His mask design esthetic is colorful, trendy and fun, giving a sense of self-expression, safety and comfort. Visit his Instagram page @_officialwest.

Designer Jada Hunter – This self-taught designer delivers a positive, uplifting message on the face mask she designs that she hopes will resonate with everyone. Hunter says, "It is important that we maintain social distance and stay covered so why not do it in a fashionable and positive way." Her motto is "Let's Be Covered in Positivity." Visit www.yadhhae.com | Instagram: @yadhhae

Wearing a face mask with style and pizzazz is perhaps the new normal. As note by Pedram; "Face masks are here to stay, they will become a part of our culture like hats and sunglasses."

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



If I could do one thing, I'd have a daycare closer to work.

If you could do one thing for your community, what would it be? More daycare centers? More funding for Head Start? Completing the 2020 Census is a safe and easy way to inform how billions of dollars in funding flow into your community for hundreds of services. **Respond online, by phone, or by mail.**

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Mobile COVID-19 Campaign Brings Testing Closer to New Orleans Residents

Story and Photos by
Kai Wilson
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Over 57 percent of COVID-19 deaths in Louisiana are African Americans. During April 21 to April 24, the City of New Orleans and its healthcare allies worked to make access to coronavirus testing more convenient for Black residents through a newly created mobile testing campaign to stem the rate of infection in hard hit areas in the state.

The city's health department partnered with the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center (LSUHSC) and the Louisiana Children's Medical Center (LCMC Health) to deliver up to 250 free tests daily, over the four-day period, through a mobile unit parked at Xavier University's Convocation Center parking lot in Gert Town. Dozens of residents turned up for the mobile tests making long lines that circled the block. Those who came to be tested said they were grateful for the convenience of the mobile testing site, especially since it was free.

"Somebody came on a job site from another job that tested positive and they shut our job down and told us to stay home for two weeks and that's why we are here



Healthcare workers with the New Orleans Health Department, the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center and LCMC Health, guide dozens of residents on the process for free COVID-19 testing at a mobile unit on Friday, April 24th in Gert Town.

to get tested," said Johnny Jefferson, a New Orleans resident and a construction worker. He and his co-worker explained that they were not allowed to return to work until they got tested.

"Before, it [mobile testing] wasn't available, but now it is...So luckily, more or less it is convenient for the area where I come from," Jefferson added.

Health workers constantly walked back and forth to the lines to pass out water bottles, hand out

fresh masks, and to check on those in line to get tested.

"I think a lot of people are excited to be able to come and get tested whether you have symptoms or not; that's what I think is so great about it," said Kevin Sherman, a New Orleans Department of Health worker. "I think this community has shown great concern because they have been coming out to get tested," Sherman added.

Throughout the week the Xavier Community Outreach Center also

helped residents with questions they had about types of medications, how their health insurance would cover costs, and other related health concerns about the pandemic. Keeyan Davis, a Xavier pharmacy postgraduate one year resident student, said the testing progressed well and smoothly throughout the week.

"On day one it was a trickle. I think because it was the first day and people were just finding out about it," Davis said. "But then after that, it definitely spiked. So, Wednesday we had a good number of people and it was a much quicker day, once it reached 250 [tests], they cut off the line," Davis said.

Friday was similar in the number of people that showed up for testing, according to Davis.

Upon arrival, participants were given a number in the line to keep count on how many people had arrived to be tested. Once people got to the front of the line, the process of getting tested was usually about a 10 to 15-minute process.

Some residents came with folding chairs to sit in line as it moved. Those who did not have chairs and who were seen with canes or walking support were given a chance to sit under a tent and wait after being given a number.

Once people were tested, they were directed to tables near the exit where they could receive information from a Women, Infants and Children's (W.I.C.) program booth and the Xavier University Outreach Center booth on additional support. Representatives for the mobile campaign said they hoped to be able to have more sites in other hard-hit Black neighborhoods and that residents can learn more about testing options through the New Orleans Health Department's website: nola.gov/health-department/.

"Both units [the Xavier Community Outreach Center in Harahan and Gert Town] are here as part of the outreach," said Dr. William Kirchain, the Director of Xavier's College of Pharmacy Health and Wellness Center. "As best as we can, we are going to continue our participation with this as it moves around the city."

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Darnell and Denna, adopted 16-year-old Isaiah

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Mayor Cantrell Announces \$50 Million Small Business Loan Fund for Southern Businesses with Goldman Sachs and Hope Enterprise Corp

Data News Weekly Staff Edited Report

NEW ORLEANS — Mayor Cantrell recently announced that Goldman Sachs has committed \$50 million as part of its 10,000 Small Businesses initiative to loans for small businesses in New Orleans and across the south, in a partnership with Hope Enterprise Corporation, a leading community development financial institution (“CDFI”). Applications are currently being accepted and can be found by visiting the Hope Enterprise Corporation.

“I want to thank Goldman Sachs, Hope Enterprise Corporation and our federal partners for working together to make this happen. Goldman Sachs recognizes the value of meeting people where they are and ensuring that the support provided from the federal government must get into the hands of the people who need them most and in a timely fashion,” said Mayor LaToya



New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell and Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards have been at the forefront of the COVID-19 crisis providing leadership and direction during these crucial and critical times for the City and State.

