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New Orleans

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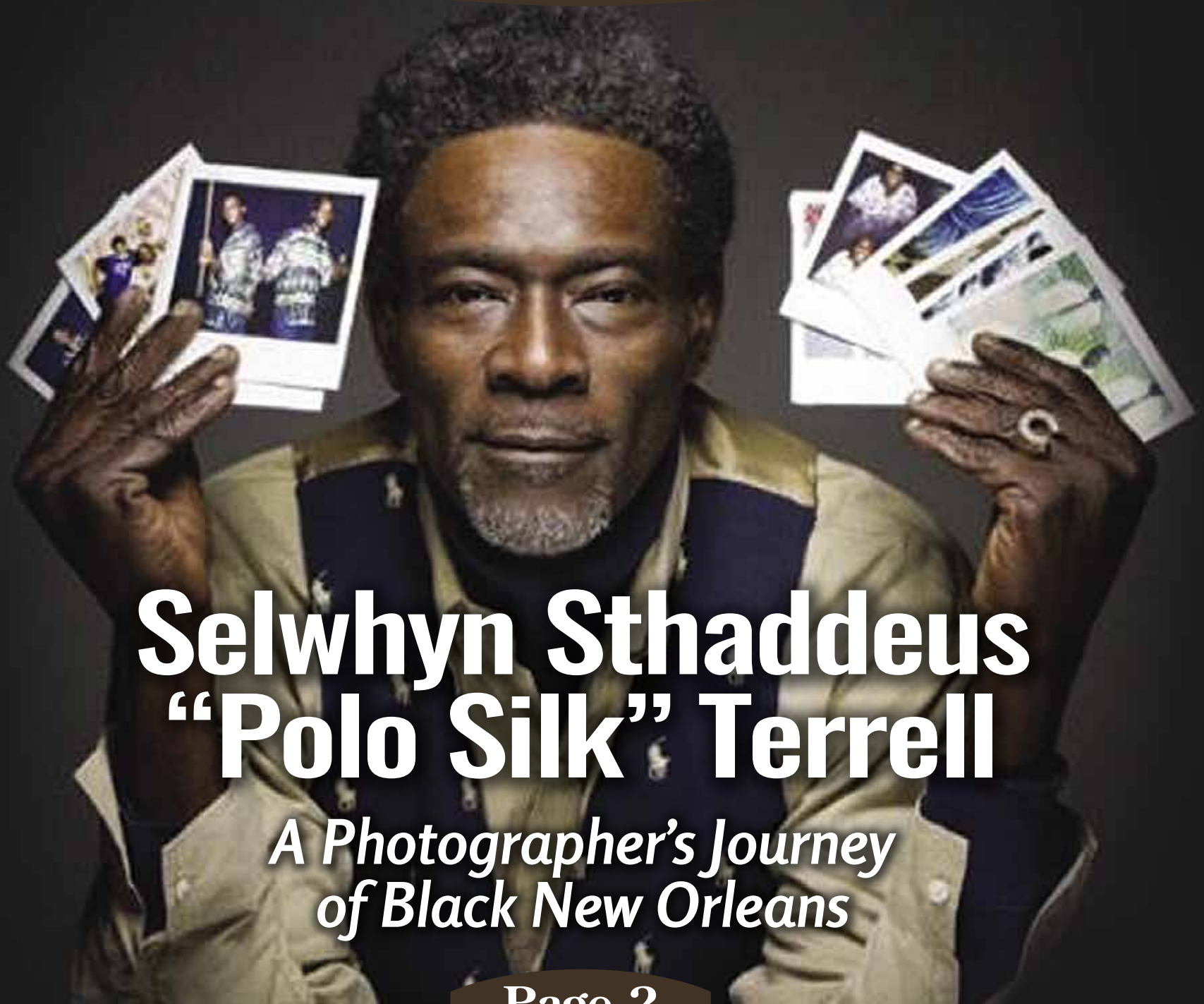
