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It Takes A Village

“Let Me Live” Rally Against Gun Violence



The family of Jamere Alfred along with local elected officials, community and faith leaders, and over 70 mothers impacted by gun violence, took their fight for justice to the next level at the “Let Me Live” Rally Against Gun Violence which was held on Saturday, June 5, 2021.

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

A Tale of Two Cities

New Orleans is an amazing city, known for its unique culture and lifestyle that is laid back and appreciative of her people regardless of their social standing. It is one of those places where hospitality and cordiality are the cornerstones of those who live in the Crescent

City. Conversely, it is a city that is rife with crime and violence, but there are those from various walks of life who have come together, working towards putting a stop to the gun violence that’s taken so many lives.

A March For Peace

Joined by local elected officials, community and faith leaders, and over 70 mothers affected by gun violence, the family and friends of slain New Orleans teen Jamere Alfred took their fight for justice to the

next level through the ‘Let Me Live’ Rally Against Gun Violence which took place on Saturday, June 5, at 10:00 a.m.

“With the ‘Let Me Live’ Rally Against Gun Violence, we wanted it to be a call to peace for the City of New Orleans, and asked all families who’ve had a loss of a loved one come out and join us in this march for peace,” says John Alfred, father of Jamere Alfred, a young man with a bright future ahead of him, who was slain in a drive-by shooting on Christmas Day in 2020,

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while going to Walgreens with his cousins.

The site of this tragedy is where on this rainy day, the rally began with a prayer and march from Walgreens, located at the intersection of Bullard and Lake Forest Blvd to Joe Brown Park (Shelter #3).

All Hands on Deck

Many came out to participate, lending their voices and resources in their fight for justice including: Louisiana Congressman Troy A. Carter, Orleans Parish District Attorney, Jason Williams, NOPD Chief of Police, Shaun Ferguson and Bishop Lester Love along with other City leaders and the families of those who've lost loved ones to the senseless gun violence that plagues the City of New Orleans.

"All the leaders and others we spoke to were more than willing to take time out of their schedules to assist in this effort and bring the resources that we needed. This is a testament that people want to see an end to gun violence in our City. There's no one way to get this problem fixed. Everybody has something to bring to the table. This march is a step in the right direction," stated Alfred prior to the march, regarding the effort that was spearheaded by himself and Jamere's mother LaRicha Alfred, who were co-parenting and providing a loving and nurturing environment for this young man to thrive.

Stop the Killing

The objective of the 'Let Me Live' Rally Against Gun Violence was to provide a platform for the community and law enforcement to work in concert to combat armed violence. With nearly 90% of murder victims in New Orleans being killed by firearms, according to a 2019 gun violence reduction plan released by Mayor Cantrell, it is imperative for the community and law enforcement to work together. Leveraging the month of June as Gun Violence Awareness Month, organizers of the 'Let Me Live' Rally hoped to bring visibility to Jamere Alfred's case and the need for justice to other similar cases.

"Losing my only child, Jamere Alfred, on Christmas Day 2020 in New Orleans has been absolutely heart-wrenching," says mother of Jamere, LaRicha Alfred. "June is Gun Violence Awareness Month and this Rally for Justice for Jamere and Justice for New Orleans will create a space for the community and law enforcement officers to put aside any differences they may have and work together to get criminals off of the streets and secure justice for all kids." Over 70 mothers who have lost kids to gun violence agreed to participate in the rally.



Jamere Alfred's parents, John Alfred (left) and LaRicha Alfred (right) are both pleading for answers in hopes that there will be justice for their son.



NOPD Chief of Police Shaun Ferguson address rally marchers.



Orleans Parish District Attorney, Jason Williams issued a call to action to the community to help put an end to gun violence.



Newly Elected Congressman Troy A. Carter asked members of the New Orleans community to help be a part of the solution.



Councilwoman Kristen G. Palmer



Darlene Cusanza - Crime Stoppers CEO.



