

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

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Tyra G. Morrison

Living the Dream

Louisiana Native Stars in Netflix Series Family Reunion



Tyra G. Morrison is a star on the rise as one of the stars of the popular Netflix show ‘Family Reunion’ and her popular Tyra the Creator YouTube Channel.

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

Redefining Success in the Entertainment Industry

Tyra G. Morrison is a star on the rise who is redefining how to navigate success in the entertainment industry. Presently, she stars in the award-winning Netflix show Family Reunion. Additionally, she is also building her brand with her YouTube Channel Tyra the Creative, becoming an influencer partnering with companies and expanding her reach.

How did this 20-something from St. Francisville, Louisiana emerge as a force to be reckoned with in an industry that now takes a different approach to be successful? “I didn’t initially set out to be an actress, but I was in a play for Earth Day in elementary school where I played a tree and I fell in love and it gave me a joy like I’d never felt being on stage,” says Morrison as she recalls the moment, she decided that acting was her calling in life.

From St. Francisville to YouTube Influencer

Morrison began her life in a small town in Louisiana, but always had big dreams for her life.

“I always have been interested in travel, I wanted to venture out and do things that others around me were not doing, so I did a Student Exchange Program while in college and later I moved to New York, but for a variety of reasons I realized it wasn’t for me, but at that time I started my YouTube Channel.”

This was a move that would pay dividends as the young actress took the reins of her career into her own hands.

“I thought it made sense to use this platform to showcase my talent and not wait around for casting directors to notice me. I wanted to cre-

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My Long-term goal is to see myself as a film star. I would love to play a superhero or some other role that could inspire people that their dreams can come true and that any-thing is possible.

ate my own opportunity. I soon realized that because I had natural hair, and compelling content, and was building my audience, so at some point companies began to pay me to use their products."

"I started looking at influencers and what would it take to put myself in this world, so I bought a book called Influencer by Brittany Hennessey. I went to one of her workshops and began learning the business side, and maximizing your potential, and creating partnerships that make sense in reaching, building, and sustaining your audience."

Positively Black...Family Reunion Shows another Side of Black Life

Today Morrison is part of a stellar cast on the Netflix Series Family Reunion, which garnered critical acclaim as well as winning multiple NAACP Awards. Speaking of how she landed the gig that's raised her profile she says, "I moved to L.A. with a game plan, and entered into an acting class, and took part in a showcase, and found an agent. I booked Family Reunion, but I did not know the gravity of what this would be and then I found out I would be playing a young Loretta Devine. This is an amazing opportunity to showcase some my other talents, because I am also a voice actor and practiced her voice before getting the role."

Family Reunion is a show that not only have Blacks in front of the camera but are the majority of those writing and working behind the scenes. This is something that Morrison enjoys about being on a show that's created many opportunities for African Americans to showcase Black Excellence.

"It is great to be surrounding by so many positive people when we are in production. And to see so

many African Americans, not only in front of the camera, create a great working environment."

Continuing she says enthusiastically, "It is a family show that navigates today's world and on set it is filled with people who are very supportive and positive. I enjoy working with multiple directors. It gives me pause when I look at my life's journey and think I am working with a director from shows I grew up watching like That's So Raven and Sister Sister."

Making Dreams Come True

While Morrison's star is rising in the social media space and television, her long-term goal is to make her mark on the big screen.

"My Long-term goal is to see myself as a film star. I would love to play a superhero or some other role that could inspire people that their dreams can come true and that any-thing is possible."

Acting is important for Morrison, but she is a grounded young woman, who is using her platform to inspire a generation of young people.

"I always want to be an actress, but I realize you need a bigger calling. This spirit of service that's rooted in me came from my community. I am very lucky to have the parents I have coming up and never having fear in me. I am so glad I had the mental fortitude to pursue my dream and parents who supported me."

Black Girl Magic...The Recipe for Success

Tyra G. Morrison has the "It Factor" she is an intelligent, beautiful, engaging young woman who is poised for success and doesn't mind sharing the recipe with young people who are following in her footsteps.



