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The State of MLK’s Dream 2021



In these important times for Democracy of the nation; the Dream of MLK’s colorblind America is more important than ever to secure the future of the country’s survival.

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

As we near this year’s MLK Holiday, it is one where we see the transfer of power in our nation with the election of a new president in Joe Biden, and the historical election of the nation’s first African American woman Kamala Harris as Vice-President.

And while these are historic times in ways that many believe are bringing the nation closer now where

a person can be judged not by the color of their skin, but the content of their character; conversely we are witnessing a Civil War like atmosphere where some believe that progress for some means their version of the American Dream is under attack.

Recently, while certifying the Presidential Election, an insurrection took place at the Capitol where some Trump supporters stormed in an act of defiance one would expect in a Third World country, not the United States.

It is at this time that MLK’s Dream becomes even more important for a nation that is trying to determine which course it will take in its future as it experiments in Democracy is under attack.

The State of the Dream

“We have certainly made advances, but it is obvious that a lot more can be done. The uprisings we see that is occurring right now just illustrates just how far we have to go,” says Royce Duplessis, a Louisiana State

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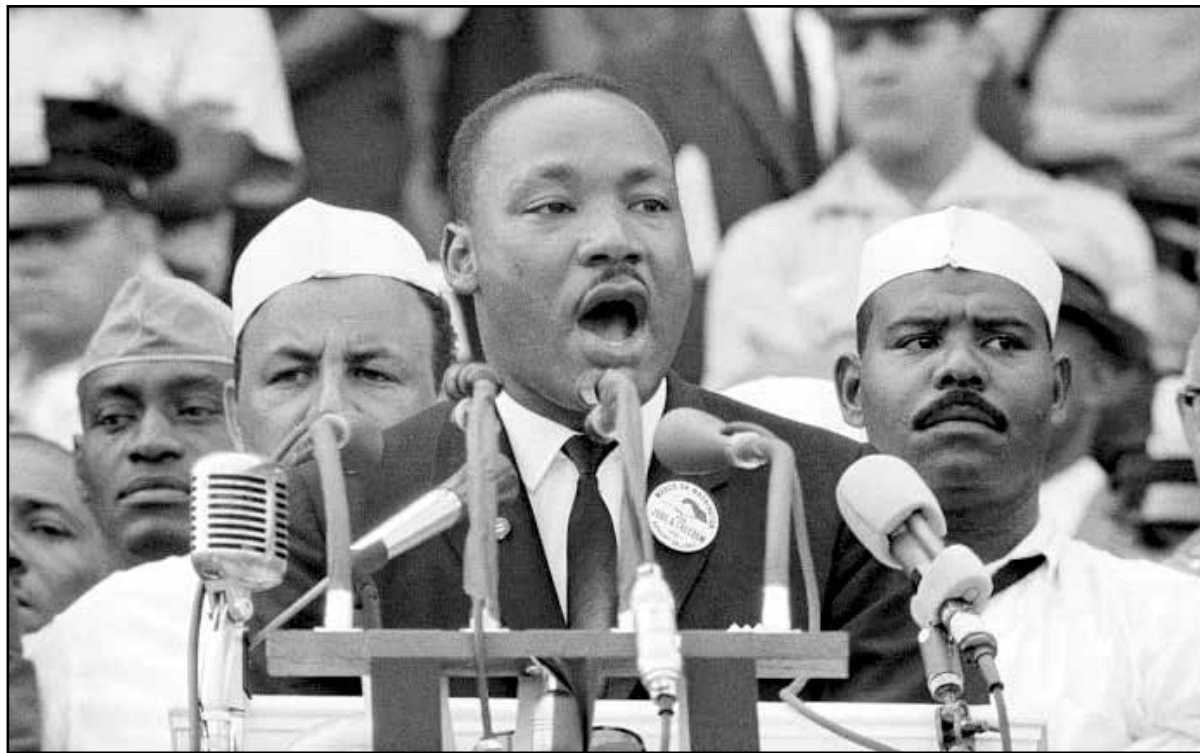
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The spirit of activism have been renewed as more people are taking an interest in social justice issues in America.



Mia X, is a legendary rapper, author, educator and activist who is using her platforms to bring voice to issues of inequality.



Royce Duplessis, is a State Representative from District 93 who believes that there have been many gains in Civil Rights, but says that much more needs to be done to make MLK's Dream a reality.



National Urban League President and Former New Orleans Mayor, is encouraged by young people taking the mantle of leadership. He feels this passing of the baton is important to continue the legacy fighting for issues surrounding justice in America.

Representative and Democrat serving District 93.

Most agree that while there's undoubtedly been progress for African Americans that much work still needs to be done.

