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Summer  
of  
Soul

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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

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# Celebrations!

## *New Orleans Style*



Custom designed umbrella by A’Creations22LLC.

**Renetta B. Perry**  
Data News Weekly Contributor

Birthdays are special all over the globe, but in New Orleans we celebrate birthdays and other special events with a curious exuberance which is both vibrant and extravagant and is reminiscent of the colorful culture which surrounds us daily. Since the City has re-opened amid loosened COVID-19 restrictions, locals are overwhelmingly excited to share birthdays, weddings, baby showers and other special events with friends and family, outside of their homes. As we eagerly re-emerge, and get back to normalcy, the customary tradition of fashion and pomp and circumstance will undoubtedly be in the forefront of everyone’s minds and plans.

This is where local musicians, chefs and entrepreneurs come in and stamp our special events with the NOLA treatment, creating something so special, people in other cities marvel at our unmistakable creativity. I once asked a NOLA native who had relocated to another city, how do they end parties out there. I asked this because I simply can’t imagine a party or a wedding ending without a second-line band serenading the party all the way out of the door.

Local Entrepreneur and Designer Adrienne Singleton, Owner of A’Creations22LLC brings her contribution to New Orleans’ celebrations with her gorgeous array of custom designed second-line umbrellas, birthday pendants, hand fans, balloon displays and embellished party glasses. With distinctive flair, Singleton creatively touches the pulse of NOLA culture and leaves her clients feeling extra special for their special events. But it was her own sense of distinct style that ignited her entrepreneurial flame. “I decided to start my own design business because I wanted to create affordable, quality products that would capture the hearts of anyone looking to create memories of their event

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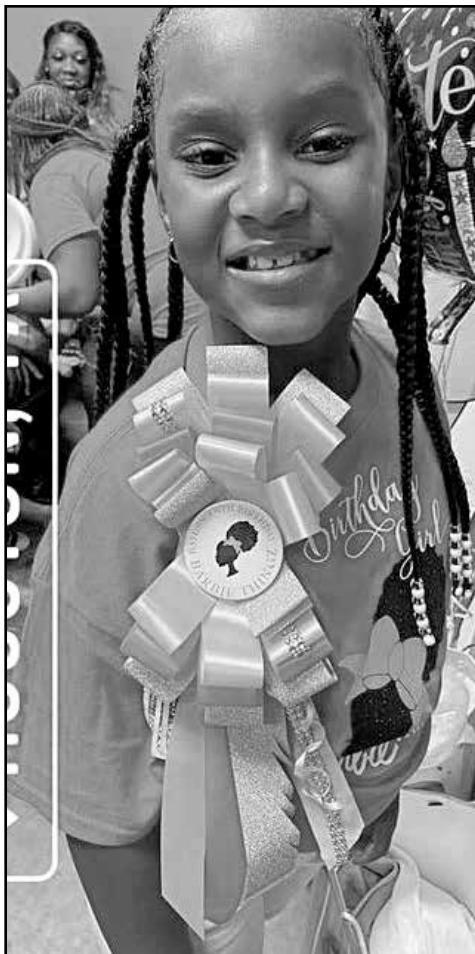
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Designer Adrienne Singleton, Owner/Creator of A'Creations22LLC.



Custom birthday designs for a little birthday girl by A'Creations22LLC.



Custom birthday pendant by A'Creations22LLC.



Custom letter "R" hand fan and birthday pendant.

with a special custom touch that would be timeless," she says, adding that each piece is unique and that no piece is exactly the same. "You won't see a piece I've created on anyone else and that's what makes each piece uniquely mine."

In a City as undeniably unique as New Orleans, where creativity endlessly abounds, bringing creative vision to life is no easy feat, but Singleton is always up for the challenge. Her designs have even been sought after in other cities like Houston, where the desire to bring the NOLA vibe to their events is ever looming. "Everyone loves custom decor. It stands out and speaks volumes on the individual's style of preference with an extreme personal touch," she says. "NOLA culture has been extended to Houston and has flourished and the fleur-de-lis has become an added extension, specifically to our culture which is very well known and popular, and it definitely adds the perfect touch to a lot of A'Creations22LLC custom designs!"