Patrick Young-Director of the Office of Gun Violence Prevention

Accountability and Working Toward Solutions

Since their son's untimely death, John and LaRicha have been moved into action, centering on seeking solutions. "We have created the King Jamere M. Alfred Foundation, which supports band, football and scholarships. There's another non-profit that I started called "Mothers For Justice," says LaRicha, with passion and conviction for what's become a calling and a mission for her.

John agrees they are a united front determined to help contribute to solutions to gun violence. "We didn't think this would be our calling, but after the death of Jamere it was like we were thrust into a leadership position. It is therapeutic for us. By bringing people together, that gives hope to other people that if they said something, they would be heard, and bringing us together as one voice in the City of New Orleans."

Many of the people involved in some of the crime and violence are young people. And John believes that there must be a holistic approach, but truly it must begin at home. "Parent accountability is important. This is key. Get involved and know what your child is doing," says John, with both passion and compassion ringing in his voice. "I also believe just throwing them to the criminal justice system is not the only answer, but to provide help and resources to them before they choose crime, violence and the streets. Just be more aware of what your child is doing, because there is more things we all as parents can do."

There is an old, well known African Proverb that states, "It Takes A Village to Raise A Child." Today, perhaps the most African city in America needs to move toward this, if it is to become a greater city. "We can get closer to solutions by picking out things we all share collectively and stand together for change. If we all get on one accord we can make it work. This is our collective fight," says LaRicha.

At the forefront of the rally, John was optimistic of its outcome, pledging, "This fight, it is a continuous fight. This rally is something that can bring us all together to create a network to help each other, not just the families that lost loved ones, but across the City. At one point we were communities, then we became hoods, but we would like to bring back the word village. Make them villages again. We can make the change that we are looking for, bringing our resources together to help our kids, because ultimately that's what it is all about."

Weekend Vibe



Tracee Dundas
Fashion Stylist

When the clock strikes 5 P.M. on Friday, every guy is ready to lose the suit and tie and slip on fashions that tell the world you're a guy loaded with style and living for the weekend. Get that positive, ready-to-chill, weekend vibe with any one of these standout looks!

Ever wonder what goes on behind-the-scenes of a fashion photoshoot? Here's a sneak peek!



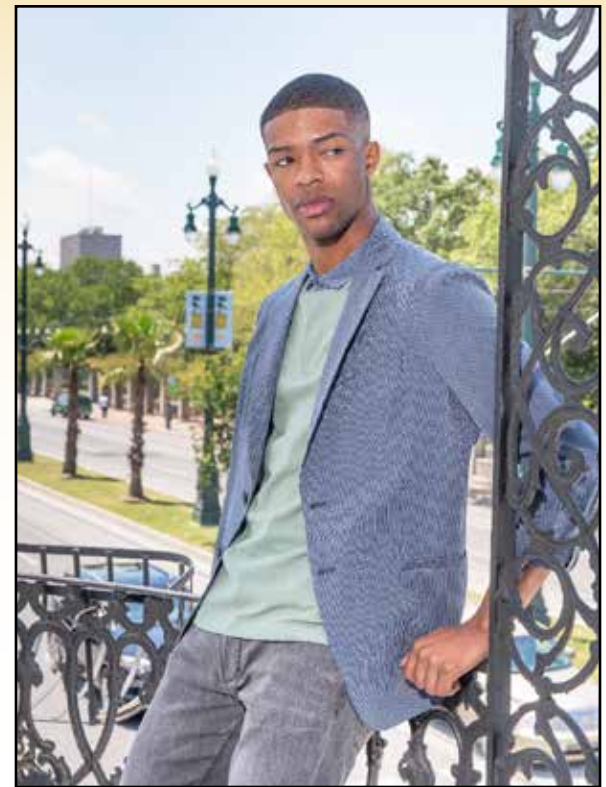
Mellow Yellow

White deconstructed tee, citrus satin pants, tortoise shell sunglasses all from reFresh, yellow silicone strap watch from Saks; Yellow Brazilian cut Hugo Boss Polo, charcoal print Hugo Boss walking shorts, black baseball cap, all from Saks



