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Evolution
of the
Bikini

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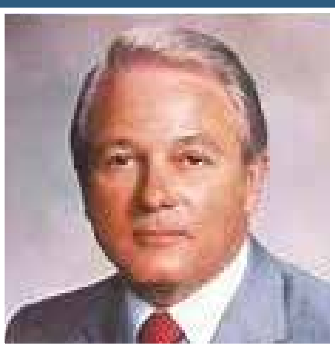
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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

A Champion's Journey

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Becomes First African
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A Champion's Journey

Louisiana's Zaila Avant-garde Becomes First African American to Win Scripps National Spelling Bee



Zaila did not get to this moment of greatness alone, for it is the caring and encouragement of her parents to help her thrive. She is the daughter of father Jawara Spacetime and her mother Alma Heard, who appears in the above photo after winning the Kaplan Virtual Spelling Bee in 2020 where she won \$10,000.

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

To Be Your B-E-S-T

In 2006 there was a film called *Akeelah and the Bee*, starring Laurence Fishburne, Angela Basset and Keke Palmer, who plays Akeelah a young girl who participates in the Scripps Spelling Bee and overcome obstacles to become a champion.

This inspirational film is now the real-life story of a young girl from Harvey, LA, Zaila Avant-garde. The 14-year-old recently made history as the first African American to win the Scripps National Spelling Bee in its nearly 100-year history.

As she stood on the stage, young and confident, after spelling the word "Murraya," a genus of tropical Asiatic and Australian trees, it was announced she'd won and made history. At which time with youthful exuberance Zaila Avant-garde twirled around in a spin, with a triumphant smile beaming from her face as confetti fell from the ceilings.

The 14-year-old from Harvey, LA, had reason to twirl and spin, and most importantly, she had more than enough reasons to smile.

With her victory Zaila also took home the \$50,000 first prize.

A Story of E-X-C-E-L-L-E-N-C-E

Her Spelling Bee victory is on one of many feats of greatness for the 14-year-old.

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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

“Not only has she competed in spelling bees for two years, but she also already holds three Guinness World Records for dribbling, bouncing, and juggling basketballs. All before the ninth grade,” New York Times Writer Maria Cramer noted in a story published about this incredible youth.

In an interview with “Good Morning America,” Zaila said that she hopes that more African American students would participate and fare well in the Scripps Spelling Bee. “It is a gate-opener to being interested in education,” Zaila stated with hope and optimism in her voice hoping her victory would inspire others to pursue excellence.

Truly I-N-S-P-I-R-I-N-G

Celebrities including Oprah Winfrey as well as City and State leaders joined in praising Zaila and her wonderful accomplishment. One of those who also made history and inspired a nation and the world with his victory in the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election.

“Three Guinness World Records and now the national spelling bee champ! Congrats, Zaila—your hard work is paying off. We’re all proud of you,” former President Barack Obama tweeted.

Avant-garde has more than 12,000 followers on Instagram, where she hopes to inspire young girls like herself. “Have faith and try new things,” she said in one of her posts.

A Bright Future of Unlimited P-O-S-S-I-B-I-L-I-T-I-E-S

For a life that is just beginning and being armed with amazing talent and also being from Louisiana; the world is truly her oyster. She has big dreams for her future and two Louisiana schools LSU and Southern have already offered her full scholarships.

“I have a lot of different ideas; I might be an NBA Basketball Coach. I might work for NASA if I can. I also have an interest in treating diseases of both the mind and body by studying neuroscience,” she remarked in a recent interview.

The Importance of P-A-R-E-N-T-I-N-G

Zaila did not get to this moment of greatness alone, for it is the caring and encouragement of her parents to help her thrive. It is a true testament to the importance of parenting. She is the daughter of Jawara Spacetime and Alma Heard.

In an article published in the Irish Times, her dad got the idea that his daughter had what it took by watching the spelling bee on television. He’d noticed his daughter had a great aptitude in solving complex math problems that could



Zaila Avant-garde, is a winner of many spelling bees and have appeared in a commercial, become a YouTube sensation and inspiration to many garnering the praise from the likes of Media Mogul and philanthropist Oprah Winfrey and The First African American President Barack Obama.