Tyra's life and the path she is blazing is one for the ages and her potential is limitless as she is armed with the tools for even greater success in the years to come. She's created a template for many of her generation and beyond.



A woman of many talents, and because she is a Louisiana Girl, she also is a great cook. Tyra, in addition to having a college degree is a chef who attended culinary school and today uses her meals to bring people together.

"Yes, I went to culinary school," she says laughing. "I studied as a pastry chef. I enjoy making special occasion cakes, small confec-



Morrison began her life in the small town of St. Francisville, Louisiana but always had big dreams for her life and now she is living them out making her mark in the entertainment industry.

tions, and macaroons. Today, what you can find me making is gourmet vegan meals called Tyra's Table, which consists of 3 people, a 3-course meal, and that safe space to talk about things you go through exploring the mind, body and spirit of building community."

Her life and the path she is blazing is one for the ages and her potential is limitless as she is armed with the tools for even greater success in the years to come. She's created a template for many of her generation and beyond.

"If I had to say anything to my peers or those younger that could inspire them, I would say you can accomplish anything you put your mind to. If you can dream it, you can achieve it. I want to challenge people to create a dream book. That's when I learned how to dream. It is something that's not talked about early in life. Asking the question, what do you dream to and aspire to in life? Create that timeline of what you want to do in life. You only have one life so follow your dreams and make it happen."

Celebrating Mom in Distinct Ways

Larry Panna
Data News Weekly Contributor

Mother's Day means many things to many people and is celebrated in unique ways as well. (On a beautiful day in May, thousands of families across New Orleans and the surrounding areas paid homage to mom, each in a manner different from another.)



Marilyn Jackson celebrated the life of her daughter, Shante Herrera, with her 2 grandchildren by releasing balloons in her memory. Photo credit Marilyn Jackson



Three generations enjoying Mother's Day.



Former New Orleans City Councilmember Nadine Ramsey(top left) with her sister and close friends all enjoying a meal together. Photo credit Larry Panna



Renee, Kevin and Joycelyn Jenkins, shared a meal at the River Shack in Gretna. Photo credit Larry Panna



Anna L. Panna celebrated Mother's Day with her granddaughter Ebony Panna (pictured) as well as her sons, other grandchildren and friends at Red Fish Grill in the French Quarter. Photo credit Renee Jenkins

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

Haute & Cool

A Summer Fashion Guide



Tracee Dundas
Fashion Stylist

While keeping cool is top priority during a Louisiana summer, you don't have to sacrifice style for comfort. Even on the hottest days, leave the cut off shorts and flip-flops at the beach and follow these summer fashion tips for staying haute, cool, and stylish.

1. Choose a Looser Fit

In this case, less is not more when selecting a perfect summer dress. A loose fit maxi that doesn't cling to your body will keep you cooler than skimpier outfit options.

2. Go Natural

Retire fabrics like polyester and rayon for the summer and opt for cotton, cotton blends or southern favorite seersucker. These fabrics are more breathable and will wick instead of stick under summer's humidity.

3. Light is Alright

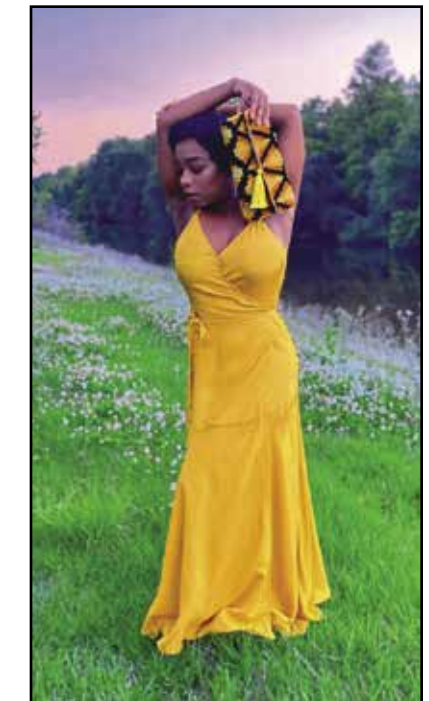
Let's be honest, light colors look better under the blazing sun and show off that natural sun kissed glow you acquired. While it's hard to deviate from eternally fashionable black, this fashion tip is in the science: Dark colors absorb light and heat you up, while light colors reflect the light and allow you to shine.