Southern Gent

Mint green Haspel seersucker jacket, pink print pocket square, blue print shirt, slim skinny dark blue washed jeans, all from Rubenstein's



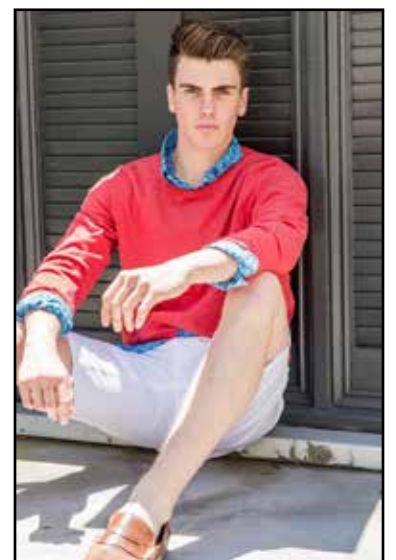
Swagger Style

Armani, navy and grey unlined seersucker jacket, Stripe collar Polo shirt, grey slim fit stretch jeans, all from Emporio Armani



Just Hanging

Versace baroque black and cobalt blue graphic print pullover shirt, Pierre Balmain white distressed slim fit jeans all from Saks.



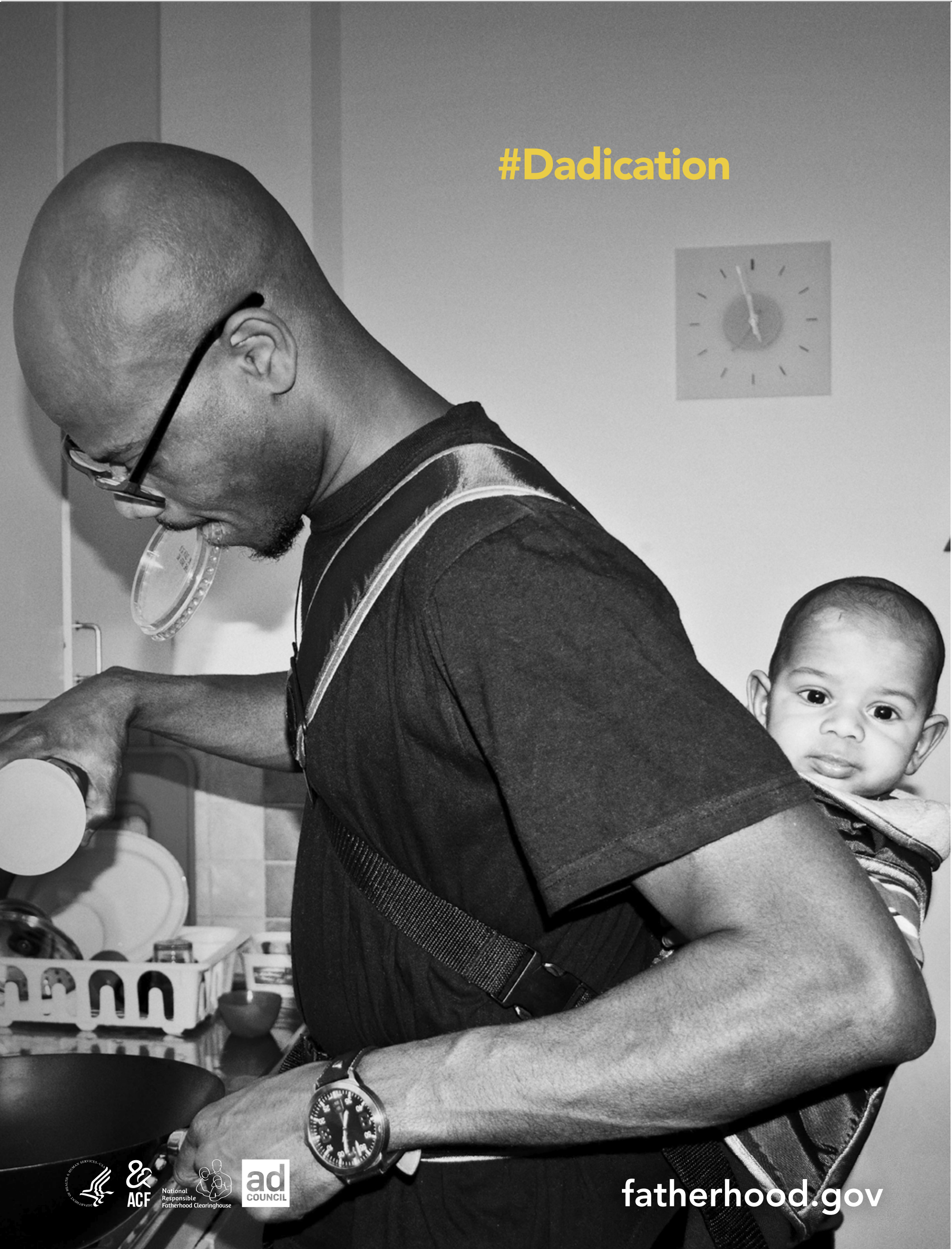
Dress to Chill

Ralph Lauren silk poplin floral print shirt, Peter Millar cape red crewneck sweater, white walking shorts, all from Saks

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New Orleans Fashion Week | @neworleansfashionweek_
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Models: Chase Cutrer, ; Logan Guillory,
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Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events



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New Orleans Native Cindy Crusto Becomes First Female African American Professor in Yale Psychiatry History

Jordan Sisson

Cindy Crusto, PhD, has always been interested in children's health and well-being. As a high schooler in New Orleans, she worked at her mother's Montessori early care and education center and ran afterschool programs, but when she took her first psychology class as a senior, "I was just hooked," she said. Her psychology teacher also led groups for children of divorced parents, and watching her teacher play multiple roles within her school community intrigued Crusto. She was a participant in that group for children of divorced parents and remembers feeling comforted because she was not the only one with this experience. Later, participation