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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

# The Red Summer of 1919

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Violence Against Black Citizens*

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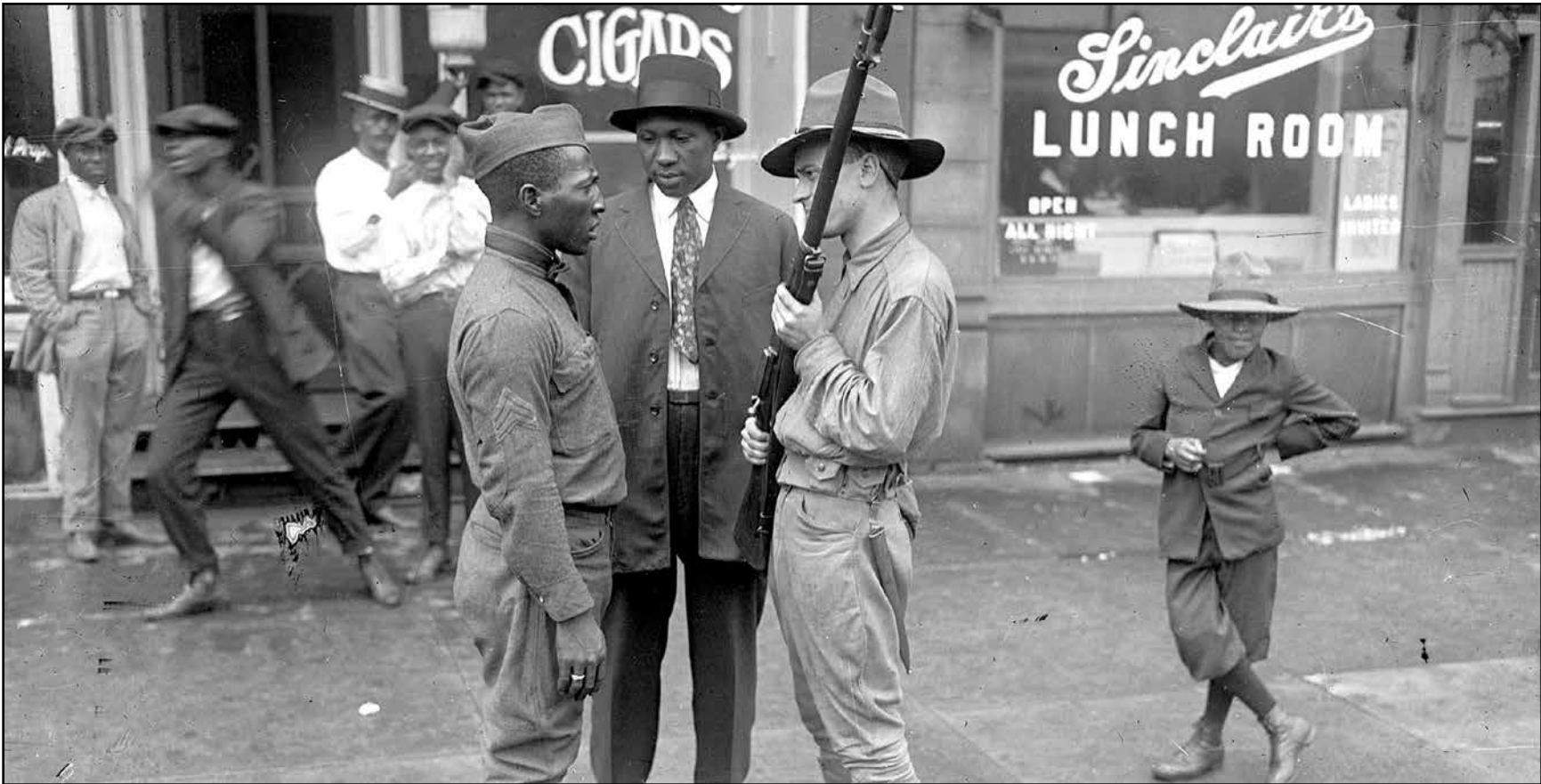
**CMS Administrator  
Chiquita Brooks-  
LaSure Makes History**



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# The Red Summer of 1919

*America's Shame of Mob Murder and Violence Against Black Citizens*



National Guard and a Black WWI veteran face off during the 1919 Chicago Race Riots. Rioting erupted on July 27 when a Black teenager drowned after being hit with stones when he and friends drifted near a de facto whites-only beach. Violent rioting across Chicago's South and West sides and into the downtown lasted days. Eventually the state militia was deployed to restore order. Though records vary, the final Chicago casualty count listed 38 fatalities (23 Black, 15 White), 537 injured and upwards of 1,000 Black families made homeless by the burning and rampant destruction of African American neighborhoods. Photograph by Jun Fujita, courtesy of Chicago History Museum, ICHI-65477.