Zaila is a champion in so many ways and has a bright future ahead of her. (Pictured with 3 time NBA Champ Stephen Curry, who she appeared with in 2018 in an Under Armour commercial).

potentially translate well into spelling. Their belief in her is paying off for now she is a champion.

Reaching Your Full P-O-T-E-N-T-I-A-L

The world and the City are celebrating this young lady who is showing the best of Black Excellence. Zaila’s victory is proof posi-

tive what nurturing our kids’ gifts and guiding them is important for them to become their best selves.

Where they can live without limitations and low ceilings for themselves. This story is one that inspires and shows that there are young people in the New Orleans area who are truly amazing or have the potential to be.



Not only has Zaila competed in spelling bees for two years, but she also already holds three Guinness World Records for dribbling, bouncing, and juggling basketballs all before the ninth grade.



In an interview with “Good Morning America,” Zaila said that she hopes that more African American students would participate and fare well in the Scripps Spelling Bee. “It is a gate-opener to being interested in education.” (Photo: Recent appearance on the red carpet at the Espy Awards.)

The Evolution of the Bikini



Tracee Dundas
Fashion Stylist

Throughout history numerous circumstances have dictated society's fashion landscape, causing people to pause and take note. Such as the case in the 1940's, as World War II forced America to rethink many of life's necessities due to material shortages, inflation or production challenges. It was a cultural pandemic of sorts, as Americans had no choice but to comply with President Roosevelt's Executive Order 8875 of 1941 that would place a ceiling on prices of goods and to limit consumption by rationing for the common good in support of the war effort. This was also true in the clothing industry. During this same period when Americans were faced with fabric rationing, many fashion designers did an about-face of their clothing aesthetic influencing the trajectory of what would be worn. From plunging necklines and shorter hemlines, to nylon withdrawn from the civilian market and outfits in general became more streamlined; fashion was experiencing an evolution that would set the tone for the future.

One of the most noteworthy fashion evolutions of the 1940's was the transformation of the woman's swimming attire, presumably in part due to fabric rationing. But let's first reflect on swimwear for women at a time when it more closely resembled a belted dress over long bloomers. While they weren't aesthetically appealing, this swim attire fulfilled its primary objective: concealing the female figure. It was strictly about "modesty", with no consideration to functionality or comfort. These "suits" were made from heavy flannel fabric and required an abundance of material for adequate coverage and sturdy enough to not rise with the water.

Data Zone,
Continued on page 5.



Black Bombshells at the Beach



Black Beauty



Fun in the Sun



Kick It Up a Notch



Cozy Couple

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



One Bad Chick

Data Zone, Continued from page 4.

It was at the turn of the century when swimming became an intercollegiate and Olympic sport that it was realized a practical design was needed. This paved the way for a more streamline and lighter textile to be introduced. However, with limitations and still modest, of course.

Shortly thereafter it became acceptable for women to expose their arms, hemlines crept up and designers used less fabric to conceal a woman's body. This new swim attire consisted of a modest,

full-coverage bra-style top, high-waisted, shorts-like trunks, baring only a sliver of the midriff without exposing the bellybutton. Although it continued to maintain a level of unpretentiousness, most women were reluctant to wear it out at public beaches in fear of being chastise or receiving a citation.

In the mid 1940's French couture designer Jacques Heim and Louis Réard who was also French, but an

automobile engineer turned fashion designer after acquiring his mother's lingerie business; both set out to lay claim of designing the smallest two-piece swimsuit. Heim made a first attempt to launch his swim attire prototype in the late 1930's. Perhaps a bit too soon for public acceptance, as it was deemed as indecent exposure and very few women would dare wear it. Heim reintroduced his version in May 1946, naming his suit the "Atome" after comparing its fashion impact to that of the atomic bomb. Using skywriting, he advertised it as "the world's smallest bathing suit".