"What I see is definitely a dream that has been deferred. I don't see everyone working together. I don't see all races, colors and creeds working together and there are economic disparities and right now I do not see these issues addressed directly to heal the communities affected by these things on a daily basis," remarks Alexis Sakari, who is an educator, artist and activist.

In a year that's exposed the open wounds of the continued inequalities and systemic racism that continues to exist in America, there is indeed much work that must be done to make King's Dream a reality.

A Dream Agenda

And while many remember Dr. King as one who inspired a nation and the world as a great orator,

the Civil Rights

Movement was attached to changing public policy that kept African Americans resigned to second class citizenship.

This point is not lost on Marc Morial, President of the National Urban League, and former Mayor of the City of New Orleans.

"In this time there are many issues that are important. Voting Rights and Criminal Justice Reform and addressing issues around health disparities, economic opportunities and access to quality education."

Morial has had the opportunity to speak with President-Elect Joe Biden and feels optimistic that they can work together to improve the lives of African Americans and those on the margins of society.

"We have an administration coming into office that we can work with to move forward with an agenda that is more inclusive and can empower more people in the country."



Alexis Sakari, is an educator, activist and artist who is optimistic about the Dream of MLK becoming a reality, but feels all must do their part.

It Takes A Village to Make the Dream A Reality

Alexis Sakari, who on a daily basis gets an up-close view of the future generation as a teacher

says she sees young people who are more open to embrace a society where there is more inclusion and equality. Feeling that the potential is there but realizes that all hands must be on deck to make the "Dream" a reality.

"I am hopeful that these things will be addressed, but it is not up to one person, but each individual person doing their part. For me working in the arts and being an educator, I am doing my part, but it is up to others and to everyone to do their part."

It will take like-minded people working together for progress says State Representative Royce Duplessis.

"I think just always being on the side of right and righteousness and we're not going to always agree, but we need people at all levels; we need elected leaders, community organizers, teachers, volunteers,

we need everyone to view this community as their responsibility and that we all have a role to play and we all have a part to play in the success or failure of this community."

Lessons in Leadership and the Next Generation

In this generation we are seeing a different breed of leaders and movements happening in America. But it is important to note that the trailblazers have already lit the torch that lights the path to a bright day and the fulfillment of the dream.

This point is emphasized by Marc Morial, who recently released a book on leadership: "The Gumbo Coalition: 10 Lessons That Help You Inspire, Unite and Achieve."

Coming from a family dedicated to service and steeped in a

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What's Your Fashion DNA?



Tracee Dundas
Fashion Stylist

True style comes from knowing who you are on the inside (your inner essence) and being able to reflect that on the outside through the clothes you choose to wear. As you evolve, mature, and discover new interest it's only natural that the same would happen with your fashion choices. However, it is quite easy to get stuck in a style rut and forget what message you are conveying with the fashion style.

It's been said that you never get a second chance to make a good first impression. Studies show that it takes only seven seconds for someone to form an opinion about you. Bear in mind this is solely based on nonverbal communication. The brain makes a thousand computations in lighting speed: Are you approachable? Is what you're wearing age appropriate? Are you dressed suitable for the occasion (wedding, business meeting, office party)? Are you trustworthy, competent, likeable, or confident?

It's easy to get comfortable in a routine and lose sight of the fact that how you dress is still a key element that defines who you are. Your life situation may have changed. Maybe your body is not as slender as it once was. Perhaps your taste in clothes have changed. You realize that you will feel a whole lot better if you look better, but somehow you can't seem to get around achieving it.

Ever see a stylish woman walking down the street and wonder how she manages to look so darn good? A colleague that always shows up for work so well pulled together. Or a friend that seem always to be effortlessly chic? These ladies don't have the help of a personal fashion

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TAKE THIS QUIZ TO GET A BETTER PERSPECTIVE OF YOUR STYLE DNA:

- 1) What reaction (if any) do you typically get from your fashion styles?
(No reactions, a second look, a big gasp, compliments).
- 2) What does your current image say about you?
(Confident and classy or outdated and old fashion)
- 3) Describe your current fashion style in three words? (Be honest)
- 4) How would your Mother/ Daughter/Sister or BFF describe your fashion style?
(This may be a good time to get their opinion)
- 5) What colors dominate your wardrobe?
- 6) Do you preplan what you are going to wear or randomly pull something from your closet? (Preplanning the night before doesn't take a lot of effort and gives you extra time in the morning)
- 7) Do you have a closet full of clothes, but still feel you have nothing to wear?
(Holding on to clothes you've outgrown, out-loved, or out-of-style)
- 8) If something is stained, ripped, too tight or too big, do you wear it anyway and think no one will really notice? (You're only fooling yourself...everyone notices! Remember your appearance is the first thing someone will take note of when meeting you)
- 9) Does your fashion style reflect your high school years, college years, or maternity years?
(Out with the old and in with the current)
- 10) When shopping are you focused on sales and bargains and not quality, style and fit?
- 11) Have you worn the same hair and makeup style for the last 10, 15 or 20 years (yikes)?