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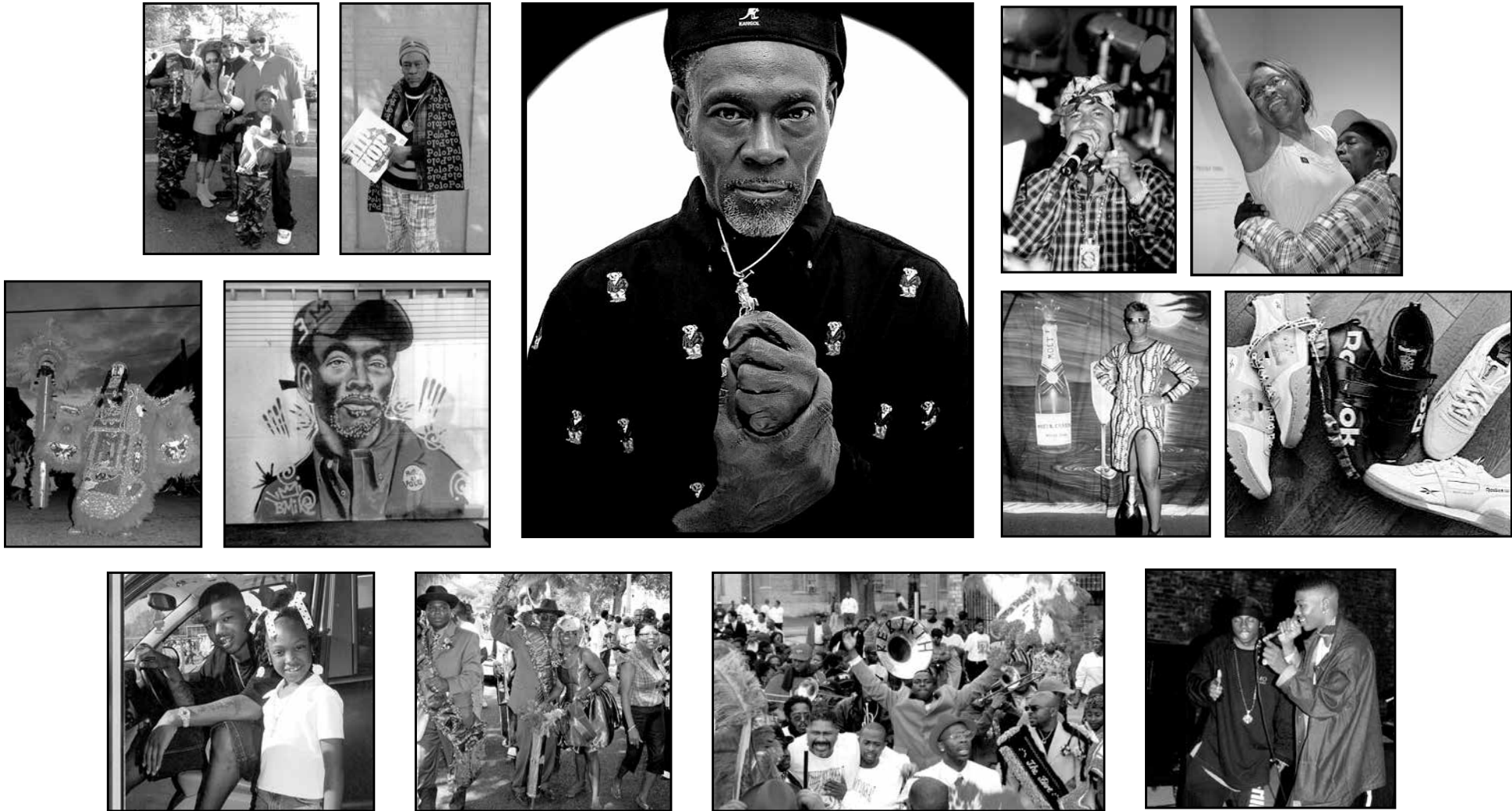
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Selwhyn Sthaddeus “Polo Silk” Terrell