With an acute focus on customer service and accountability to each client, Singleton is building her brand locally and nationally, all while she continuously hones her entrepreneurial skills. She is always creating new inventory and seeking the next design while trying to keep her creations cutting-edge and relevant. As with many other entrepreneurs, her longevity has been tested, especially with events like the 2020 Pandemic,



A'Creations22LLC custom birthday pendant and bottle holder.



Baby Shower balloon towers, table art and pendants by A'Creations22LLC.

but her drive and determination to grow her business are relentless. "In the next five years I would like to see my business completely off the ground in full service, creating custom orders for my community at affordable prices to ensure that memories of every event they put together is as memorable as the NOLA culture." Her message to budding entrepreneurs is an echo of her very own triumph as a solo business owner/operator. Having started her business over a decade ago and being inspired

after attending crafting classes many years ago, she offers sound advice to prospective entrepreneurs... "Follow your dreams and never give up," she says enthusiastically. "We all have a special gift to share in life. Working hard towards your dreams is not always about the dollar; passion needs to be the drive that wakes you up every morning to start the day with your dream and passion to create. Without passion, drive, and determination, it's just a dream without a path towards your future."

In addition to her beautiful birthday and special event designs, Singleton also creates custom jewelry, wreaths, outdoor signs and is currently offering custom home decor. A'Creations22LLC can be reached at: (504) 510-7728, Email: adriennemarie42@gmail.com, Insta: A'Creations22LLC FB: A'Creations22LLC

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# Summer of Soul

## (...Or When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised)

**Dwight Brown**  
NNPA News Wire Film Critic

It was a volatile time. Malcolm and Martin had been assassinated in recent years. Civil uprisings and riots had just simmered down. The summer of '69 was a chance for a much-needed cultural break and reawakening.

That happened in Harlem's Mt. Morris Park, when program director Tony Lawrence created the summer long Harlem Cultural Festival. Three-hundred thousand music lovers attended. Few to no cops in sight. The Black Panthers provided security. It was a mellow celebration.

The Tonight Show... musical director Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson has flicked the moth balls off the never-before-seen, decades-old footage of the festival. The 2-inch video tapes were shot by producer/director Hal Tulchin for an unreleased 1969 doc called Black Woodstock. The tapes had languished in a basement for 50 years and Tulchin signed the rights to the masters over to Questlove just before he died in 2017. The bandleader's task of screening, editing and assembling clips couldn't have been an easy task. His efforts were augmented by music supervisor Randall Poster, editor Joshua Pearson and director of photography Shawn Peters.

Among the many stellar performances: R&B artists (BB King, Little Stevie Wonder, Sly and the Family Stone, Gladys Knight & The Pips); pop stars (The 5th Dimension); jazz greats (Abbey Lincoln, Nina Simone); Latin legends (Mongo Santamaria) and gospel singers (The Staple Singers, The Edwin Hawkins Singers, Mahalia Jackson). Mayor John V. Lindsay makes a cameo and activists like Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton share their opinions on music and the state of Black life. Sharpton: "Gospel was more than religion. Gospel was the therapy for the stress and pressure of being Black in America."

The vintage performances are edited in with news footage and new interviews from fest musicians recollecting their performances and attendees recalling their experiences. Of particular interest is the interview with Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis Jr., who were determined to connect with a black audience who had been



reluctant to embrace The Fifth Dimension, their pop group.

Together, these interviewees' perspectives add insight and footnotes to the social/political history surrounding these unforgettable outdoor concerts. Before there was Prince there was Sly. Before Yolanda Adams, Mahalia. Before Bad Bunny, Mongo Santamaria. We know this because

Questlove and his rousing, thoughtful documentary links us back to the past with this precious and rare archive.

There is something so spiritual, uplifting and motivating about watching 300,000 black folks, over the course of a summer, gathered around a stage to vibe and rejoice. You need to watch this doc in a theater or on the streaming service Hulu. Why? Because the

revolution will not be televised!

