

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

# Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

Adonis C. Expose' 22nd Annual Toy Drive

FREE COPY

Data Zone Page 6

December 19 - December 25, 2020 55th Year Volume 34 [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com)

A Data News Weekly Exclusive

# Pandemic's Impact on Mental Health

Should Not be Ignored, Experts Say

Page 2



**Newsmaker**  
State Leaders Announce  
10-Year Plan for a  
Healthier Louisiana

Page 4

**State & Local**  
Pro Athletes  
support for New  
Orleans HBCUs



Page 5



# Pandemic’s Impact on Mental Health Should Not be Ignored, Experts Say



Dr. Danielle K. Wright, the Division Director of Navigate Nola

**Scott Lipscomb**  
Data News Weekly Contributor

The prolonged pandemic, combined with social isolation, is one of the areas, professionals say, has hit everyone’s emotional well-being extremely hard. While some people have lost their jobs, others have lost loved

ones and the ability to do the things that bring them happiness. Front line workers, who are witnessing the impact of the pandemic firsthand, are now reaching their breaking points.

“Compassion fatigue, emotional erosion that occurs in mental health professionals,” said Dr. Danielle K. Wright, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Public

Health Practitioner, and the Division Director of Navigate Nola, a community wellness organization. Wright shared how those who have been at the front lines in communities during the pandemic have often pushed their own mental health aside.

Wright joined other professionals at a virtual panel on Dec. 10th, organized by the Metropolitan Human

Cover Story, Continued on page 3.

INSIDE DATA	
Cover Story . . . . .	2
Newsmaker . . . . .	4
State & Local News . . .	5
Data Zone . . . . .	6
Commentary. . . . .	8
Special . . . . .	10
National News . . . . .	11

## DATA NEWS WEEKLY

P.O. Box 57347, New Orleans, LA 70157-7347 | Phone: (504) 821-7421 | Fax: (504) 821-7622  
editorial: datanewseditor@bellsouth.net | advertising: datanewsad@bellsouth.net

<b>Terry B. Jones</b> CEO/Publisher	<b>Contributors</b> Scott Lipscomb	<b>Art Direction &amp;</b> Production
<b>Edwin Buggage</b> Editor	<b>Manuel Scherif</b> Eric Connerly	<b>Pubinator.com</b>
<b>Sharonda Green</b> Executive Assistant	<b>Kira Mercado</b> Joe Ricks, Ph. D	<b>Editorial and</b> Advertising Inquiries
<b>June Hazeur</b> Accounting	<b>Mark Lennihan –</b> Pool/Getty Images Data News Weekly Staff Writers	<b>datanewsweeklyad</b> @gmail.com
	<b>Renee’ Dugue’</b>	<b>Distribution</b> by Terrence Lee

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

## Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

Services District's New Orleans Center and the Mental Health Association of Greater Baton Rouge.

"We have a natural tendency to sacrifice self-care to help others," Wright said. "Mental illness in our field is sleep deprivation, anxiety, depression." Wright shared that it is important that there are more public conversations on the mental toll of the pandemic and how to

income doesn't always match output and the pandemic brought extra pressure to provide," he said, adding his wife supported and encouraged him during this time. "I'm thankful for my support system and encourage everyone to find their people or person during these times," Harris said.

Teachers are another group of frontline workers who have

worked with education and policy reform, explained that society must begin to think about this current generation and the expectations for success.

"A lot of young adults have high stress levels due to not knowing if they'll have jobs or if their campuses will open back up. During this time, we must have a sense of community," Coco said.

The panelists encouraged listeners to become creative about finding new ways to have human connections. They indicated that mental health support is available through Metropolitan Human Services District of Louisiana, and that residents can call the crisis line number: 504-826-2675 for support.

"There is so much you can do

virtually to build connections. My college classmates have created [Facebook] Live events that have been awesome ways to get us together and keep us connected," Govan said. "We've been doing Zoom events, movie nights, etc. Create what you need and prioritize doing it," she said. "It will normalize for your peers the experience that you all are having."



Restaurant Owner and Chef Nina Compton



Visual Artist L. Kasimu Harris



Dr. Rashida Govan, the Executive Director of the New Orleans Youth Alliance

help citizens cope.

"Therapy once a week is my self-care. Scheduling social time with friends, as well as finding new interests and hobbies," Wright said.