By Cheryl Mainor  
Contributor

The poet and author Clyde McKay wrote the poem, "If We Must Die" after a series of violent attacks against Black people Americans in the summer of 1919. Author, James Weldon Johnson coined the

term "Red Summer" to describe those events. A century ago, hundreds of Black people were killed during those events, and yet, the nation has built few memorials to those dead. The Red Summer deserves to be remembered.

1919 was a sort of a turning point for the United States. The first World War had ended in November

1918, and troops were returning to an America that was rapidly changing. Women would soon gain the right to vote, and Prohibition would begin an experiment in banning alcohol.

The army was segregated, but some Black troops were put under French command because White American officers were not comfortable commanding

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## Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

Black troops. Many White Americans blamed the French for treating Black soldiers as equals and planting ideas in their heads. Called soldiers of democracy, Black veterans came back to America ready to demand civil rights. W.E. B. DuBois wrote "We return, we return from fighting, we return fighting."

For Black Americans, 1919 marked three-hundred years since the first African slaves were brought to the American colonies and they had begun to start culling for change. 1919 was a time of anxiety for the United States and the world. The first World War had ended, but other social movements and economic conditions contributed to an anxious time. Inflation was rising, labor strikes were common. In Russia, the Bolsheviks had overthrown the Czar; Americans feared Bolshevik agitation might come to their shores. Anarchist bombings were common, and the economy was in flux. And, in northern cities, Whites were afraid of the new Black migrants and economic competition.

The Great Migration would eventually send millions to the North and industrial Midwest fleeing violence, segregation, and lack of economic opportunity in the South. Unfortunately, they were oftentimes greeted with the same in places where they relocated. While they were at first unconcerned, Southern employers eventually worried about the loss of cheap labor and how to stem the tide of the exodus.

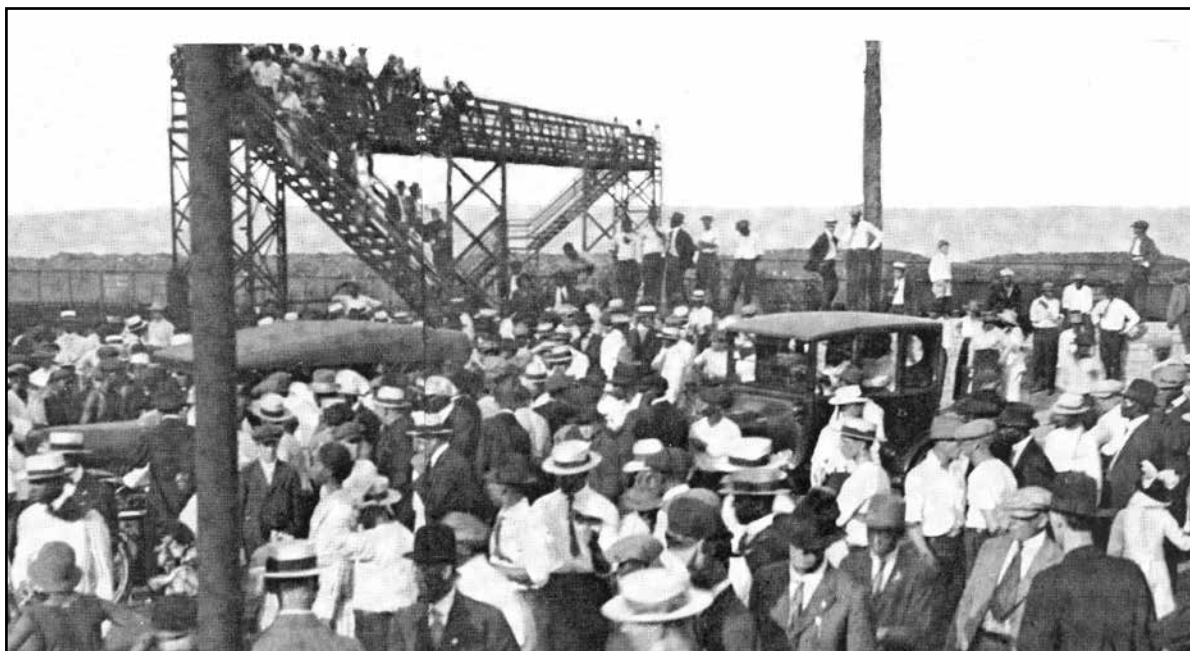
From spring into fall of 1919 these tensions exploded into the series of violent episodes in which hundreds of Black Americans were killed and served as a wake-up call. But it also spurred a movement in which Blacks in America, fought back; sometimes, for the first time.