That same year on July 5th, Réard launched his version of a two-piece bathing suit. As the story goes, while vacationing on Saint Tropez beaches Réard noticed women rolling up the edges of their swimsuit to get a better tan. Harnessing his knowledge, skillset, and appreciation of the female body, he was inspired to design a better swim apparel. Réard was aware of Heim's unsuccessful attempt of launching the Atome but

proceeded unwaveringly to produce his interpretation of the world's smallest two-piece. His design consisted of little more than two triangles of fabric for the bra, with strings that tied around the neck and back. The same triangle cut comprised the bottom, connected by strings at the hips. He strategically named his two-piece swimsuit the "Bikini" after the newsworthy US Atomic Nuclear Testing Site Bikini Atoll in the Pacific Marshall Islands. Réard also applied and received a patent for his version of the two-piece swimsuit. Not to be outdone by Heim, he then hired nude model Micheline Bernardini to model it. Adding more fuel to the fire, like Heim, he also used skywriting over the French Riviera he advertised the Bikini as "smaller than the world's smallest bathing suit" noting he used a mere 30 inches of material for his design, and he anticipated that the Bikini would be an explosive success.

Needless to say, it has been a sensational hit ever since!

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Former Louisiana Governor Edwin Edwards Passes Away At 93

Eric Connerly
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Edwin Edwards, who was a 4-term Governor, died on July 12, 2021, at age 93, according to a statement from current Gov. John Bel Edwards.

"Edwin was a larger-than-life figure known for his wit and charm, but he will be equally remembered for being a compassionate leader who cared for the plight of all Louisianans," the statement said. The statement did not cite a cause of death.

Edwards, a Democrat, announced July 5th that he had entered hospice care after suffering



Former Governor Edwin Edwards passed away at 93. He was a transformational figure creating policies that assisted all the people of the state including African Americans.

respiratory problems for several years, according to media reports.

During his long and colorful life Edwards built a political machine that helped champion African American causes throughout the state.

Today as the infrastructure spending is being debated, Edwards, while in office he funded schools roads, bridges, and hospitals.

Throughout his life he was a bridge builder, bringing many varied interests to the table to get things done.

As of press time no announcement has been made about his funeral arrangements and other services celebrating his life.

State & Local News

DCHC to host Back-To-School COVID-19 Virus Vaccination Events during Weekend Hours for Working Parents



All students who receive both doses from DePaul Community Health Centers will be entered into a drawing to receive a laptop computer courtesy of High Level Speech and Hearing.

Data News Staff Edited Report

NEW ORLEANS, LA – In getting kids ready for the upcoming school year, DePaul Community Health Centers will offer COVID-19 Vaccinations (Pfizer Vaccine) for children ages 12 and up at its Carrollton (3201 S. Carrollton Ave.), New Orleans East

(5630 Read Blvd.), and Algiers (3215 General Meyer Ave.) health centers, Saturday, July 17th, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Children who attend any area school may receive COVID-19 Vaccinations during the events. Parents or guardians must be present.

Parents may register their children by calling (504) 207-1080. Second doses are sched-

uled for Saturday, August 7th, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

All students who receive both doses from DePaul Community Health Centers will be entered into a drawing to receive a laptop computer courtesy of High Level Speech and Hearing. In addition to COVID-19 Vaccines, parents may schedule future well-child appointments during the events.



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White House Releases Gun Reduction Strategy

Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior Correspondent

In June, President Biden unveiled a comprehensive strategy to combat gun violence. This strategy implements preventative measures that are proven to reduce violent crime and attacks the root causes – including by investing in effective community policing and addressing the flow of firearms used to commit crimes. Combined, the Administration's comprehensive strategy will:

Stem the flow of firearms used to commit violence, including by holding rogue firearms dealers accountable for violating federal laws

Support local law enforcement with federal tools and resources to help address summer violent crime

Invest in evidence-based community violence interventions

Expand summer programming, employment opportunities, and other services and supports for teenagers and young adults