4. Show a Little Shoulder

The cold shoulder trend has peeked through in past seasons but has reached its all-time high this summer season. It's flirty, fashion forward, feminine and hides signs of sweat. Couple this fashion with the previous tips of natural fabrics and loose fit for the ultimate summer staple.

5. Keep Accessories Light and Minimal

Summer is not the season for statement necklaces or bulky jewelry. In addition to the heavy look and feeling, these pieces will often stick to the skin and become uncomfortable as your body temperature rises. Keep jewels to a minimum; stick with dainty and lightweight pieces.



6. Style it Up with A Wide Brim Hats

Can't resist making a statement? The wide brim hat is your pass to skip the subtlety. Plus, this accessory acts as built-in shade and will keep you from getting too much sun on your face.

Haute & Cool - A Summer Fashion Guide
Fashion Stylist: Tracee Dundas
Photos Courtesy of Each Designer/Retailer

U.S. President Joe Biden Visits Louisiana to Promote Infrastructure Plan

Eric Connerly
Data News Weekly
Contributor

President Joe Biden visited Louisiana last Thursday, first making a stop in Lake Charles before heading to New Orleans to promote his infrastructure plan.

During his time in Louisiana, Biden's accompanied by State and City leaders visited the old Calcasieu River Bridge in Lake Charles and the New Orleans Sewerage & Water Board Carrollton Plant to promote his \$2.3 trillion Infrastructure Spending Plan and its potential benefits for the nation.

President Biden spoke with several local and state leaders including New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell.

"I was honored to welcome President Biden to New Orleans and to host him on his tour of the S&WB Plant in Carrollton. It presented a priceless opportunity to speak with him directly



President Joe Biden greets, from left, Rep-elect Troy Carter, D-LA., Sen. John Kennedy, R-LA., Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-LA., and New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell upon arrival at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport, Thursday, May 6, 2021, in Kenner, La. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

about our critical infrastructure needs specifically power for our



President Joe Biden tours a pumping room at the Sewerage & Water Board's Carrollton Water Plant, Thursday, May 6, 2021, in New Orleans, as New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell listens at right. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

pumping system, and a wholesale modernization of our drainage capacity. The American Jobs Plan is a beacon of hope, and a critical step on our City's road to recovery."

Commentary

Message to Grads: Spend Nine Minutes and 29 Seconds to Make a Difference



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

NEW YORK – This week, I had the honor of delivering the commencement address at Tennessee State University.

Like many Historically Black Colleges and Universities, TSU was born in the crucible of the age of segregation. It was born at a time when our forefathers and foremothers were escaping from the throes of the Ku Klux Klan. They were escaping from the pandemic of lynching which was sweeping the South.

If they lived in the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s, they may have had a chance to vote. A chance to hold public office. A chance to own property. Then in the late 1896, the Supreme Court ruled in Plessy v. Ferguson that legal segregation did not violate the U.S. Constitution. For the sons and daughters of enslaved ancestors, that represented a great betrayal.

And in those times, just imagine the courage it took, the determination it took for the sons and daughters, grandsons, and granddaughters, of our enslaved ancestors, to aspire to a college education.

That entire generation, faced with this betrayal, didn't cover, and they didn't quit. They created great, Historically Black Colleges and Universities. They created the NAACP and the organization I'm proud to lead, the National Urban League. They created the

Alphas, the Kappas, the Omegas, the AKAs, the Deltas, Zeta Phi Beta, and all the rest. They created organizations of Black doctors, and nurses, and lawyers. And they were determined to strive against those difficult times.