An industry hit extremely hard by the pandemic was the restaurant business, said chef and restaurant owner Nina Compton, who explained the stress of the shutdown was particularly tough for owners and workers.

"I'm responsible for a lot of people. The restaurant is how a lot of my staff take care of their families," Compton said. "It's hard to go from super busy to not being able to come in. It was important to support my staff and show that we are like a family."

Compton explained that conversations around mental health should be taking place in workspaces. "A lot of people don't know how to ask for help, and a simple check in could be all you need to get your foot in the door," she said.

Local Visual Artist L. Kasimu Harris shared how local artists and entertainers have been coping. He said that in his own personal relationships, he has shifted the conversation to check in on the mental well-being of those closest to him.

"I felt a lack of purpose," Harris said. "I went from traveling all the time to unessential and out of work. When being a creative your



Attorney Jennifer Coco with New Pathways



Entrepreneur Minh Nguyen



WDSU Anchor Christina Watkins

struggled to motivate children and young people to learn in socially isolated ways.

"Mental illness manifests in a lot of women who work in the field of education or working with children through anxiety," said Dr. Rashida Govan, an educator, activist, and writer who is the Executive Director for the New Orleans Youth Alliance. "A lot of us experience vicarious trauma, or trauma residuals from helping others. When we aren't well, we can do a lot of damage," Govan said.

Roughly 1 in 4 young people ages 18 to 24 have considered suicide. Jennifer Coco, an attorney who has

Others are looking for ways to manage the new normal. Entrepreneur Minh Nguyen said he has thrown a lot of his old rules out the window during the pandemic.

"Balancing a job, 5-year-old, and 5-month-old was challenging. It definitely made me appreciate caregivers a lot more. This time also allowed me to appreciate my family and loved ones," Minh said. He also wanted to make sure his son still was able to be socialize even with distancing. "I got my son a Facebook portal which is basically like Facetime so he can talk to his friends or family," Minh said.

follow us on

twitter 

@DataNewsWeek



# State Leaders Announce 10-Year Plan for a Healthier State

**Manuel Scherif**  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

The COVID-19 Pandemic revealed the health inequities across the state. Louisiana, and, New Orleans, in particular, carried some of the worse numbers for COVID-19 deaths at the start of the lockdown in March. In response to such numbers, Gov. John Bel Edwards announced a 10-year, state-wide investment into healthcare access, health equity, and health outcomes across the state with a focus on urban, rural, and underserved communities.

Edwards stated that the initial first 5-years will see an investment of \$100 million to address the state's health disparities. State officials will work with New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell and Jefferson Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng in partnership with Ochsner Health and Xavier University of Louisiana, to improve the state's overall healthcare systems.

"Louisiana's unfortunate distinction of being ranked one of the least healthy states is not just a number – it reflects the lives and livelihood of our friends, neighbors, colleagues, and family," said Warner L. Thomas, the President and Chief Executive Officer of Ochsner Health, in a statement announcing the initiative. "We understand that accomplishing this aspirational goal will happen by coming together and we implore



Ochsner CEO Warner Thomas speaks at the launch of the 10-year Healthier State initiative.



Mayor LaToya Cantrell speaks at the launch of the 10-year Healthier State initiative.



Gov. John Bel Edwards launches the 10-year commitment to a Healthier Louisiana

other organizations, local leaders and community members to join us in this journey to create a healthier state," Thomas said.

America's Health Rankings placed Louisiana once again among the lowest ranked states when dealing with clinical, behavioral, environmental, and social factors. Currently, Louisiana placed 49th in 2020 in National Rankings, with COVID-19's spread in the state being a major factor that made New Orleans one of the hardest hit hotspots in the nation. Ochsner

Health said it will partner with Xavier, the Brees Dream Foundation, and other Health Advocacy Organizations to support, study, and plan ways to improve these rankings by analyzing health factors and disparities that identify what is needed in many communities.

"The impacts as it relates to the health disparities in the City wasn't and didn't fall fresh on us as it relates to COVID-19," said Mayor LaToya Cantrell at a press conference announcing the partnership.

"We learned even after Katrina

how vulnerable people are. Recognizing those disparities and seeing them once again from COVID-19 has really forced all of us to not only look in the mirror, but to double down on our efforts because it's not just an opportunity at this moment it's an obligation that we all have," Cantrell said.

This 10-year effort will take all stakeholders coming together, Cantrell added.