**View Trailer:**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1Eg-vtSABE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1Eg-vtSABE)

**In theaters and on Hulu:**

July 2nd, 2021.

Visit NNPA News Wire Film Critic Dwight Brown at [DwightBrownInk.com](http://DwightBrownInk.com) and [BlackPressUSA.com](http://BlackPressUSA.com).

Visit [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com) for more photos from these events



# The Essence of A Woman



**Diva Dionne Character**  
Female Empowerment  
Columnist

There's something magical that happens when we come together on one accord celebrating being Black and beautiful, strong, and bold, with the intentions of becoming more confident, embracing the uniqueness of our individual spirits, tapping into the root of

our amazing souls as women around the world who can make all things happen because we are phenomenal.

Being a woman is about knowing who you are and exactly what you will stand for and against. It's about communing with those we can learn from as we continue to climb higher heights, breaking records in politics, sports, and music, becoming entrepreneurs, progressing, while embracing the joys of womanhood with style and grace.

Together, we must learn to accept the sophistication of our core enjoying the changes we have accomplished through-



Together, we are magical.

out the world. Girl, you have to know that you are the difference needed to make the universe a better place. You should not be afraid to give all that you have to offer because you are

important, and your dreams will continue to matter.

Let the world swarm around your greatness and beauty. Let people see that you are one of a kind as they try to judge you by

the color of your beautiful skin. Let your hips swing in freedom while your back remains strong. Embrace the layers of who you are because you are wisdom and smarts. Be strong enough to walk into any room and shine like a 100-watt light bulb. Never be afraid to show the world the layers of your incredible because you are masterful in all that we do.

Let your resilience and fortitude continue to make a difference because you are The Essence of a Woman.

Dionne Character can be reached at [www.characterhollywood.com](http://www.characterhollywood.com).

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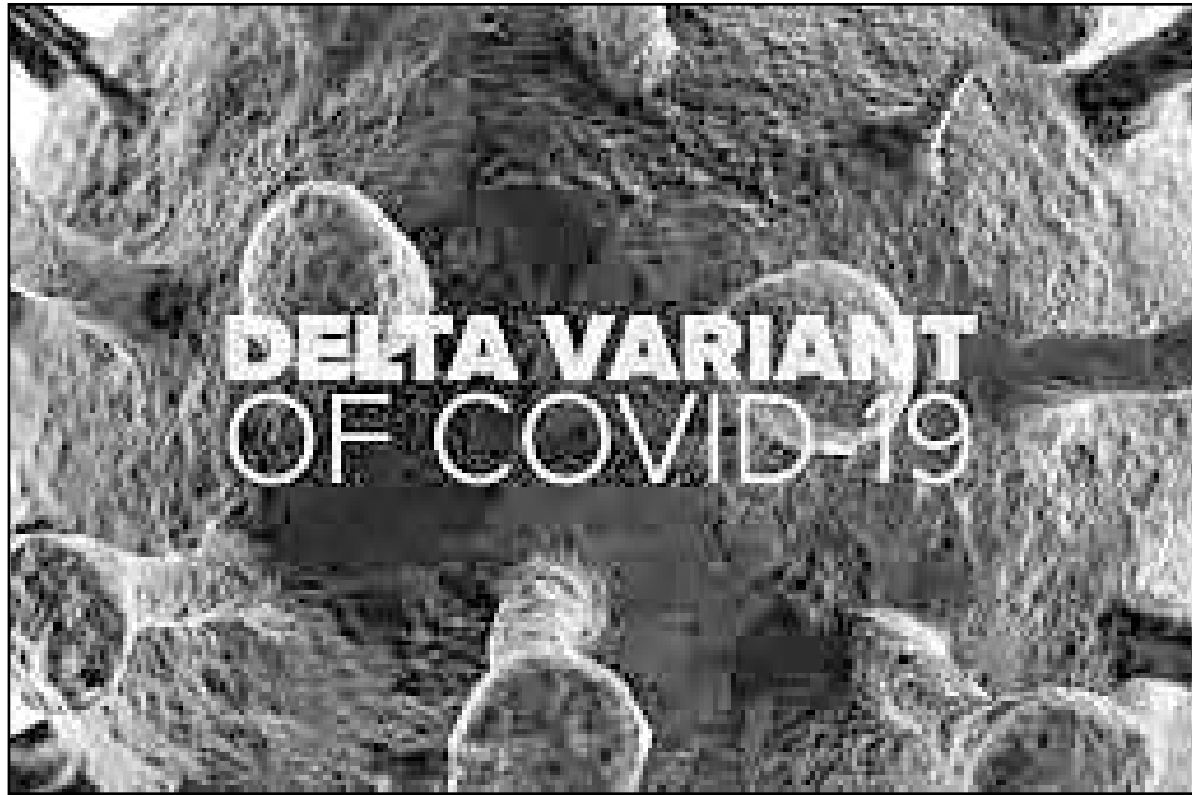
# First Delta Variant COVID-19 Case Confirmed in New Orleans