A Photographer’s Journey of Black New Orleans



Polo Silk’s photographs tell the untold stories of Black New Orleans.

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief Data News Weekly

The Untold Stories of Black New Orleans
When people in Black New Orleans think of POLO, oftentimes, they are not speaking of Ralph Lauren the

designer, but the iconic Photographer Selwhyn Sthaddeus “Polo Silk” Terrell, who has for over several decades chronicled the lives of Black New Orleans. His catalog of second line, the Mardi Gras Indians, and New Orleans Hip-Hop and Bounce Artist have become highly sought after by archivist across the nation. Recently, his work has appeared in the Smithson-

ian Book on the history of Hip-Hop. His work has also been featured in galleries and museums that include the Contemporary Art Center (CAC) and an upcoming show at the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA). He’s also made an impact in the fashion world, collaborating with Brand Jordan, Reebok, Roc-Nation, and many others, bringing his brand of New Orleans

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culture to the world.

On this day, we meet, as always, he is rocking Polo gear from head to toe. You are about to hear the story of Selwhyn Sthaddeus "Polo Silk" Terrell, also known as the Ghetto Olan Mills.

A Unique Perspective

His use of the camera in telling the story of the people of New Orleans began in the 1980's.

"There was a photography class at the Boys and Girls club. Back then, it was just the Boys Club. In my house we had Jet and Ebony magazines around the house. I was always fascinated by the pictures. And in my house along the walls were photos of all my family members," recalls Polo.

Today he is a fixture at second lines, nightclubs and bars, and parties all over the city, capturing the untold stories of Black New Orleans.

"I want everybody in the City of New Orleans to have one of my pictures. It's been an amazing journey." Continuing he says, "It started out in 1987 in a teen club called 'Club Adidas' is where I started, and many years later my work is being seen all over the world. All I can say is I am honored to give people a glimpse of a side of New Orleans they do not often see."

As the New Orleans Hip-Hop and Bounce scene began to emerge, Polo, was on the frontline shooting history in the making.

We grew up on hip-hop and most of the performers were my friends and I was in the second line and marching club culture as well. Back then, most of the people who were shooting the early hip-hop were part of the culture. Now you see that people who do not understand and are not part of the culture taking pictures. What makes what I do different is my perspective as someone inside the culture."

The Rose that Grew from Concrete

As this creative spark was taking place, alongside it was the crime and violence from the drug trade began to claim the lives of many young Black men.

"I look back at these times when the rap game and drugs were becoming a big part of New Orleans culture. Many of the people I knew who were living in the projects needing money and saw an opportunity chose the street life, and I chose the photography route. Looking back, I could have been in jail or dead. I've lost a lot of friends and family. I lost my brother to the streets."

Despite all this going on around him, Polo, was focused on continuing down the path making his mark on not just New Orleans, but the world with his camera.

"My mother always said you are groomed for greatness. In my work I have highlighted the beauty of a part of the city many do not see. New Orleans is like no other city in the world. You can always find

life, so when I began to photograph them, it was very organic. It is part of who I am and is reflected in my work.

Polo has also collaborated with several brands over the

its appeal is its unabated authenticity, "My work is not Bourbon St., I am the real New Orleans, it is a people's history that I am a part of, and that comes through in my photos."

In addition to the Smithsonian



Selwhyn Sthaddeus "Polo Silk" Terrell.



Cover of Polo's groundbreaking book "Pop that Thang" A Pictorial History of New Orleans Rap and Bounce.

interesting things to photograph wherever you are."

New Orleans and Putting the City on the Map

The spirit of New Orleans and its rich culture has always been a part of his life.

"I can remember my dad, who was a member of Young Men Olympians (YMO), and I had family members who Masked Indian. This was just such a natural part of my

years. Speaking of his work he says, "I have worked with Brand Jordan. I also worked with Roc-Nation with their Planes clothing line, and I also did a Reebok collaboration. I remember they had my commercial playing in Times Square in New York, I felt like crying, imagining a dude from uptown New Orleans was making this kind of impact."

His work continues to gain legions of fans across the globe. For

Project, he has a book called "Pop That Thang," a collection of photos from the golden age of New Orleans Rap and Bounce.

"I made Pop That Thang as a pictorial history of the music and people I love. This book came out in 2017, and I've been called an expert on this great music coming out of my city. It is a good feeling telling the world about my people, who they are and what they create."

Getting Your Flowers While You are Still Here

Polo is getting his flowers while he is still alive, this was on full display when he was involved in a serious car accident. People from all walks of life showed love when Polo reemerged. Recounting this episode he says, "I was in a car accident 6 years ago, people started calling like crazy checking on me. I only went out once in a wheelchair because I did not want people to see me like that. Finally, I went out to a second line, and the love they gave me was overwhelming. I rode my bike out there and people were just giving me love and money. I believe God chose me to do this work, and I am honored to tell the story of my city and its people."

Reminiscing and Reflecting

His work resonates with many, especially people from New Orleans, who lost many of their photos during Hurricane Katrina, forever washing away visual images of the life they knew. Polo's work is reminiscent of life as it was before Katrina.