"Partnering with my alma mater Xavier University of Louisiana and focusing on equity because that means that's speaking to my

heart, and the dignity that our people deserve," she said. Xavier and Ochsner will work to develop the Ochsner Xavier Center for Health Equity to expand the pipeline for training and education of a diverse healthcare workforce in the state.

"Our health outcomes are driven by social factors," said Xavier's President Reynold Verret in a statement. "It is important that we come together to face these issues head on."



MAKE SURE THEY'RE IN THE RIGHT CAR SEAT

[NHTSA.gov/TheRightSeat](https://www.nhtsa.gov/TheRightSeat)



# Professional Athletes Highlight their Support for New Orleans HBCUs

Scott Lipscomb  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

Former 18-year NFL veteran and 5-time MVP Peyton Manning is using his retirement to highlight HBCUs in his birth city – New Orleans, and across the Gulf Coast. During the 2020 Capital One Golf Classic over the Thanksgiving weekend, he outfitted his golf cart with the shields of Louisiana HBCUs: Dillard University, Xavier University, Southern University at New Orleans, Southern University of Baton Rouge and Grambling University. He is part of a growing number of retired and current professional athletes investing in HBCU Athletic Programs and student athletes.

"It was great to see the University's brand featured on multiple national media outlets," said Dr. Kiki Baker Barnes, Dillard's Athletic Director, who noted that Manning had worn a Dillard hat during the tournament.

Manning's gesture is backed by a donation of endowed scholarships to six HBCUs in Louisiana and Tennessee through his Payback Foundation this year. The 3-year commitment will be used to support students and have been named after notable public figures connected to each institution.

"We are grateful to Peyton and Ashley Manning for their generous gift to Dillard University," said Dr. Walter Kimbrough, Dillard's Presi-



Dr. Kiki Baker Barnes, Dillard's Athletic Director.

dent, in a statement. "As a New Orleanian, Peyton knows Dillard's value in the community and nation. Having it named for Dr. [Michael] Lomax is a nice touch to a great scholarship gift," Kimbrough said.

Xavier's endowed scholarship will be named after long-time President and President-Emeritus Dr. Norman C. Francis.

"The University and especially the Athletics Department enjoy our connections with professional athletes and celebrities, specifically Peyton Manning in this instance," said Jason Horn, Xavier's Athletic Director. "The Manning's are a staple in the New Orleans community and it is great to have them support the local HBCUs. It was definitely



Jason Horn, Xavier University's Athletic Director

great to see Peyton wearing the Xavier cap during The Match Golf Event in November," Horn said.

In addition to football, former Pelicans player Jrue Holiday pledged the remainder of his 2020 salary toward combating systemic racism. Holiday selected Xavier University as a recipient of a donation through the Jrue and Lauren Holiday Social Justice Fund, which pledged \$5.3 million towards supporting Black-owned businesses, charities, and educational institutions.

"Xavier is grateful to be a recipient of this award from the Jrue and Lauren Holiday Social Justice Fund," said Xavier President Reynold Verret, in a statement. "Through its support of our mission

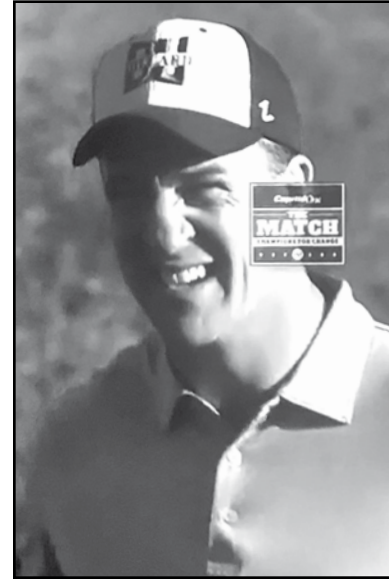


Alana Faust is a freshman volleyball player at Xavier University of Louisiana

to educate leaders who seek a more just and humane society, this act of generosity advances the cause of social justice across the nation," Verret said.

Current HBCU student athletes in the city said they are encouraged that professional athletes are supporting their programs and their institutions this year. It demonstrates their belief that HBCUs can not only educate but develop future professional athletes as well.

"Personally, I think there's a stigma that HBCUs are not as strong as [predominantly White institutions]. So, when I see pro-athletes use their platform to shed light on HBCUs, it's heartwarming," said Alana



Retired NFL Quarterback Peyton Manning displayed his support for New Orleans and Gulf Coast HBCUs at the Thanksgiving Capital One The Match Golf Fundraiser broadcast on TNT on Nov. 27th. Manning was born in New Orleans.