Cantrell. “Small businesses are the backbone of our City’s economy, and now we can help our entrepreneurs to continue fueling this recovery.”

“We are humbled by the leadership of Mayor Cantrell, as well as Congressman Cedric L. Richmond, by establishing this partnership to ensure that entrepreneurs across the region are not without help,” said David M. Solomon, Chairman and Chief Execu-

tive Officer of Goldman Sachs. “Small businesses are a cultural and economic force, where the impact they have on their communities is matched only by their resilience.”

These loans, made through the U.S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), are an option for small businesses and non-profits

that have been unable to submit a PPP application through another lending institution.

Hope Enterprise Corporation will offer these loans directly to small business owners in New Orleans and across the south, who will be eligible for these loans to be partially or wholly forgiven if they maintain or rehire their workforce. The loans can be used for:

- Payroll costs.
- Interest on mortgages.

- Rent; and,
- Utilities

This capital commitment builds on existing investments by Goldman Sachs that support small businesses in New Orleans through the 10,000 Small Businesses initiative, which helps small businesses grow and create jobs by providing them with greater access to education, financial capital and business-support services. To date, over 750 business owners in New Orleans have graduated from the program. Nationally, two-thirds of graduates of the program report revenue growth within six months and nearly half report job growth.

Goldman Sachs will provide the capital as part of its \$550 million commitment to COVID-19 Relief, which includes \$500 million in capital to fund these loans, as well as a \$25 million grant to support CDFIs nationally in this effort and \$25 million in grants to first responders and other relief organizations.

Fleur De Lis

PRO-Active in the Midst of a Pandemic

Fleur De Lis Data News Weekly Columnist

When we hear the word “quarantine” or the words “stay at home” we automatically think of everything that we are unable to do. We can’t go out to eat, we can’t go to the beach or host large family gatherings. It becomes a very dreary and dreadful position to be postured in. Unless you are Angela L. Young and the people in her orbit.

Angela’s family and friends decided to be PRO-active in coming up with things that they can do while being under “stay at home” orders. Their goal is to remain postured in positivity despite what it looks and feels like. They have banned together to support one another and believe that on the other side of this pandemic, they are going to be better, healthier, stronger, more appreciative and full of faith.

How? By being intentional about their response to things. Angela said, “We are NOT staying at home watching the news all day. We recognize the negative effects that has on your mind and emotions.



Daphney celebrates her 50th birthday with a social distancing “Drive by, Wave and Sip” event!

We make it a point to DO SOMETHING as much as possible”. So Angela’s and the people in her orbit ride bikes, workout either at home or at Joe Brown Park, gather by the pool, participating in volunteer efforts, talk via group text or facetime quite often and most importantly, they attend church on line individually or collectively...all while practicing social distancing.

Most recently, Angela’s sister Daphney Young celebrated a birthday. They were supposed to be in Jamaica but due to COVID-19 those plans were halted. So, Angela and her Mom planned a social distancing “Drive by Wave and Sip” 50th Birthday Celebration. Over 35 car loads of people attended including



Angela, Daphney, Tiffany and LaToya volunteer to serve seniors in New Orleans East.

Councilmember Cyndi Nguyen.

In a world full of uncertainty, one thing is for sure, Angela and her circle are doing what it takes to create a world of certainty and their actions speaks volumes. “Faith without works is dead. We not only have faith, but we have faith backed up with action...we will win!” said Angela.

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Job Opportunity

Freelance Writers Wanted

Data News Weekly, “The People’s Paper,” is looking for freelance writers to join our team print and digital team. We want to hear from you if you are a working journalist, or an aspiring journalist who has 2 years or more of newspaper or PR writing experience. We need writers who can cover New Orleans news stories, ranging from local high school sports, community events, City Hall and entertainment. Experience in print is necessary, experience in digital and social media are encouraged.

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TOO MANY WASHINGTON POLITICIANS ARE PROTECTING **INSURANCE COMPANY PROFITS** OVER **BLACK HEALTH CARE**

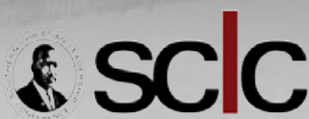
Too often, insurance companies refuse to cover emergency services. Either patients are forced to pay bills they cannot afford, or hospitals are shuttering. Congress claims to be tackling this challenge, but until the Congressional Black Caucus got involved, Congress was focused on protecting insurer profits, not people. Let's join leaders like Rev. Al Sharpton, the Congressional Black Caucus, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Black Women's Health Imperative, National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. and Dr. Julianne Malveaux in working to ensure that insurance companies expand their networks and cover more emergency services. This will maintain access to care in hard-hit Black communities.

**THE STATUS QUO MEANS HOSPITALS IN OUR COMMUNITIES
CLOSE FIRST. WE CANNOT LET THIS HAPPEN.**

Emergency services are already hard to come by in our communities.
Together, we can ensure that the old way of doing business -
putting insurance company profits
over people - **STOPS.**

JOIN US AND SUPPORT THE CBC

Help us work to make sure Congress passes a bill that keeps us healthy and alive -
by allowing insurance networks to grow and cover lifesaving services.



Dr. Benjamin F.
Chavis Jr.

Dr. Julianne Malveaux

For more information, visit: <https://nationalactionnetwork.net/newnews/black-americans-and-healthcare>