in the group helped her understand the powerful role that schools could play in children's social and emotional well-being. When she realized there was a field dedicated to helping people overcome adversity, she decided she wanted to become a psychologist. "I think we're all the product of a cumulation of risks and protective factors. I've had my share of both in my life, and I've al-

ways been interested in how we can prevent or mitigate the impact of some of those negative life experiences," she said.

Over the years, Crusto supplemented her interest in psychology with studies in political science, sociology, history, and Africana studies to build a career in community and clinical psychology. Now, after spending the last 22 years at Yale, Crusto was recently promoted to Professor of Psychiatry, making her the first African-American woman in the history of the Department of Psychiatry at Yale School of Medicine to reach that rank. "There were many people who came before me who worked just as hard or harder than me, and so I have complex feelings about my accomplishment," she said. "I know I worked extraordinarily hard to develop and carry out my career plan, and I am immensely proud. I was fortunate to have had mentorship, sponsorship, and advocacy, but at the same time, I have to remember we're in this system that does not provide that for everyone, especially women and racial and ethnic minorities. I do feel an immense responsibility,



Of her historic appointment Crusto says, "There were many people who came before me who worked just as hard or harder than me... I do feel an immense responsibility, and I'm thinking of what I can do daily to help someone else get to this point."

and I'm thinking of what I can do daily to help someone else get to this point."