An early episode of violence occurred in Jenkins County, Georgia in April. A Black church service was interrupted when two White officers arrested a Black man named Edwin Scott for possession of a pistol. A wealthy Black farmer named Joe Ruffin offered to pay his fine, but the officers demanded cash instead of a customary check. When Ruffin tried to pull him to the car, an officer struck him with his pistol, which discharged and knocked Ruffin unconscious. Ruffin's son, an Army veteran thinking his father was dead, shot and killed one of the officers. In the ensuing gunfight, the second officer was shot and then beaten to death. As the word spread, hundreds of White men rushed to the town, bent on revenge.

Ruffin surrendered to the local sheriff, who protected him from a mob intended on lynching him. But the mob then caught and lynched



From October 1-3, 1919, a race war exploded in Elaine, Arkansas when a small group of black men and women were gathering a rural church to organize a sharecroppers' and tenant farmers' union. An altercation ensued between the farmers and two armed deputies, one of whom was shot. As word of the shootings spread throughout the county, the local sheriff sent out a call for men "to hunt Mr. Nigger in his lair." The call went out to Mississippi to come to the aid of white men in Phillips County. Hundreds of armed men jumped into trains, trucks, and cars and, crossing into Arkansas, fired out of windows at every black they saw. By the time the shooting ended, 25 blacks and five whites were listed as officially dead. Many blacks believed that perhaps as many as 200 were killed, their bodies dumped in the Mississippi River. Image: University of Arkansas at Little Rock.



In Washington, D.C., from July 19 to 23, 1919, four whites and two blacks were killed; whites were astonished that blacks dared to fight back. The NEW YORK TIMES lamented the new black militancy: "There had been no trouble with the Negro before the war when most admitted the superiority of the white race." When the local police were overwhelmed by the mayhem, Washington, D.C.'s Black community banded together to fight back, arming themselves with bats, clubs, pistols and knives. The violence died down after President Woodrow Wilson sent in troops to restore order. Photo courtesy of Chicago Daily Tribune

two of his sons as well as another Black man who was in the area. They also burned the church and three other Black churches as well as three Masonic lodges in the area. Ruffin was taken to another county by the sheriff and put in jail there. Repeated attempts to try him for murder and manslaughter were unsuccessful but he was left impoverished due to his legal fees. He left the county moving to South Carolina as it was not safe for him to remain in Georgia. No charges were ever filed against the men who killed his two sons and the other man, or who destroyed property.

On July 19th, in Washington, D.C., a White woman claimed she was jostled on the street by two Black men. One of the men was questioned by police and released, but a rumor began among some

White Army veterans that the man had committed rape. White mobs started a four-day riot, attacking and beating hundreds of individuals and damaging businesses. When the city's police refused to intervene, Black residents fought back, and defended their neighborhoods with firearms. There was shooting and attacks from both sides until then President Woodrow Wilson reluctantly sent in two hundred Army troops to intervene. When it finally ended on July 25th, at least forty people had died from gunshots and street fights with over 150 people wounded.

In Chicago, a weeklong riot was set off on July 27th, when a Black teenager named Eugene Williams and three others were on a raft in Lake Michigan to escape the sweltering heat. Being taken along with

the current, they floated into the area of a segregated White's only beach, where a White man threw rocks at them hitting Eugene in the head and knocking him into the water where he drowned. When Black witnesses complained to the police and tried to have the man arrested, the police did nothing. A fight broke out between the Black people and a White mob, and the riot ensued, lasting for five days.

The vast majority of the acts of murder, arson and property damage were perpetrated by White gangs against Black neighborhoods of Chicago's South Side. Police did little to protect Black people and the State's Attorney accused the police of arresting the Black rioters while refusing to arrest White rioters. Illinois was forced to call in the militia to restore order. In the

end, 23 Black and 15 Whites were killed during the rioting with more than five hundred injured and over one thousand Black residents were left homeless due to arson.

Other riots broke out in twenty-two other cities including Omaha, Nebraska with 120 Whites being arrested but none found guilty. The deadliest event took place in Elaine, Arkansas on September 30th. When a group of union Black sharecroppers was planning a meeting with White farmers to discuss how to obtain fairer wages for their labor, members of the farmers group insinuated that Communists were behind the sharecroppers' efforts, stoking the fear and tensions of the nation that the Russian Revolution was coming to America.