## Data News Staff Edited Report

The fight against COVID-19 is not over. Last week officials with the Precision Medicine Lab at LSU Health New Orleans School of Medicine have identified the first Delta variant COVID case in Louisiana Region 1. This includes the New Orleans metropolitan area.

Alongside Ochsner, the Louisiana Department of Health, and BIA, LSUHNO authorities are investigating samples collected by Ochsner to identify variants circulating in Louisiana. About a dozen cases from the Delta variant have been identified statewide with many more presumptive cases.

The CDC estimates that this variant is responsible for about 25% of cases in U.S. Region 6, which includes Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico.



The variant was recently identified as a Variant of Concern by the CDC, which indicates several factors:

- Evidence of an increase of transmissibility
- More severe disease (i.e., increased hospitalizations or deaths)
- Significant reduction in neutralization by antibodies generated during previous infection or through a vaccine
- Diagnostic detection failures

LSUHNO also reports that a study concluded the effectiveness of both Pfizer vaccine doses in preventing disease caused by the Delta variant was 88%. One dose was 33% effective.

In New Orleans and across the state, it is important for citizens to get vaccinated to fight COVID-19 and new variants.

## Commentary

# The Fourth of July: We The People



**Terrol Perkins**  
Data News Weekly Contributor

Every summer, Americans of all colors and creeds celebrate the day that the United States formally declared independence from Great Britain on July 4th. For it was on this historic day in 1776 that the Founding Fathers accepted the Declaration of Independence, deciding that it was no longer an option for the American colonies to be readmitted into the British Empire after having their rights and liberties infringed upon by the Crown. Although the Revolutionary War raged on for another four years, the Founders of this country cemented their breakaway from the "mother country" in the 1783 Treaty of Paris.

While many Americans (mainly White Americans) had gained



their freedom from a country they claimed was the very steward of oppression, hundreds of thousands of Black enslaved people were still in bondage. It would be almost a century later until Black Americans were finally free from the vile condition of forced servitude. In fact, many African Americans celebrate June 19th, 1865, as the day when slavery officially ended in the United States. We

call this holiday "Juneteenth" or "Emancipation Day."

In 1852, nine years before the Civil War, Frederick Douglass gave a blistering speech on July 4th at an event commemorating the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In his address, Douglass spoke of the hypocrisy surrounding the American Founding and the atrocious treatment of African Americans in the United

States. "What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in the Declaration of Independence, extended to us?" Douglass skillfully exclaimed at the gathering. Despite his scathing reproach of the contradicting original intent of the Founding Fathers, Douglass never fathomed that the United States

was irredeemable. In fact, we wanted our country to truly live up to the ideals it so preaches of liberty and justice. He was also a proud patriot who believed that freedom must be achieved through acts of bravery and sacrifice, even if it means laying down one's life. Two of Douglass' sons served in the Union Army in the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, one of the most celebrated African American units in the Civil War.

Although Blacks Americans were not citizens when the Declaration of Independence was signed, our country has come a long way in the battle for equality. From slavery to the Reconstruction period, and Jim Crow, Black Americans have proven to be one of the most patriotic groups in America for their unwavering faith in the American dream and the desire of achieving a level playing field that all citizens are promised in the Constitution. I chose to celebrate both the Fourth of July and Juneteenth. The first holiday reminds of this country's potential, despite the original intent of the founders, while the second reminds me of how far we have come.