As Deputy Chair for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the Department of Psychiatry, Crusto is responsible for diversity, inclu-

sion, and equity initiatives, including co-chair of the department's Diversity Committee and Anti-Racism Task Force, curriculum development, and management of identity-based harmful behavior. She holds additional leadership positions within Yale related to diversity and inclusion, including co-chair of the Yale School of Medicine Minority Organization for Retention and Expansion (MORE), a faculty developed and run organization designed to accelerate the appointment and retention of underrepresented racial/ethnic minority faculty members and enhance their professional environment; executive committee member of the Yale School of Medicine Committee on the Status of Women in Medicine (SWIM), which addresses gender equality at the Yale School of Medicine; and deputy Title IX coordinator at Yale.

Crusto is known for her work in community-engaged research, program evaluation and research, and intervention work in children's exposure to psychological trauma and its impact on their health and well-being. Her experience in trau-

ma research has impacted her way of approaching her work in diversity, equity, and inclusion, she said, by recognizing that being in these spaces can be traumatic for minoritized groups.

"Yale School of Medicine and the Department of Psychiatry were not developed for women, people of color, or other diverse groups. These spaces can be inconsistent with our ways of being and knowing. Diversity, equity, and inclusion work is about making those systems more responsive to and reflective of those differences. These are the things that impact people's ability to realize their goals or progress in the system. I'm trying to level the playing field and to eradicate the barriers people face." Over the last year, America has seen an increase in anti-Asian rhetoric and hate crimes since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as several high-profile cases of police brutality against Black Americans. Crusto said while it is in some ways helpful that these incidences have brought racism back to the forefront of the

Commentary, Continued on page 7.

Commentary

Celebrate Pride Month By Passing The Equality Act



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

NEW YORK – This week marks the beginning of Pride Month, which commemorates the 1969 Stonewall Uprising, a turning point in the movement for LGBTQ rights. "It's a time for those of us in the racial justice movement to affirm our solidarity and acknowledge – as the late Congressman John Lewis said – "You cannot have equality for some in America and not equality for all." For those of us who are Af-

frican American, whose forefathers and foremothers endured the oppression of slavery, segregation, and discrimination, we are morally bound to stand on the front lines with our LGBTQ brothers and sisters. More than 40 percent of LGBTQ Americans identify as people of color. Their rights are our rights.

The movement for gay liberation is inextricably bound to the movement for racial equality, and has been led by LGBTQ people of color such as civil rights icon Bayard Rustin, "the mayor of Christopher Street," Marsha P. Johnson, writer and activist James Baldwin, and #BlackLivesMatter co-founder Alicia Garza. Years before Stonewall, teenagers inspired by the lunch counter protests in Greensboro, North Carolina staged a sit-in at a Philadelphia restaurant called Dewey's, in response to Dewey's re-

cently implemented discriminatory policy claiming it would not serve "homosexuals," "masculine women," "feminine men," nor "persons wearing non-conformist clothing."

Early activists who attended the 1963 March on Washington took heart from Rustin's leadership. Segregationists had tried to discredit the march by exposing Rustin's sexual orientation. A few weeks before the march, South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond famously attacked Rustin as a "Communist, draft-dodger, and homosexual," and had the file from his 1953 arrest on sex charges entered in the Congressional Record, but their efforts failed, and the March galvanized support for the Civil Rights Act.

More than two decades after he organized the March, Bayard Rustin declared that gay people were the new barometer

for social change.

It wasn't that racism had been eliminated by 1986, but the Civil Rights Act gave Black Americans legal recourse against discrimination. In 1986, when Rustin was testifying in support of New York State, LGBTQ Americans had almost no recourse against discrimination. Today, in half the states, they still have little recourse. In 25 states, there are no explicit statewide laws at all protecting people from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity in employment, housing and public accommodations. The Equality Act would change that. The Equality Act would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, housing, public accommodations, education, and

other key areas of life.

The Equality Act has been introduced four times in consecutive sessions of Congress, and has passed the House twice, in 2019 and again this past February. The National Urban League is proud to support the bill and we join our advocacy partners in urging the Senate to pass it.