"I can recall when I decided to go live on Instagram and people from all over the world began commenting on my work. Many of whom left during Katrina, my pictures give them a view of how life was and bring them back to how New Orleans was in the eighties and nineties that was the golden era. It was a beautiful time, even with the drugs, crime, and killing that was occurring at the time."

In this moment he gets choked up thinking of all the lives lost to the drug life and gun violence of New Orleans.

"I've been to so many funerals, people didn't have choices, they had talent and got caught up in the street life."

People from all over love his work, and most importantly love Polo the person behind the camera, and what he does in telling the untold stories of New Orleans with his photos.

"I look at how I am archiving my stuff of people, some who are not here. Recently, I have begun to do these bracelets with pictures and give them to the families as mementos of those who have passed on. Some who may not have pictures of their loved ones."

"For me shooting pictures is more than a way to make money and tell stories, but it is about building relationships with people, often when they see me saying that's my picture man. It is a good feeling to know my work is respected by so many, and I am putting my people on the map for the world to see how beautiful and unique we are in New Orleans."

Bayou Classic 2021

The Bayou Classic is more than a football game. The annual event is one of the nation's greatest college sports rivalries, bringing the fans and alumni of Grambling State University and Southern University to New Orleans each November. 2021 was a great year for the classic series.

The week-long events featuring the Parade, Greek Show & Battle of the Bands and Fan Festival culminate with Saturday's Bayou Classic football match-up.



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

How Far Have You Come?



Diva Dionne Character
Female Empowerment
Columnist

With all that has been going on around all of us, you are still alive. You should be glad that you survived yet another hurdle, even when you swore one more thing would take you down, the universe was in your corner as you made it through another difficult period in your life.

Keep those memories and let them be the force you need to continue on through all the low feelings you may be experiencing. The good news is that you are an expert survivalist at this point. You have proven that no matter how far you had to go to get where you are today, you did it and now you should be rejoicing in gratitude.

Know that your strength comes from your ancestors who have laid down the path to your winning your life back in order



Diva Dionne Character

to help someone else make it through some of the same obstacles you have encountered.

Take a look in the mirror and realize that you are a winner and can do all things because you are a woman. You are free to live the life designed for you full of love, hope and gratitude.



Embrace your inner Diva for the holidays.

Start loving you more because you are a boss who can shine from the inside. Everything is gonna be alright!

You have the power within you to create the life your heart desires. Be happy to know that nothing can take you down because you can count on the rest of us who have traveled from

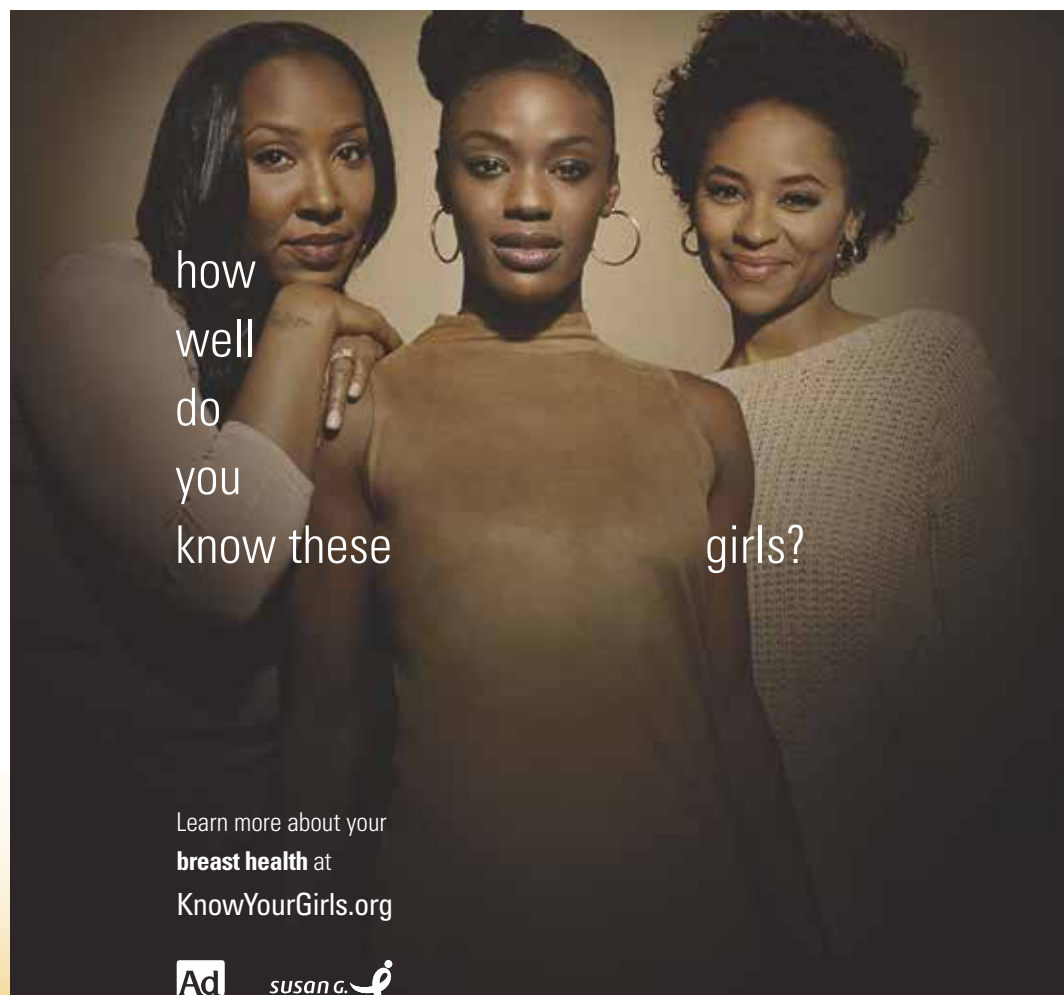
hardships and trials to a place of freedom and good health. Remember, you will never be alone, not even in a dark season, no matter how far you had to travel to get to this point in life because you are amazing.