Help formerly incarcerated individuals successfully reenter their communities

The core of the President's plan is a partnership with cities and states, equipping local leaders with historic levels of federal funding and a range of tools to address the multifaceted challenge of gun violence. In particular, the strategy uses the American Rescue Plan's \$350 billion in financial support and clear guidance to provide state, local, territorial, and tribal governments the money they need to put more police officers on the beat – including hiring above pre-pandemic levels in communities experiencing an increase in gun violence associated with the pandemic – as well as the other resources, training, and accountability they need to engage in effective community policing. The administration has clarified that these funds can also be used to support evidence-based community violence intervention programs, summer employment and educational opportunities, and other investments that we know will reduce crime and make our neighborhoods safer.

Since the President's plan was launched, leaders across the country have already responded by taking up or supporting the take-up of these American Rescue Plan dollars for violence prevention efforts. And, as cities, counties, and states



President Biden unveils strategy to reduce gun violence in cities across America.

around the country consider how to allocate the historic support they've received through the Rescue Plan, we again encourage them to use funding to improve public safety in their communities. Already we've seen state and local governments utilize the funding they've received to put more cops on the beat, invest in community violence intervention programs, bolster community programs and economic opportunities, and acquire technology like gunshot detection systems that will help them better confront crime head-on.

We know that the rise in violent crime over the last 18 months is a complex and multi-dimensional challenge for communities around the country, and that it requires a comprehensive response. And we know that cities and states need a strong partner in the federal government to get that done. That's why we've been heartened to see communities moving already to use the funding in the Rescue Plan to bolster public safety:

Utica, NY, plans to support "gun violence prevention and law enforcement career recruiting efforts."

Walla Walla, WA, will "fund new police hires"

Tucson, AZ, "plan[s] to invest at least \$7 million in community safety, health and wellness, and violence interruption programs."

Cincinnati, OH, is using Rescue Plan funds to increase its policing and emergency services budget

Philadelphia, PA, is spending "\$1.3 million to expand proven violence interruption programs" and "\$2 million for a Transitional Jobs Program to address a root cause of violence, lack of job opportunities."

Albuquerque, NM, is investing "\$3 million to expand a gunshot detection system, \$5 million to refurbish station houses, \$1 million for new cars and \$450,000 to recruit more officers."

Watertown, NY, will use some of its Rescue Plan funds "to reinstate four police officers and two other city staff positions."

Kansas City, MO, seeks to "restore police departments to pre-pandemic levels"

Syracuse, NY, will invest in an "enhancement of the police department's ShotSpotter system, which helps locate gunfire; a collaboration with mental health providers to assist with mental health-related police calls; [and] increased police transparency."

Monday, the President will con-

tinue his ongoing conversations with local leaders about gun violence reduction.

Cities represented in the meeting are using American Rescue Plan funds to improve public safety and expand community services – including by investing in community policing and bolstering law enforcement, supporting effective community violence intervention programs, and expanding programming to increase economic opportunity and steer at-risk individuals away from crime.

The historic funding from the American Rescue Plan is also being supplemented by additional federal efforts to support communities and crack down on gun crime.

As part of that, the Department of Justice has announced the launch of gun trafficking strike forces in five areas nationwide – including New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and the Bay Area.

Those multi-jurisdictional efforts will address the problem of guns being obtained in places with weaker gun laws and then used to commit horrific crimes across state lines. And they will augment existing efforts by the Department of Justice announced in May to target federal law enforcement efforts nationwide to address violent crime.

In addition, the President has requested additional support to better strengthen both federal and local law enforcement efforts.

In his proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2022, the President asked for \$300 million more for the COPS program to boost federal assistance for community policing, and he called for over \$750 million more for federal law enforcement agencies.

The President also has already taken steps to strengthen regulations to keep guns out of the wrong hands – including by cracking down on ghost guns, homemade firearms that often cannot be traced by law enforcement due to the lack of a serial number and that are increasingly being used in crimes.

He also continues to push Congress to take long-overdue action to prevent guns from being used in crimes, including strengthening background checks, renewing the ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, and ending immunity for gun manufacturers.