(See answer above)



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stylist. They've learned that half the battle of knowing how to dress is being able to identify their fashion DNA!

There are no right or wrong answers. It's about understanding who you are, embracing it and allowing your personality to shine through the fashions you wear. Style is about knowing yourself as well as knowing who you want to portray and building a style that speaks volumes when you walk into a room.

Fashion Stylist: Tracee Dundas | @fashionablyyoursnola PHOTOS COURTESY OF PINTEREST

Jason Williams Inaugurated as New Orleans District Attorney

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

It was a historic day on January 11, 2020 as newly inaugurated District Attorney Jason Williams was sworn in, promising there will be a new way of doing business at the DA's office.

During his campaign Williams pledged to reform the office that was racked in controversy under his predecessor Leon Cannizzaro.

"Fighting for victims does not mean stacking up convictions. Fighting for victims does not mean using police and prosecutorial power to intimidate those caught up in the legal system," said Williams during his inaugural address as he was surrounded by supporters and family members.



Jason Williams is the new District Attorney of New Orleans. Williams is part of a group of DA's across the country that are reformers, but stressing this does not mean that his office will not work hard to keep those who break the public trust to account with the full force of the DA's power to prosecute those who commit crime.

Williams is part of a group of DA's across the country that are reformers, but stressing this does not mean that his office will work hard to keep those who break the public trust to account with the full force of the DA's power to prosecute those who commit crime.

In his Inaugural address he stated "To be clear we will hold people who harm this community accountable. Let me say that again. We will hold people who harm this community accountable,"

Jason Williams is making history as the second African American District Attorney of the City of New Orleans. He promises to be fair but firm and run the office in an efficient and effective manner and keep the people of the City safe.

State & Local News

New Orleans Reverts to Modified Phase One to Combat Recent Spike in COVID-19 Cases

Eric Connerly
Data News Weekly
Contributor

In a move to help reduce the spike in cases of COVID-19 in New Orleans, Mayor Cantrell made a big move declaring that the City is going back to a modified Phase I.

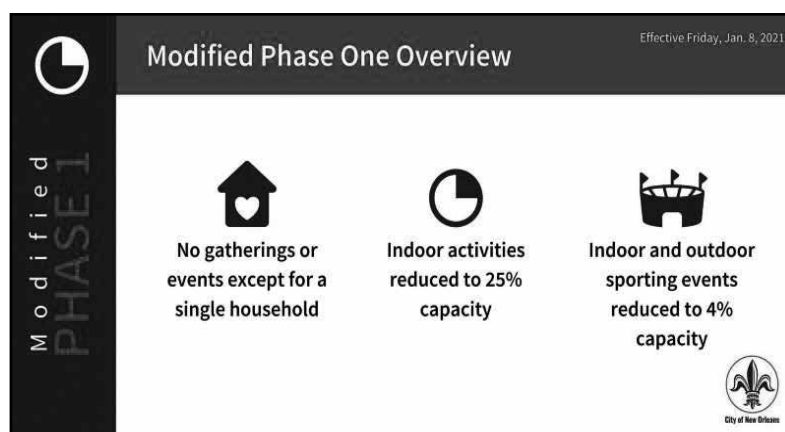
This move is because recent data from the State's Department of Health, that there are nearly 6,900 new cases, bringing the total over 333,000.

In Orleans Parish over the course of the COVID-19 Pandemic there has been a total of 22,171 cases and 685 residents have died.

This rise in cases have prompted Mayor Cantrell to revert Orleans Parish back to a modified Phase 1.

Recently, the numbers have been staggering with the positivity rate in New Orleans reaching 10.4 percent. This is nearly double recent positivity cases equaling 5.5 percent.

Some of the specifics regarding



Because of an increase in New COVID-19 cases, New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell, recently announced that the City will revert back to a modified Phase One in an attempt to help reduce the number of new cases in the City of New Orleans.

a modified Phase 1 includes:

Reducing indoor capacities at businesses to 25 percent.

Indoor and outdoor sporting events will be reduced to four percent capacity.

Gatherings will be restricted to those in the same household only.

Prohibited activities include indoor activities at bars and brewer-

ies, no large gatherings, special events, or live entertainment.

These restrictions go into effect Friday, January 8, 2021, and will remain in effect until January 29, 2021 when Mayor Cantrell and her team will determine if the City will stay in a modified Phase 1 depending on the number of new positive cases.