Dionne Character can be reached at characterinhollywood@gmail.com.



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Mayor Cantrell Addresses COVID-19 Omicron Variant

Data News Staff Edited Report

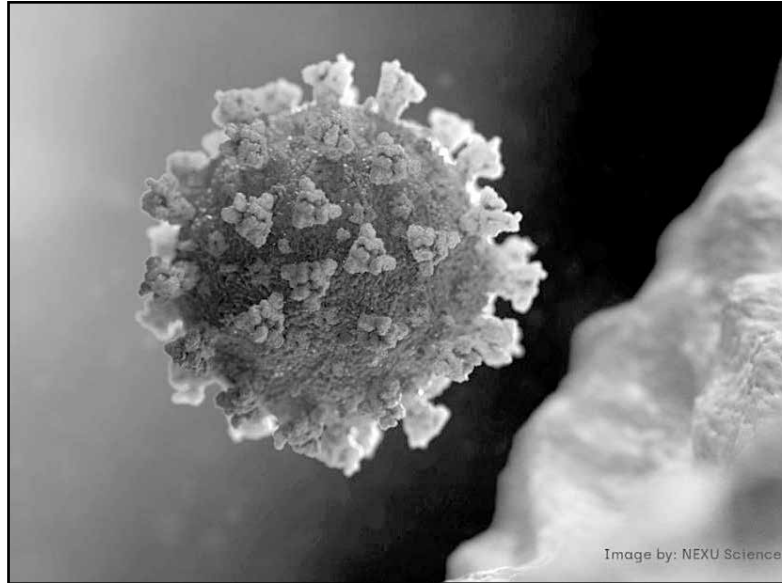
Recently, New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell held a news conference where she was flanked by the New Orleans Health Department and New Orleans Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness to discuss concerns surrounding the COVID-19 Omicron Variant. Additionally, she spoke of the importance of vaccinations and booster shots for the holiday season.

Although there are no known documented cases of the Omicron Variant at this time, Mayor Cantrell stressed that the next few weeks are crucial for determining COVID-19 Protocols moving forward.

Referring to vaccines as “the



New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell held a news conference where she was flanked by the New Orleans Health Department and New Orleans Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness to discuss concerns surrounding the COVID-19 Omicron Variant.



seatbelt” on the journey out of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Cantrell stated, “This, right now, is the time for every New Orleanian to be paying attention. Anyone planning to visit the City of New Orleans, this is the time to get vaccinated we do not have any time to waste.”

Dr. Jennifer Avegno also spoke about the dangers of the new variant, saying, “Now is not the time to panic but to continue on the same path we’ve traveled before.”

When asked what will determine new protocols being put into place, Avegno said hospital capacity will be the main metric.

“We’re in a good place for hospitalizations,” said Avegno. “We’ve got to keep it that way.”