In a 1986 speech to students at the University of Pennsylvania, Rustin compared Stonewall to the Montgomery Bus Boycott. "... something began to happen," he said. "People began to protest. They began to fight for the right to live in dignity, the right to resist arbitrary behavior on the part of authorities, the right essentially to be one's self in every respect, and the right to be protected under law. In other words, people began to fight for their human rights."

The Greatest Gymnast of All Times

Simone Biles Wins a Record Seventh U.S. Gymnastics Title

Elise Schenck
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Simone Biles continues to inspire and reins as arguably the Greatest Gymnast of All Time. She once again dominated at this weekend's United States Gymnastics Championships in Fort Worth, Texas. Biles broke a record by winning her seventh U.S. championship title. She was victorious in three of the four events. This series of victories further substantiates Biles's bid to become the first woman to win back-to-back Olympic championships in over 50 years.

"It's really emotional, especially going into my second time doing an Olympic run; it's really crazy," said Biles, who has won every all-around competition she has entered since 2013. Her ability is undeniable and was on full display during the competition, where Biles stunned with her floor routine, which included a brand new tumbling pass, appropriately titled "The Biles." According



Simone Biles, once again dominated at this weekend's United States Gymnastics Championships in Fort Worth, Texas. Biles broke a record by winning her seventh U.S. championship title.

to NBC commentary, this opening tumbling pass, including two flips and three twists, had never been done before. Biles nailed the combination.

This championship comes after Biles also made history last month,

becoming the first woman to land a Yurchenko double pike in competition at the U.S. Classic in Indianapolis. The Yurchenko double pike vault had only ever been done by men in competition in the past. Biles won this weekend's U.S. champion-

ship and received the highest vault score without even performing the Yurchenko double pike. However, ESPN notes that it will return at trials and likely in Tokyo, where Biles is favored to bring home the Gold once again.

Commentary, Continued
from page 6.

national conversation, there is still work to be done.

"The times we are in have allowed our system to progress, but we still have a long way to go," she said. "We need to think about the degree to which we can challenge and interrupt these deeply held and ingrained patterns that perpetuate inequities, such as of who gets funding, published, physical space, honorifics, or equitable salaries. This is where people must demonstrate their commitment. We're scratching the surface of understanding the root causes of these inequities, and we need to continue down the path."

Crusto said her goal at the departmental level is to evaluate and measure the impact of the work being done and how it has affected system change. On a broader level within the School of Medicine, she is always searching for what more can be done and what other roles she can take on to champion change.

Cindy Crusto is the daughter of retired New Orleans educator and administrator Al Crusto.

State & Local News

HB 652 Passes Senate

Rep. Cedric Glover's HB 652 Bill Passes Senate, Decriminalizing Small Possession of Marijuana

Louisiana Democrats

Democratic Representative Cedric Glover's HB 652 passed the Louisiana Senate this week by a vote of 20-17. HB 652 decriminalizes the possession of small amounts of marijuana (14 grams). Lives are too frequently destroyed by harsh criminal penalties that carry costly fines and jail time. HB 652 reduces the possession of small amounts of marijuana to a misdemeanor offense with a maximum fine of \$100, injecting equity and justice into an issue that has been deprived of both for far too long.

"It's hard to overstate the significance of HB



Democratic Representative Cedric Glover's HB 652 will make Louisiana the 27th state to decriminalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana if it is signed into law by Governor John Bel Edwards.

652," said Louisiana Democratic Party Chairwoman Katie Bernhardt. "HB 652 eliminates heavy-handed penalties that carry lifelong consequences and it saves taxpayers money. We are grateful to Representative Cedric Glover, Senator Jay Luneau, Louisiana Progress Action, and countless others who have worked tirelessly on this important issue."

HB 652 will make Louisiana the 27th state to decriminalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana. It passed the House of Representatives 68-25.

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