What does that have to do with today? Well in 2020, the year just ended, our lives were upended by an invisible virus, an enemy we couldn't see, and we couldn't touch. But it could see us, it could touch us, it could infect us, and it did kill us.

And our lives were upended, by nine minutes and 29 seconds of a knee on the neck of our brother George Floyd in Minneapolis. Nine minutes and 29 seconds that ignited a new flame of activism.

All of this presents a question to the Class of 2021 – a class that has withstood a year of virtual instruction, a massive wave of job loss,

interacting from behind masks at a distance of six feet. The Class of 2021 has seen family members and friends fighting for their lives on ventilators. The Class of 2021 has overcome this invisible virus, and the challenge of those nine minutes and 29 seconds.

And that question is: What will you do now? Will you become spectators, or will you seize the moment?

My charge to the Class of 2021 is to commit to nine minutes and 29 seconds each day to the fight for social justice and civil rights in this country.

Nine minutes and 29 seconds spent urging the United States Senate to pass the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act. Nine minutes and 29 seconds spent telling states like Georgia: we will not be silent while you suppress our votes. Nine minutes and 29 sec-

onds a day reaching back to your high school or community, serving as a role model and a guide for another young person.

Nine minutes and 29 seconds, every day, to honor the memory of George Floyd and all the men and women who have lost their lives to racially motivated police violence. To honor the memory of the lives lost to structural racism in our Health-Care System during this awful pandemic.

Whether we graduated this week or 50 years ago, we all stand on the shoulders of the brave men and women who came before us, the men and women who built great universities in the crucible of Jim Crow, men and women who had the audacity to seek a college education against all odds.

We all should remember their courage and carry it with us as we work to build a nation

Pay Transparency Bill Moves to House Floor in LA Legislature

Data News Weekly Staff
Edited Report

A step forward in history was made Thursday, May 6th in the House Labor Committee of the Louisiana Legislature when HB 245 by Representative Barbara Carpenter passed without objection to the House Floor.

The Independent Women's Organization (IWO) has worked for many years with a coalition of organizations to fight discrimination in the workplace that affects pay and to lift the secrecy that poisons workplace culture.

HB 245 would allow employees to be able to talk about their wages without fear of being retaliated against or fired and would incentivize businesses to ensure they are using fair pay practices.

The bill would also ban the use of salary history, which can perpetuate discrimination from past jobs or prevent considering candidates whose previous jobs paid too much.

Mary Griggs, IWO President, said, "Louisiana workers and women in particular are struggling financially. Louisiana is at the bottom of economic and well-being lists, so we know that federal law has not been enough to stop the discrimination that keeps us there. Other states are doing better - we need our state legislators to step up and pass HB 245 into state law."

Julie Schwam Harris, Advocacy



Lisa Diggs, IWO Vice President

Committee Chair, said, "In 2013, the Legislature passed the 'Equal Pay for Women Act' that was intended to cover both public and private employment - but was amended to cover only state public employees. It had a provision to allow wage discussion and prevent retaliation and it has worked! The pay gap in state public employment has gone down significantly - 9% - from women earning 84 cents on the dollar in 2013 to earning 93 cents compared to men. This kind of protection for discussion about wages is needed

in the private sector in Louisiana where women earn significantly less than men at about 64 cents to the dollar."

Lisa Diggs, IWO Vice President, said, "As a Black woman who has now started her own business, I know how hard it is to pay for basic family needs and to accumulate the resources to be an entrepreneur. HB 245 will benefit all women and workers but is particularly important for minority women. We can't wait - we need for workplace discrimination to end now."



Julie Schwam Harris, Advocacy Chair

Jessica Cogan, IWO Corresponding Secretary, said, "The good news is that many studies show that businesses that establish a positive workplace culture with more transparency are better off. Their employees are happier, more productive, and loyal, which cuts down on turnover stress and costs. They are also more attractive to dynamic young employees who are tech savvy and know how to find things out online. Secrecy is a thing of the past and we want Louisiana to move into the future!"

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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.

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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