Commentary

New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce Op-Ed Donald Rouse, Sr. (Rouses Market)

LaVerne Toombs
Executive Director New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce (NORBCC)



LaVerne Toombs.

The New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce was disappointed to learn that Donald Rouse, Sr., co-owner of Louisiana based and Gulf Coast Regional Grocery Chain Rouses Market, participated in the treasonous rally that led to the attack on our nation's Capital on Wednesday, January 6, 2021. This behavior is unconscionable and is unacceptable for someone who conducts business in the metropolitan New Orleans area.

Donald Rouse, Sr.'s attendance at the event in support of overthrowing the will of the people after a free and lawful election - at the very time that our leaders in Congress were carrying out their constitutional duty to certify the electoral votes - is abhorrent and should not be tolerated.

In the Spring of 2020, in the wake of the unlawful and violent death of George Floyd and others, the New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce presented a "Call to Action" which outlined how the City of New Orleans should move

forward to increase diversity, inclusion, and equity. Wednesday's events laid bare the inherent racism that has plagued this country for over 400 years.

In this vein, the New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce condemns the actions of Mr. Rouse. In response to his behavior, we implore that the Greater New Orleans Region joins us in support of Black-owned grocery stores and food businesses, including NORBCC members.

Our sincere hope is that we can move toward more kindness, understanding, and equity in the United States of America in this dark time in our nation's history. The Chamber looks forward to a peaceful inauguration of President-Elect Joe Biden and Vice-President-Elect Kamala Harris on January 20, 2021.

President-Elect Biden Says Police would have Reacted Far Different with Black Lives Matter Protestors

Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

President-elect Joe Biden pulled no punches on Thursday when he spoke about the violent mob that rioted, looted, and ransacked the U.S. Capitol a day earlier.

The actions from the mob of President Donald Trump supporters contributed to death, destruction, and global embarrassment for the United States.

The Delaware Democrat spoke of his granddaughter sending him a photo of armed security guards and law enforcement standing at the Lincoln Memorial during a Black Lives Matter protest last year.

"She said, 'Pop, this isn't fair. No one can tell me if it had been a group of Black Lives Matter protesting yesterday, they would not have been treated very, very different than the mob of thugs that stormed the Capitol,'" Biden relayed.

"We all know that it is true. And it is unacceptable. Totally unacceptable," Biden remarked.

Black Lives Matter officials had earlier made the same observation.

In news interviews following the Capitol's chaotic scene, Toni Sanders of Black Lives Matter called the treatment of the pro-Trump rioters a double standard.

Sanders and others took note of how some of the Capitol officers



A mob of Trump supporters stormed the Capitol in an attempt to stop the certification of the election of Joe Biden as President. Many observers say that this lax law enforcement would have never happened had the protestors been Black.

opened gates and let the mob into the immediate area outside the building's doors.

Some officers were seen taking selfies with protestors.

"I am enraged by the light treatment that these terrorists are getting," Sanders demanded.

"They have guns. They have attacked the police. They have attacked innocent people who are just in the area, and yet they have not been beaten and teargassed and

had flash-bangs thrown at them the way we had all summer long. We didn't have any weapons. All we had were our voices saying, 'Black lives matter.'"

Philadelphia 76ers coach Doc Rivers echoed Sanders and Biden's comments.

"I will say it because I don't think a lot of people want to," Rivers announced. "Can you imagine today, if those were all Black people storming the Capitol, and what would

have happened? That, to me, is a picture that is worth a thousand words for all of us to see."

Biden also implored media members to not label the mob at the U.S. Capitol as "protestors."

"They weren't protesters. Don't dare call them protesters. They were a riotous mob, insurrectionists, domestic terrorists," the President-Elect stated.

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history of progress as the son of the City's First Black Mayor, Ernest "Dutch" Morial, he says, "My mother and father are my champions. They dedicated their lives to serving others and seeing much of this close up, going to NAACP, law firms or the State legislature or teacher's union meetings. They were unselfish public servants and it inspired me to dedicate my life to helping others."

Mia X is a legendary hip-hop artist, author, and college lecturer. She has been active in uplifting and inspiring the community over the years using her voice for positive change.

"I still believe in MLK's dream. And I believe that the younger generation is going to make sure that we as a people live the dream. Our presence is definitely being felt and our potential power is under observation. But we are closer to his dream than we think, and we are beautiful."

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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 and datanewseditor@bellsouth.net.

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This shouldn't be how we say hello...or goodbye.



It's our reality right now. But it won't be if we do what it takes to beat COVID-19. Vaccines are coming, but until enough of us are vaccinated, we all still need to wear our masks, stay at least six feet from others, and avoid indoor social gatherings. The more we slow the spread, the faster we'll return to normal hellos ... and fewer goodbyes.

Learn more about vaccines and slowing the spread at [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)



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