Faust, a freshman volleyball player at Xavier. Faust, who was the league most-valuable player for her high school team during her junior and senior year said she is encouraged to see more star athletes consider HBCUs for their college career, just like top five-star college basketball recruit Makur Maker, who chose to play at Howard University this year.

"I hope to leave a legacy at Xavier by showing that HBCUs have just as much talent if not more as other schools and how they are a safe space for Blacks," Faust said.

Help Wanted

## Advertising Sales

- Our Sales Reps sell online and print advertising space to local, regional and national businesses of all sizes throughout the US.
- You must love talking to people, as this job requires you to be on the phone constantly. You will spend your time making contact and building relationships with business owners all over the nation.
- Uncapped commissions for unlimited earning potential.

Call (504) 821-7421 to apply.



We may be keeping our distance,  
but we are in this together.

• Stay Calm.

☎ Stay Connected.

🏃 Stay Active.

#AloneTogether



Go to [AloneTogether.com](https://AloneTogether.com) for ways  
to take care of yourself and others.



# King Zulu 2017 Adonis C. Expose' 22nd Annual Toy Drive

**Eric Connerly**  
Data News Weekly Contributor

King Zulu 2017 Adonis C. Expose' held his 22nd Annual Toy Drive - Drive-By on Saturday, December 12, 2020 from 1pm to 4pm outside of the Roy E. Glapion Hall. Many attendees drove by with an unwrapped toy(s) in hand to spread some holiday cheer. The event was a success as over 1000 toys collected were and will be donated to Zulu's Toys for Tots. Over \$1500 was collected to purchase additional toys.

Adonis Expose' says of this year's toy drive, "This year because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Toy Drive was a Drive-By Toy Drive. It's safe to say - there's no safe way we could gather to have a normal toy drive with a festive crowd mix and mingling in a building bringing new toys. This Drive-By Toy Drive was safe and festive as we had Santa Claus, Zulu's Toys for Tots Committee and Zulu members (all masked up) on the sidewalk waving at the passing attendees in their cars as they collected the new unwrapped toys. There was also DJ Gator playing holiday music to spread some holiday cheer."

The Toys for Tots Drive-By Giveaway will take place on Sunday, December 20th from 8am to 1pm at Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office at 2800 Perdido Street.



2017 Zulu King Adonis Expose' held his 22nd Annual Toy Drive. Many came out to support by donating toys for kids in need. The Toys for Tots Drive-By Giveaway will take place on Sunday, December 20th from 8AM to 1PM at the Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office at 2800 Perdido Street.



People came out and social distanced to donate toys for kids in need in the City of New Orleans.



Adonis Expose' with Orleans Parish Civil Clerk of Court Chelsey Richard Napoleon



Many toys were donated in addition to \$1500 dollars collected to purchase additional gifts.



Members of the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club continue their mission in supporting many causes in the community.



Adonis Expose' (R-L) with Ranord Darenburg, Judge-Elect, Orleans Parish Juvenile Court, Angelle Wilson and others who came out to support the toy drive.

If anyone wants to donate please contact Zulu's Chairman of Toys for Tots Committee Melvin Labat at (504) 919-9256 or email him at [melvin.labat@spr.doe.gov](mailto:melvin.labat@spr.doe.gov)



# THE STRONGEST, MOST ADVANCED SILVERADOS EVER.



## THE CHEVY SILVERADO AND SILVERADO HD.

With eight available cameras and up to 15 views<sup>1</sup>, Silverado offers best-in-class camera technology. And with the most functional bed of any competitor, offering best-in-class standard cargo bed volume<sup>2</sup>, these trucks make quick work of the biggest jobs. Silverado and Silverado HD. Proof that when it comes to building strong, class-leading trucks, our toughest competition is ourselves.

### FIND NEW ROADS™

<sup>1</sup> Read the vehicle Owner's Manual for important feature limitations and information. Some camera views require available accessory camera and installation. Not compatible with all trailers. See your dealer for details. <sup>2</sup> Excludes other GM vehicles.