When two White deputies showed up at the meeting, they clashed with armed Union guards, resulting in the death of one of the deputies. The local sheriff called for a posse to aid in the arrest of those responsible for the killing. When rumors spread of a possible insurrection by the Black people, a mob of over one thousand White men showed up indiscriminately killing Black men, women, and children. Estimates of those killed are between 100 to 500 killed by the mob. The Governor called in troops to stop the violence and arrested 285 Black men. Poll taxes and other impediments made it impossible for a Black defendant to receive a trial of their peers. Sometimes armed White mobs were outside and inside the courtroom. No White men were arrested or charged for their brutal violence.

These represent just a few of the more than twenty-five violent riot events throughout America during the Red Summer and lasting into the late fall of 1919. Reports indicate that between 1889 to 1919 more than 3000 Black people had been lynched. States rarely prosecuted anyone for lynching a Black person. While these incidences fighting back represented incredible courage and acts of self-determination, it would be another 5 decades before acts of terror and lynching perpetrated on Black Americans would cease, for the most part.

Many of the Black men who fought back in D.C and Chicago were military veterans who were ready to defend themselves, their families, and their communities with their training. The Red Summer riots marked a difference from previous years when Black people were attacked and did not or could not defend themselves. The violence made one Veteran, Henry Haywood said, "I'd been fighting the wrong war; the Germans were not my enemy, the enemy was right here at home."



# Mardi Gras Mambo Style



**Tracee Dundas**  
Fashion Stylist

Carnival season is officially rolling! And just like we dress in our favorite colors during football season, every parade goer will be showing off their Mardi Gras spirit wearing the signature carnival colors of purple, green, and gold. But to be a fabulous standout during carnival season it's imperative to incorporate

**Data Zone,**  
Continued on page 5



Purple and Gold Print Cardigan at Kay Boutique



Snoball and Feather Headpiece designed by Caroline Thomas

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### Data Zone, Continued from page 4.

sequins, glitter, feathers, and an extraordinary head dressing!

The choices are endless and can be as over-the-top as the persona you wish to convey!

### Mardi Gras Style Tips

1. More is More – Glitter, Sparkle & Shine is Essential!
2. Fashion with Movement is a Plus!
3. The Bigger the Headpiece the Better!
4. A Bright Colored Wig to Standout More!
5. Remember Creative Makeup to Complete the Look!
6. Remember Your Carnival Colors!
7. Fabulous is a Must!



Fringe Crop Jacket at Pop Culture Nola



Mom & Me Matching Sequins Kimono and Tassel Headband at Fringe & Co



Bright Yellow Maxi Dress at Brave Beautique



Green Maxi Dress and Purple Clutch at Pop Culture Nola



Mambo Graphic Top at Sparkle City



Two-Piece Matching Floral Athleisure Set at West London Boutique

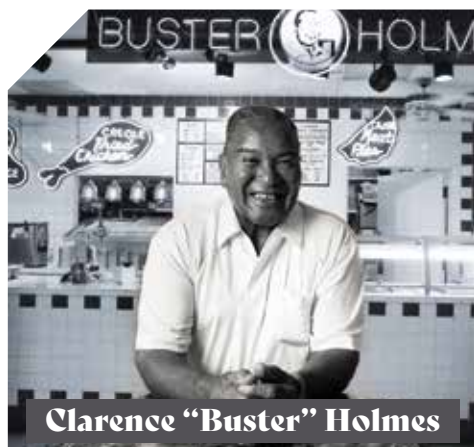
# Celebrating

BLACK CULINARY HISTORY MONTH

## ROUSES MARKETS

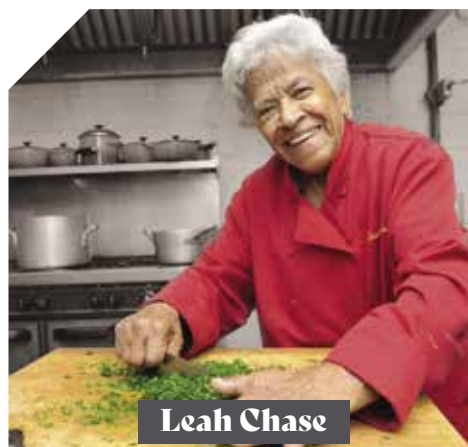
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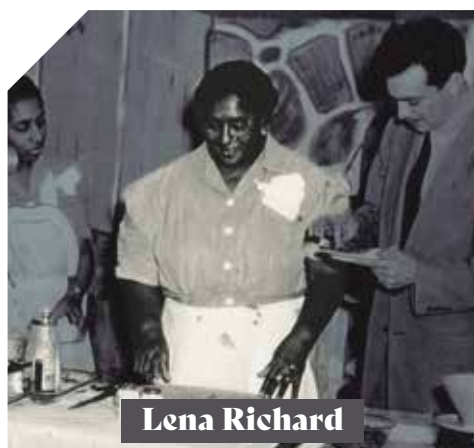
Clarence "Buster" Holmes

**Clarence "Buster" Holmes** ran an iconic soul-food restaurant where local musicians hung out: the eponymously named Buster Holmes, where all could enjoy a cheap but tasty meal. He sold his famed red beans and rice at the first New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival in 1970, and traveled the world as an ambassador of New Orleans cuisine.