State & Local News

Week of HIV/AIDS Awareness Events Highlights Realities of the Epidemic in New Orleans

City of New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS (Nov. 29, 2021) –The New Orleans Health Department and its Office of Health Policy & AIDS Funding are proud to promote a week of awareness to educate the public about HIV in the New Orleans community.

More than a dozen health and community organizations are joining forces to bring you NOLA HIV/AIDS Awareness Week from November 29 - December 9. We all have a role to play in ending the HIV epidemic and supporting healthy, stigma-free lives for people living with HIV. One step everyone can take is to get tested and, if positive, get into care.

Imagine a world free of stigma, where people affected by HIV are not ostracized, violated, insulted, or rejected. People recognize HIV as a preventable, treatable, and manageable disease. Together, we can make that world a reality to end the HIV epidemic.

Undetectable equals Untransmittable (U=U) means that a person living with HIV who consistently



Dr. Jennifer Avegno, Director New Orleans Department of Health.

takes their medications cannot transmit the HIV virus. People living with HIV who access and take treatment as directed can live a healthy and normal life. Still, HIV rates in our area remain high: Louisiana ranks among the ten states with the highest rates of new HIV cases, and New Orleans and Baton Rouge are among the top cities in

the nation for new cases, according to U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) statistics.

On December 1st, we observe World AIDS Day – a perfect opportunity to inform our communities about HIV.

Below is a select list of events happening in our community during NOLA HIV/AIDS Awareness Week:

AIDS Quilt Panel Display: New Orleans City Hall (1300 Perdido St), Wednesday, Dec. 1st- Tuesday, Dec. 7th

Wreath Laying Ceremony: Washington Square Park, Friday, Dec. 3rd, 3 - 5 pm. You can participate virtually at <https://us-02web.zoom.us/j/85792230340>

HIV Decriminalization Summit: Virtual event, Tuesday Dec. 9th, 9 am – 12 pm. Please visit <https://tinyurl.com/ModernizeIt-Summit>

State & Local
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Commentary

First-Ever Civil Rights Scorecard Grades Senators On Performance Defending Voting Rights



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

NEW YORK – How much do your senators care about voter suppression? How committed are they to our most sacred constitutional right? What have they done, and what are they willing to do, to defend it?

The Civil Rights Scorecard answers those questions.

Released this week by National Urban League, along with the NAACP, National Action Network, National Coalition of Black Civic Participation, Fighting for Our Vote Initiative, and National Council of Negro Women, the Scorecard provides civil rights advocates and their supporters with clear insights

into the voting patterns of their Senate delegations.

There is no greater crisis facing our nation at this moment than the preservation of democracy. History will judge every member of the Senate on their commitment to democratic principles. The Civil Rights Scorecard is not just a measure of each Senator’s voting record. It is a measure of their character, their integrity, and their patriotism.

The grades are based on senators’ votes on the American Rescue Plan Act, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, and the For the People Act, along with each senator’s stance on the filibuster – a once-rare procedure has been weaponized to block major legislation, including voting rights protection bills.

As the Scorecard notes, “the divide between the 51st and 60th vote in the Senate is unbridgeable with the Senate split along partisan lines.”

Senators were awarded one

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After Guilty Verdicts, Civil Rights Leaders Exhort Black America to 'Never Stop Running for Ahmaud'

Stacy M. Brown
Senior National
Correspondent NNPA
Newswire

After Guilty Verdicts, Civil Rights Leaders Exhort Black America to 'Never Stop Running for Ahmaud'

After nearly two years of pain, suffering, and wondering if the men who killed Ahmaud Arbery would pay for their heinous crime, the 25-year-old's family finally received justice.

A Glynn County, Georgia, convicted Travis McMichael, Gregory McMichael, and William Bryan of felony murder.

"Guilty. Guilty. Guilty," civil rights attorney Benjamin Crump exclaimed.

"Nothing will bring back Ahmaud, but his family will have some peace knowing the men who killed him will remain behind bars and can never inflict their brand of evil on another innocent soul," Crump continued.

NAACP President and CEO Derrick Johnson called the verdicts long overdue.

"Ahmaud Arbery's death was unnecessary and fueled by racist ideologies deeply engrained into the fabric of this nation," Johnson insisted.

"Generations of Black people



"The violent stalking and lynching of Ahmaud Arbery was documented on video for the world to witness. Yet, because of the deep cracks, flaws, and biases in our systems, we were left to wonder if we would ever see justice," said Attorney Ben Crump.

have seen this time and time again, with the murder of Emmett Till, Trayvon Martin, and many others," he continued.