# Marc H. Morial Returns Home to Kick-Off his Independent Bookstores Virtual Gumbo Coalition Leadership Lecture Series and Book Tour

## Data News Weekly Staff Edited Report

NEW ORLEANS, La. December 13, 2020 — Marc H. Morial's Gumbo Coalition Leadership has partnered with Harper Collins and One Street Books to host this National Lecture Series and virtual book signing. The kick-off events will take place on Thursday, December 17th from 7:00pm until 9:00pm at Community Book Center and Friday, December 18th from 1:30pm until 3:30pm at Blue Cypress Books. Both book events will broadcast live on Facebook and will feature a question-and-answer session with Marc. For more information about the Gumbo Coalition visit: <http://gumbocoalition.com/> Or

<https://www.rwnyork.com/about/gumbo-coalition-university>

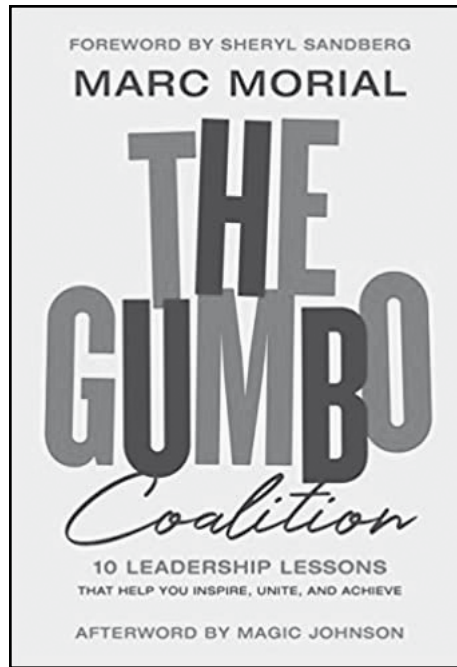
"I am looking forward to kicking off our virtual tour in my hometown. There's no place like New Orleans in the world and it has to start here," says Morial. "Small businesses are the backbone of our communities and I recognize the importance of supporting indepen-



Marc H. Morial is President and CEO of the National Urban League (NUL), the nation's largest Historic Civil Rights and Urban Advocacy Organization. He served as Mayor of New Orleans from 1994 to 2002. He is the author of "The Gumbo Coalition: 10 Leadership Lessons That Help You Inspire, Unite and Achieve."

dent, locally owned and operated bookstores on this tour. I will be at each of the bookstores (Community Book Center and Blue Cypress Books) communicating with patrons via Facebook Live."

Our nation at its core has been broken and Marc H. Morial has written a book that is exactly what coalition builders, leaders, educators, students, government official and entities need right now. In



his book, The Gumbo Coalition: 10 Leadership Lessons That Help You Inspire, Unite and Achieve, Morial lays out a strategic plan and provides tools to help us build coalitions, create diverse and in-

clusive work places and communities that will unite and inspire all to move into greatness. Filled with inspirational anecdotes and action-oriented leadership strategies, The Gumbo Coalition reveals that with the right tools, significant change is possible. This book is a must read for everyone.

**The public is invited to attend these events via Facebook live.**

### Community Book Center

Thursday, December 17, 2020 / 7:00PM-9:00PM  
Purchase Book: [readcbc.com](http://readcbc.com)  
Join Virtual Event: <https://bluecypressbooks.indielite.org/book/9781400216284>

### Blue Cypress Books

Friday, December 18, 2020 / 1:30 PM-3:30 PM  
Purchase Book: <https://facebook.com/readcbc>  
Join Virtual Event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1177110709357014>



**His first football season, Isaiah told us, 'Wear a jersey with my name on it. I want everyone to know you're here for me.'**

Darnell and Denna, adopted 16-year-old Isaiah

**LEARN ABOUT ADOPTING A TEEN  
YOU CAN'T IMAGINE THE REWARD**

[ADOPTUSKIDS.ORG](http://ADOPTUSKIDS.ORG)



Data  
News  
Weekly

Advertiser



# From Desire To Purpose...

## A Dreamer's Journey

### *What's Next As You Step Into The New Year*



**Renée Dugué**  
Co-Founder and Executive  
Director of Reborn and Rising

As the end of 2020 is upon us and we ease into another bi-polar Southern winter, let's do a temperature check on our external and internal climates. When we reflect on our experiences this year, and its effects on us, an immediate response could be... "We are not ok!" COVID deaths, rising debts, blatant brutality, racist mentality, business/school closures, foreclosures, unethical policies, pending forced vaccines...most of us just want to wake up from this nightmare we've been forced to cover half of our face, shelter in place and suffer through. Scared, helpless, and hopeless like little children, we're looking to see who we can run to for help to get us through what

feels like unprecedented times.