# President Biden, Chaka Khan and Others Celebrate Black Press at NNPA Convention

Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire Senior  
National Correspondent

President Joe Biden helped to kick off the National Newspaper Publishers Association annual summer convention with a ringing endorsement of the Black Press of America.

The President, who campaigned on the promise of equity and inclusion and whose appointments, hires and policy have targeted uplifting Black and minority communities, extolled the virtues of Black-owned newspapers and media companies.

"It's an honor to join you and celebrate 194 years of the Black Press and 81 years of the NNPA," the President stated.

"The theme of your conference this year: Black Press Matters, could not be more fitting. The stories we tell, the news we cover matters. The work you do at the NNPA matters."

The President recalled visiting Tulsa, Oklahoma, earlier this year on the anniversary of the Black Wall Street massacre. "We would not know nearly as much as what happened there if it were not for the Black Press," President Biden declared.

"The same is true of stories of today. I know times are tough in the industry and every advertising dollar matters. We need your input, we need your important independent voices as much as ever," he continued.

The President thanked NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., and NNPA Chair Karen Carter Richards for the work that the Black Press does each day.

"Thank you for informing us all," he exclaimed.

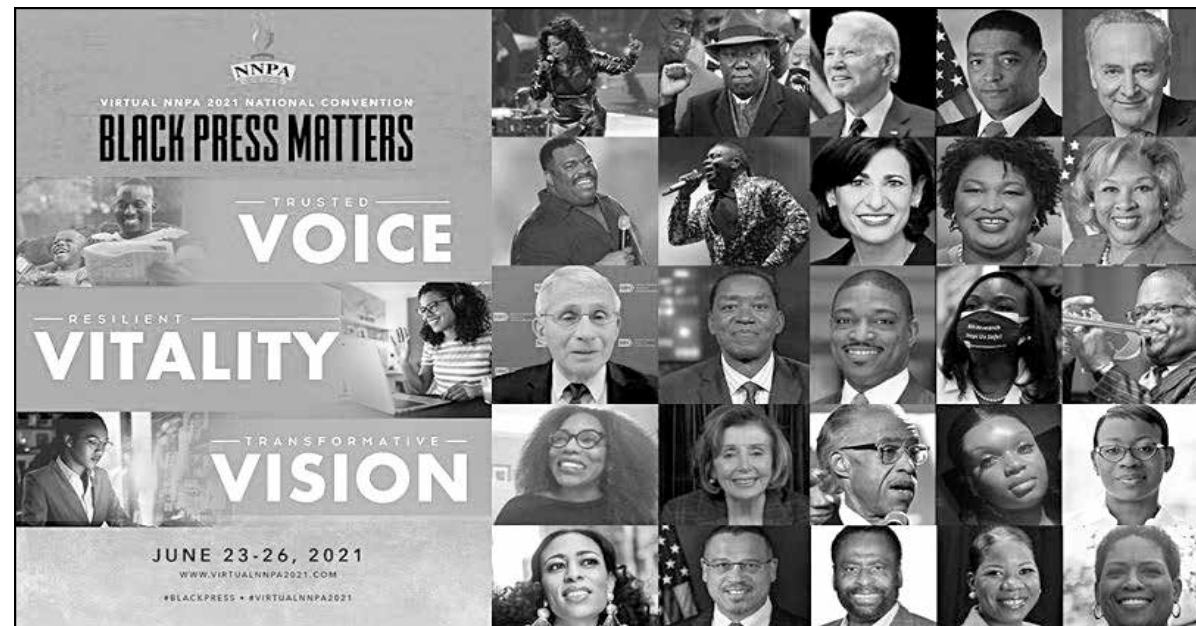
The conference kicked off with a stirring exhibit of more than 100 front pages of African American newspapers sponsored by the Google News Initiative.

Carter Richards, Dr. Chavis, and Convention Chair Terry Jones offered opening remarks.