"The actions and events perpetrated by the McMichaels and William Bryan leading up to Ahmaud's death reflect a growing and deepening rift in America that will be its undoing if not addressed on a systemic level.

"We must fix what is genuinely harming our nation: white supremacy."

The jury found Travis McMichael, who shot Arbery in February 2020, guilty of all nine charges, including malice murder and four counts of felony murder.

The panel found his father, Greg-

ory, not guilty of malice murder but convicted him on felony murder, unlawful imprisonment, and other charges.

Bryan escaped a guilty verdict on malice murder, but the jury found him guilty of three felony murder counts, aggravated assault, false imprisonment, and criminal intent to commit a felony.

The men, who also face federal charges, could spend life in prison when sentenced.

Judge Timothy Walmsley bound the men over and will soon set a sentencing date.

Immediately following the announcement of the first guilty verdict against Travis McMichael, Arberry's father, Marcus Arbery,

shouted, "long time coming."

Judge Walmsley asked court officials to remove the senior Arbery.

"Ahmaud Arbery should be alive today. This tragedy should have never happened," said Florida Congresswoman Val Demings, who is a Democrat.

"I am keeping his family in my prayers. But we must move forward together to dispel the shadows of our past and to ensure the safety and civil rights of every American," Demings asserted.

Crump insisted that Black America must keep fighting for civil rights and justice.

"This case, by all accounts, should have been opened and closed," Crump demanded.

"The violent stalking and lynching of Ahmaud Arbery was documented on video for the world to witness. Yet, because of the deep cracks, flaws, and biases in our systems, we were left to wonder if we would ever see justice," Crump remarked.

"[The verdict] indicates progress, but we are nowhere close to the finish line. America, you raised your voices for Ahmaud. Now is not the time to let them quiet. Keep marching. Keep fighting for what is right. And never stop running for Ahmaud."

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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.

We can't wait to hear from you!

Commentary, Continued from page 6.

point for each "yes" vote on the three bills, and zero points for a "no" vote, abstention or not voting.

Their stance on the filibuster, which comprised 50 percent of their overall score – was worth three points for abolishing the filibuster, two for reforming it, one for willingness to change it and zero for retaining the filibuster as it currently exists.

Senators with a score of 2.1 to 3 earned an "A" grade; those with a score of 1 to 2 earned an "I" for "incomplete," and those with a score of 0.9 or lower earned an "F."

The Scorecard focused on voting rights because every other right stems directly from it. Without the right to vote we have no say. No voice. No seat at the table to determine public policy on policing, education, or economic equity.

"A law is unjust if it is inflicted

on a minority that, as a result of being denied the right to vote, had no part in enacting or devising the law," Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote in Letter from a Birmingham Jail. Stacey Abrams expounded on this reality in Our Time Is Now: Power, Purpose, and the Fight for a Fair America: "As millions are stripped of their rights, we live out the policy consequences, from lethal pollution running through poor communities to kindergartners practicing active shooter drills taught with nursery rhymes."

Our democracy is cracking at the seams. It is crumbling before our eyes. The Scorecard is a clanging alarm, alerting every member of the United States Senate that we expect them honor their Constitutional duty and to do everything in their power to protect democracy, including abolishing or reforming the filibuster.

State & Local, Continued from page 6.

Free at-home HIV test: Text the word TEST to (504) 290-0145 to sign up for a free at-home HIV test kit.

Additional events can be found at: <https://29ui.short.gy/nolahivweek>

About OHP

The Office of Health Policy & AIDS Funding is a division of the New Orleans Health Department that provides services to persons living with HIV including assistance insurance premiums, rent, food, free medical care, and transportation. For more information about free HIV related services contact Fran Lawless at flawless@nola.gov or (504) 658-2800.