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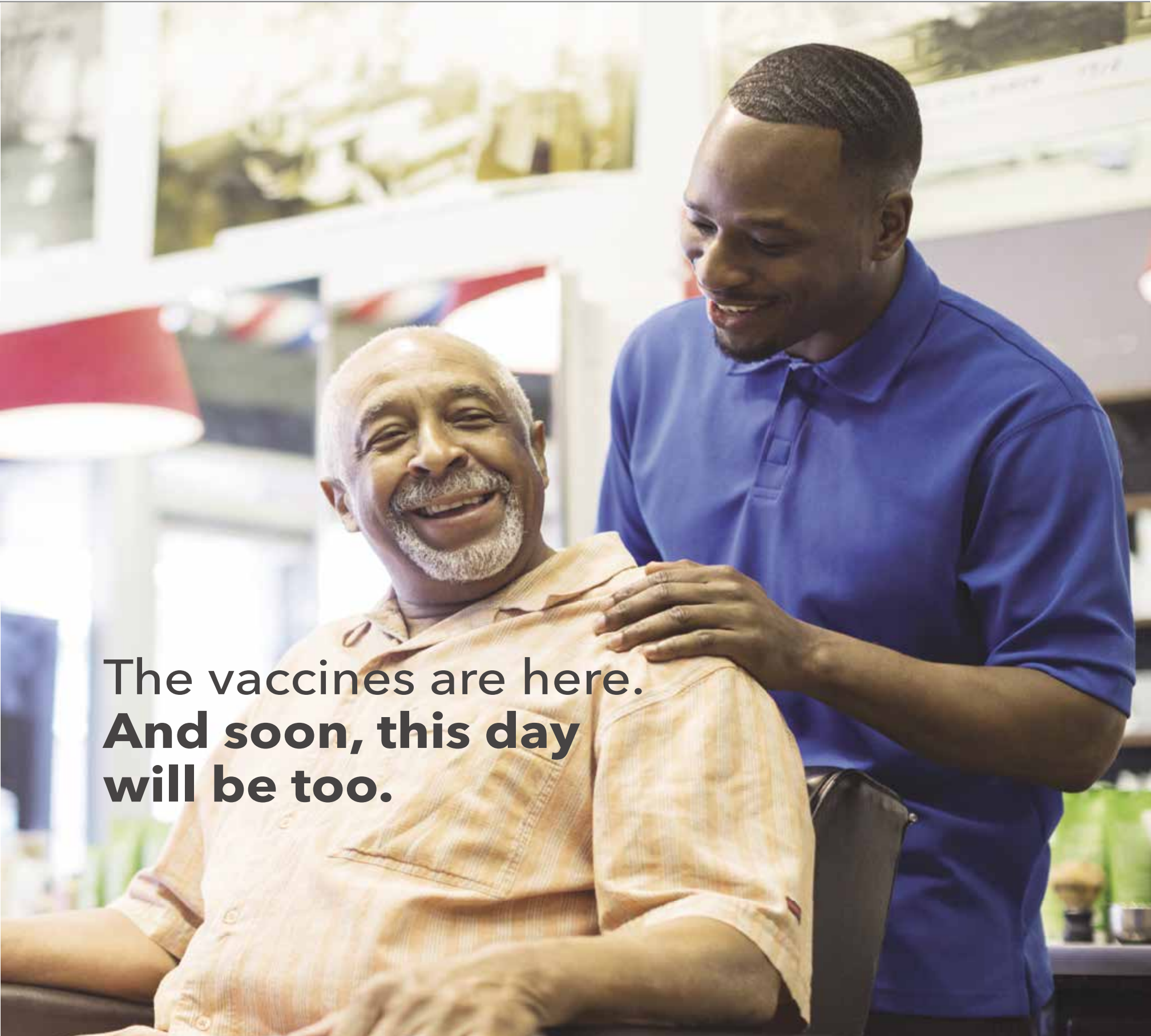
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