Take a moment though, to think about what our ancestors felt when they were shackled, shuffled, and stuffed like sardines in a ship. Imagine their racing thoughts and roller-coaster of emotions, traversing the waves of the ocean as their bodies were drowning in waste, stinking, while their spirits were sinking. They too were scared, helpless, and hopeless. There was no one or place they could run to. What did they do? Call it Voodoo, some say hoodoo, but they knew they had to pull through...and they did. Our people did. And we will too.

As we analyze our situations and assess where we are physically, financially, spiritually, there may be an inclination to become overwhelmed. Identifying the who, what, why, where, when, and how in the world are we gonna get out of this state seems daunting. In those stressful moments, pause, close your eyes, take a deep breath, and look within. Draw from the Melanated Magic and supernatural strength of our ancestors to reawaken the collective spirituality and belief in ourselves that has



Renée Dugué taking time away from her WALK4WATER Campaign's efforts to provide clean water to Africans in need for her solar bathing & meditation ritual. She is a Healer, Artist, Writer, Humanitarian, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Reborn & Rising in Houston, TX. She welcomes kindred soul connections and the opportunity to share her personal philosophy of Healing through Helping. Visit [ReneeDugue.com](http://ReneeDugue.com) to connect and learn more.

been stripped away and polluted. Realize you were born with all you need to survive and succeed. Be encouraged to move from whispered instructions that speak to your heart. Connect with kindred beings who are also seeking to rise above and beyond the chaos into the calmness, clarity, and comfort of the sun. Through the sharing of our experiences, we will find the strength to heal, move forward on our paths, discover our passions, and true purpose, and explore tangible possibilities of making our wildest dreams come true.

Regardless of your current circumstance, you're still standing. Our Creator woke you and me up today, on purpose, because our soul still has a purpose to fulfill in this plane. Each rising of the sun gives us another opportunity to be who Our Creator is calling us to be. We must fully embrace every day as a wake-up call to rise, shine, and share the beautiful light that lives in all of us. Prioritizing peace, taking each step in gratitude, I walk every day, literally, on my journey from desire to purpose. Be encouraged as you take the next steps on your path.

## Process is Necessary for Progress

### Part II



**Joe Ricks, Ph. D**  
Chair, Division of Business  
Xavier University of Louisiana

As stated in part 1, everything learned about a vaccine or any type of biomedical treatment is based on the data gathered during clinical studies. This fact guides my concern about the lack of participation of African Americans in clinical trials in general. A history of distrust is the most common reason given for a lower participation rate for African Americans. I'd like to add an additional historical data point for African Americans to consider

when thinking about clinical trials.

In 2005 a two-drug combination pill called BiDil may become the first prescription drug approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) specifically for African Americans. BiDil is a treatment for a slowly failing heart, and African Americans are more likely to suffer from heart failure and die from it. The FDA rejected the drug in 1997, stating that tests conducted on a multiracial population did not prove the drug's benefits. However, when the data was re-examined and focused on race the results clearly showed that the drug worked better for African Americans. A second study, The African American Heart Failure Trial (A-HeFT) with an all African American population, confirmed the results of the first study with regard to the African American population. In fact, the planned 18-month study was stopped after

10 months and approved due to the effectiveness of the drug.

The approval of BiDil was controversial on a couple of fronts: First it forced the scientific community to assess the wisdom and ethics of conducting race-based medical research when the latest genomic science had failed to provide much support for the use of racial categories in medicine. Additionally, BiDil, as with most research trials for drugs, was funded by the pharmaceutical industry and there were accusations that NitroMed, the sponsoring company, was more interested in marketing than the advancement in health. No matter one's beliefs regarding the use of race in biomedical research, the economics of research trials, or an individual's perspective on the history of African Americans and medical research, one fact about the BiDil case is indisputable: because of African American participation in

the original and A-HeFT trials an effective treatment for people who declared themselves as African American with heart disease was identified and saved many Black lives.