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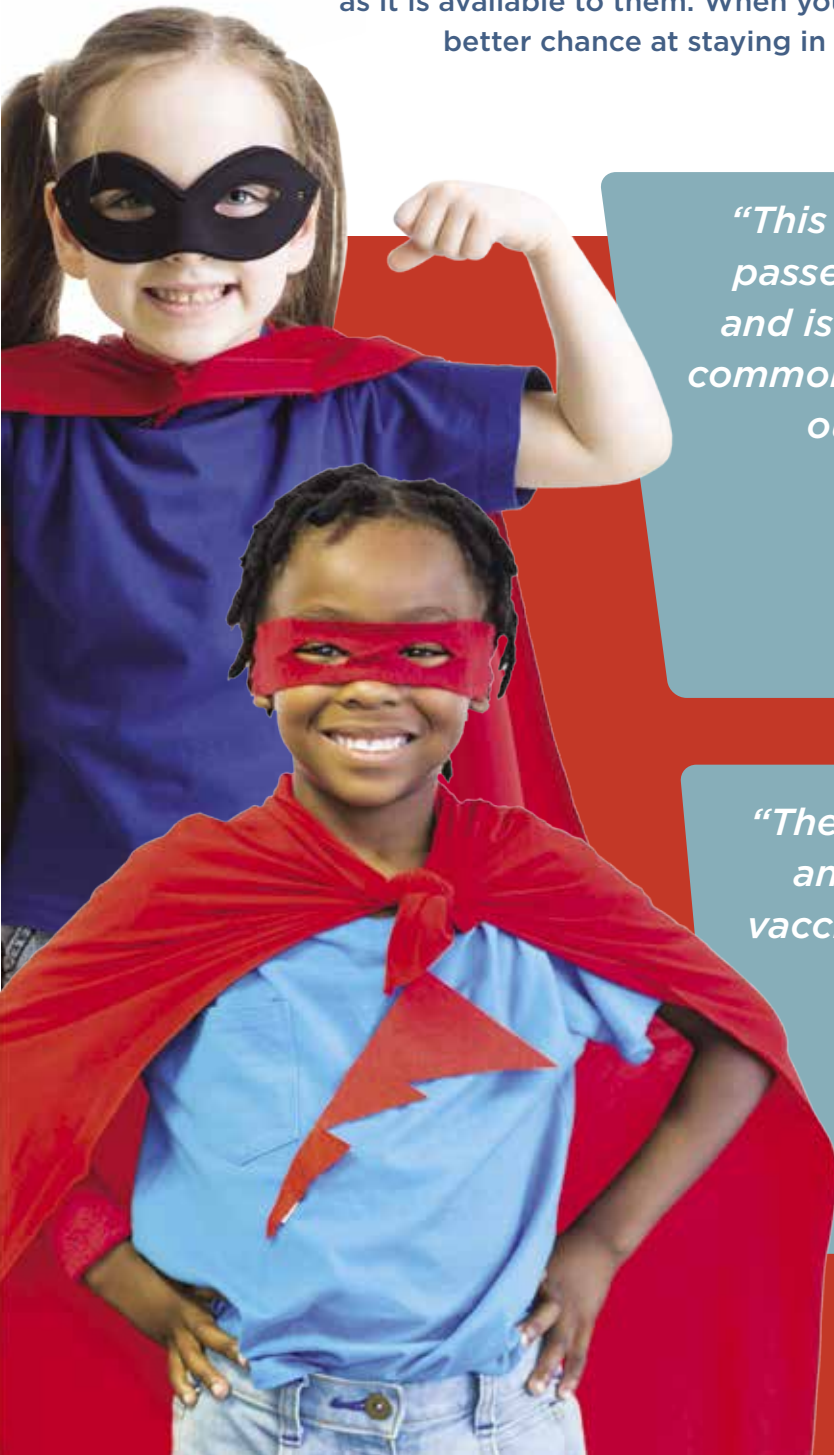
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Some
superheroes
wear capes...
**SOME WEAR
BANDAIDS.**




Our kids deserve to be protected, too.
THE COVID-19 VACCINE IS SAFE FOR CHILDREN.

The CDC has recommended that all children ages 5 and up get vaccinated against COVID-19.
The vaccines have proven to be safe and effective in children as young as 5 years old. The vaccine is so safe that the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) urge all eligible people to get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it is available to them. When your child gets vaccinated against COVID-19, they also have a better chance at staying in school and participating in the activities they enjoy.




“This vaccine for children has passed rigorous clinical trials and is safe – just like the other common vaccines we recommend our children receive.”

DR. WANDA THOMAS
PROFESSOR OF
PEDIATRICS,
LSU Health
Shreveport



“These vaccines are as safe and as effective as any vaccines we’ve ever had for any disease.”

DR. MARK KLINE
PHYSICIAN-IN-CHIEF
AND PEDIATRICIAN,
Children’s Hospital
New Orleans





BRING BACK
LOUISIANA

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