Dr. Anthony Fauci and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky participated by speaking on the importance of vaccinations and how vital the Black Press of America remains after 194 years.

"The Black Press is critically important," Dr. Fauci declared.

"Medical co-morbidities are particularly high in African American communities, and that is why get-



ting the vaccine is so important."

Racism is at the root of much of the health disparities in America, declared Dr. Walensky.

"We must take action," she insisted. "We are so grateful for [The Black Press's] voice and to your reporting and commitment to truth."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), and White House Senior Advisor and Director of Public Engagement Cedric Richmond, also joined the conference to reaffirm Washington's commitment to Black America and the NNPA.

The NNPA, the 81-year-old trade association representing the 230 African American-owned newspapers and media companies that comprise the Black Press of America, hosted the annual convention from June 23 to June 26.

While the convention regularly occurs in cities throughout the country, the pandemic forced the NNPA to hold the event virtually for the second consecutive year.

This year's theme highlighted how significant the Black Press remains, its vitality in the many communities it serves, and the transformative vision that has helped keep the millions of subscribers informed.

Pfizer Rare Disease, AARP, General Motors, Reynolds American, Comcast, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Education Trust, the Small Business Administration, Wells Fargo, American Petroleum Institute, Facebook Journalism Project, and others hosted, sponsored, or participated on panels to provide vital information for publishers and the public-at-large.

Zillow, the Knight Foundation, U.S. Census, Comcast Universal,

Molson Coors, Nissan, BHERC, Northrop Grumman, and Nina Turner for Congress, also counted among convention sponsors.

During the convention, the NNPA Fund hosted its annual Messenger Awards to recognize the outstanding work of journalists and newspapers in the Black Press.

Hosted by NNPA Fund Chair Pluria Marshall, Jr., and NNPA Fund Vice Chair Sonny Messiah Jiles with special guests Stacey Abrams and the Rev. Al Sharpton, winners included the St. Louis American, Birmingham Times, Houston Forward Times, The Final Call, Richmond Free Press, Texas Metro News, The Afro American, Michigan Chronicle, New Pittsburgh Courier, Our Weekly Los Angeles, Houston Defender, Savannah Tribune, Atlanta Voice, Jackson Advocate, and the Seattle Medium.

Winner of three Society of Professional Journalists Awards this year, the Washington Informer did not participate in the Messenger Awards.

The NNPA also presented its annual Legacy Awards where Darnella Frazier, the African American teenager who courageously filmed the police officer kneeling on George Floyd's neck, received the Ida B. Wells National Photojournalism Award.

The Rev. John P. Kee was honored with the 2021 National Gospel Transformative Award, while Earth, Wind & Fire Lead Singer Philip Bailey was presented with the 2021 National Lifetime Achievement Legacy Award for Outstanding Achievement, Impact, and Creative Genius.

Scotty Barnhart, the legend-

ary Count Basie Orchestra leader, received the 2021 National Performance and Outstanding Leadership Award, and the Rev. Dr. Starsky Wilson took home the 2021 National Achievement and Outstanding Leadership Award for his work as President and CEO of the Children's Defense Fund.

The NNPA also presented Congresswoman Joyce L. Beatty (D-Ohio) with the 2021 National Congressional Leadership Award and Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison with the Outstanding and Courageous Leadership Award.

Dr. Kizzemkia Corbett received a special Leadership Award for her work in developing the life-saving coronavirus vaccine.

Ten-time Grammy winner Chaka Khan received the 2021 National Lifetime Achievement Legacy Award for Decades of Creative Genius and Outstanding Leadership for Freedom, Justice, and Equality in American and Throughout the World.

The legend also headlined a night of entertainment with a mini concert.

The Rev. Kee performed his hit, "I Made it Out," while Nu-Soul and Jazz artist Candice Hoyes proved a worthy opening act with an electric performance.

We know we are the trusted voice in the Black community, and 'resilient vitality' is who we are," Carter Richards proclaimed.

"Our Black newspapers have thrived, and so many more are getting to the level that we want them to be. I'm so proud of the Black Press for all the work they are doing in the community and for the work they are doing to help each other."