While there is a high level of awareness about the Tuskegee experiments as well as the negative and inhumane treatment of African Americans in the name of clinical research, history is rarely all one sided. I think it is important to raise the level of awareness of our history to include successes in clinical trials, no matter how small there might be. The BiDil case demonstrates the possibilities when we are a part of clinical trials. I believe it is critical to reiterate, if we're not a part of the sample data, the safety and effectiveness of medications on African Americans will be unknown. We can't have progress without being a part of the process.

**FROECLUSRE  
MAEKS  
EEVRYHTIGN  
COFNUISNG.**

GET CLEAR ON FORECLOSURE OPTIONS.  
**CALL 1-888-995-HOPE.**

No one is good at going through foreclosure. Thankfully, there's a way for you to get free, trusted advice. Call the Hope Hotline today and speak to a HUD approved counseling agency.





# Violence Against Men often Overlooked, Rarely Spoken

**Kira Mercado**  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

Stay-at-home orders in 2020 correlated with an increase in forms of domestic violence, assaults, and intimate partner violence. While one in four women typically experience forms of intimate violence, only one in 10 men acknowledge that they do. Advocates say they saw a decrease in the use of Violence Prevention Services during lockdowns, however hospitals recorded a rise in treating assault related injuries ranging from physical injuries to rape.

Local advocates say they are working to destigmatize seeking help for men in particular who are the victims of sexual assault and intimate partner violence.

"Because of society's stigmas, men who are victims of sexual abuse are less likely to come forth with their stories," said Mark Medina, an Outreach and Education Coordinator for the Metropolitan Center for Women and Children in New Orleans. A former marine, Medina works to support counseling for victims of sexual assault trauma.

In a Dec. 3rd virtual talk on "Violence Against Men," Medina explained forms of sexual violence, and how to prevent, identify, and deal with trauma for men.

"Sexual violence is any unwanted sexual contact, it can be verbal or physical," Medina explained. "Ev-



Mark Medina works to destigmatize violence against men through the Metro Center of Women and Children in New Orleans.

erybody has the right; everybody is entitled to decide what happens with their body. Nobody has the right to step on that," Medina added.

The spectrum of sexual violence spans three main areas. Sexual harassment is the most common and is any unwanted attention or advancement regarding sexual gratification. Next is sexual assault, Medina said, which is any sexual contact or activity without consent that stops short of rape or attempted rape. Then finally is rape, which

is sexual intercourse that is vaginal, anal, or oral penetration by a body part or object, he said.

"At the moment it may seem like the person you are with may be into it and it can become unclear if someone is rejecting you," he said. "Before there was a saying 'no means no' but now it is 'yes means yes,'" he said. However, victims are often pressured due to coercion or can easily be manipulated and persuaded into sexual activities.

For less confusion, Medina said it is easier for two people to agree

through words or overt actions, so it is clear that they are both on the same page with regards to intimacy. This doesn't apply to minors who are mentally impaired to make proper consent and are particularly vulnerable when under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

It may also seem that woman "can be the only ones" to be sexually assaulted but actually, it is just as much common with men, Medina said. Data shows that 1-in-6 men have been abused or sexually assaulted in their lifetime, and be-

tween 14-percent and 18-percent of men were sexually assaulted before the age of 18. Another study conducted by End Rape on Campus (EROC) found that 1-in-16 heterosexual men will be a sexually assaulted at the college age.

"There are many misconceptions that men can't be assaulted because they are seen as dominant or masculine figures who should be able to fight off any attack," Medina said. Given these misconceptions, it is common for male victims to hide their assault and use other behavioral actions to cope with their trauma, he said. Toxic masculinity is also common amongst men with past sexual abuse. These men perform excessive actions to prove their masculinity to hide the shame of their own trauma.

Victims usually blame themselves by thinking that there was something they could have done to prevent or stop their assault. Medina suggested that loved ones do not push a victim into coming out with their story, but to allow them to do it on their own terms. Medina said that local resources like the Metro Center and national hotlines for male assault victims at 1(800) 675- HOPE (4673), offer resources for helping men get help for assault-related trauma.

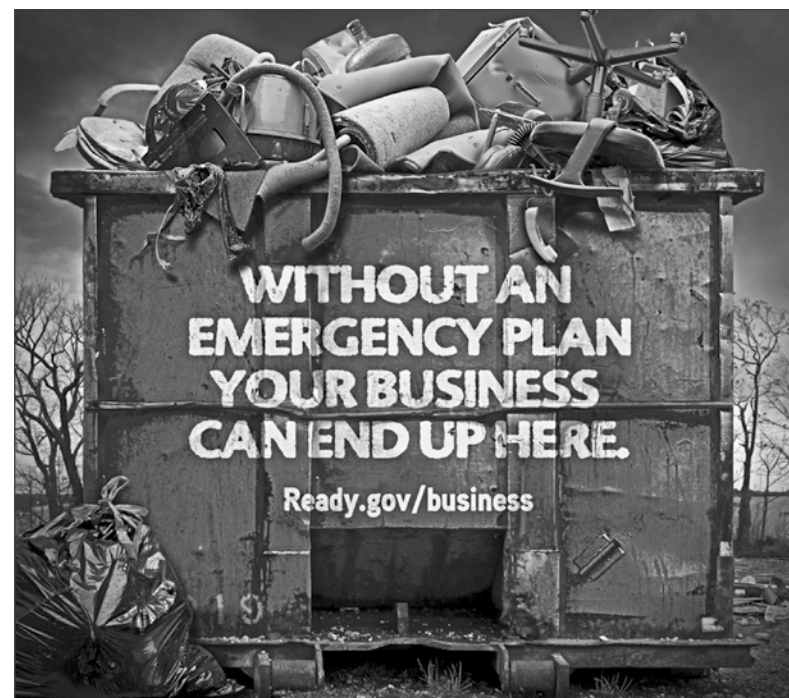
"Everyone deals with their trauma differently, some more negatively than others, but it is no one else's right to try and speed up someone's healing," Medina said.

Help Wanted

## Photojournalist

- Shoot, and edit still and video content for web, print and broadcast on deadline
- Work with reporters, assignment desk editors, and production staff and independently in the newsgathering process
- Gather relevant information, names and titles from assigned events.

Call (504) 821-7421 to apply.





# Black Critical Care Nurse Among 1st in US to Receive COVID-19 Vaccine

Data News Weekly Staff  
Edited Report

A New York City ICU Nurse became the first New Yorker, and possibly the first American, to receive an authorized COVID-19 vaccine Monday, receiving her injection in a live-streamed process.

Sandra Lindsay, a Critical Care Director, was given the injection in Long Island Jewish Medical Center, Queens, to applause from those watching.

Queens was the hardest-hit borough of the hardest-hit city in the nation; the medical center where Ms. Lindsay works has seen well over 100,000 COVID-19 patients, and in April they had over 3,500 patients in their hospitals.

Andrew Cuomo, the Governor of New York, described it as "the final chapter".

The arrival of the vaccine comes



Sandra Lindsay, left, a nurse at Long Island Jewish Medical Center, is inoculated with the COVID-19 Vaccine by Dr. Michelle Chester, December 14, 2020 in the Queens borough of New York City. The rollout of the Pfizer and BioNTech Vaccine, the first to be approved by the Food and Drug Administration, ushers in the biggest vaccination effort in U.S. history. (Photo by Mark Lennihan - Pool/Getty Images)

as the United States is bracing for yet another grim milestone. By the end of Monday, at least 300,000 Americans will have died from complications related to COVID-19, according to Johns Hopkins University Data, and more than 16 million have been infected.

In what is a historical moment for the nation in the war against COVID-19, that Lindsay, a Black woman, was one of the first Americans to receive the COVID-19 vaccine wasn't lost on her fellow Black health care workers.

"Wow, goosebumps!" tweeted Dr. Uché Blackstock, CEO of Advancing Health Equity and a Yahoo News Medical Contributor. "The first person vaccinated in NYC is a Black woman receiving the vaccine from another Black woman against a virus that has disproportionately killed Black Americans due to systemic racism."

## DATA CLASSIFIED

Call 504-821-7421 to  
place your classified ad.

### 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.

Compensation is competitive and great story ideas will be appreciated.

If you are interested, please email your resume and 3 writing samples to: [terrybjones@bellsouth.net](mailto:terrybjones@bellsouth.net) and [datanewseditor@bellsouth.net](mailto:datanewseditor@bellsouth.net).

We can't wait to hear from you!



Find us on:  
**facebook®**

*more photos  
more stories  
more data*

This space can be  
yours for only \$80

Call Now!

**504-821-7421**



WHEN  
ICONIC MEETS  
INNOVATIVE  
THE  
RESULT  
IS ELECTRIC!



BUILT *Ford* PROUD

\*Preproduction computer generated image shown. Available late 2020.