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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](mailto:terrybjones@bellsouth.net) and [datanewseditor@bellsouth.net](mailto:datanewseditor@bellsouth.net).

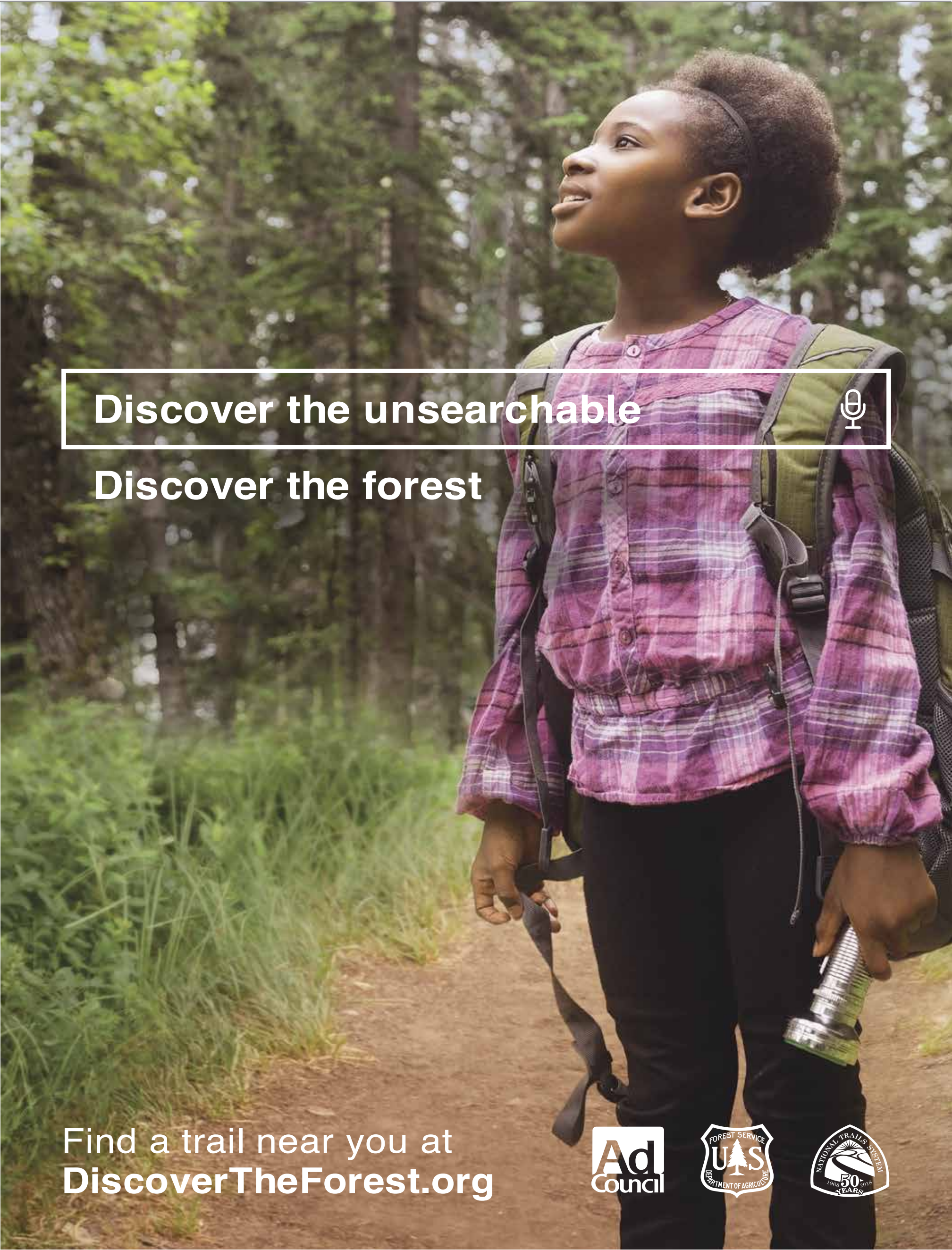
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