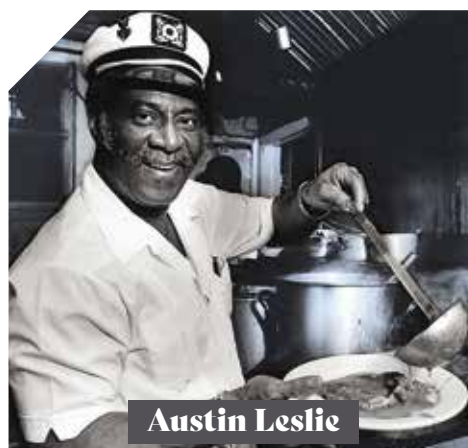
Leah Chase

Known the world over as the Queen of Creole Cuisine, **Leah Chase** ran Dooky Chase's Restaurant for decades, shining a national spotlight on Creole food. She hosted presidents and musicians, and inspired the Disney princess Tiana. The Chase family's historic restaurant was a hub for the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s.



Lena Richard

Before Julia Child, there was **Lena Richard**. Though she started out as a domestic worker, by the late 1930s her empire included restaurants, cookbooks — even food manufacturing. She was the first Black woman to host her own cooking show, which debuted on WDSU in 1949, just one year after the station was launched.



Austin Leslie

New Orleans' own **Austin Leslie** was a world-famous chef whose cuisine was synonymous with Creole Soul. He was known for his famous fried chicken, which he served throughout his career at Chez Hélène, Jacques-Imo's and Pampy's. The chicken always came with his signature garnish: minced garlic, parsley and a slice of dill pickle.



# A New Approach

## Gary Chambers Jr. Launches Campaign for U.S. Senate

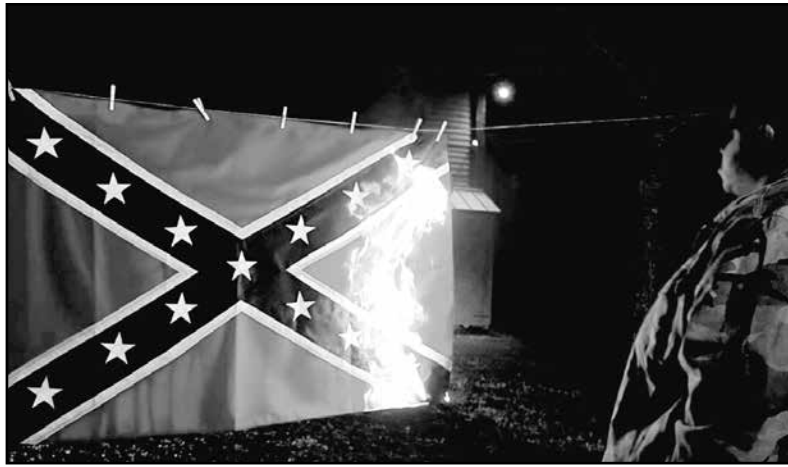
Eric Connerly  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

The mid-term elections in November promises to put Louisiana on the national stage, in a U.S. Senate Race that will pit incumbent John Kennedy, against up and comer Gary Chambers Jr.

Gary Chambers Jr., a U.S. Senate Candidate from Louisiana recently launched his campaign with a video that went viral where he is smoking marijuana in his first campaign ad. Then released another provocative ad in which he burns a Confederate flag.

In his latest spot that is garnering attention across the nation it states.

"They said, 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,'" Chambers says. "But here in Louisiana and all around the South, it feels like Jim



Gary Chambers Jr., a candidate for the U.S. Senate from Louisiana recently launched his campaign with a series of ads that's gone viral. His approach is challenging the political establishment to deal with the issues of Voting Rights and Criminal Justice Reform.



Crow never left and the remnants of the Confederacy remain.

"The attacks against Black people, our right to vote and participate in this democracy are methodical," he continues in the 60-second spot, pouring gasoline on the flag. "Ger-

rymandered districts are a byproduct of the Confederacy. Our system isn't broken. It's designed to do exactly what it's doing, which is producing measurable inequity. One in 13 Black Americans are deprived of the right to vote. One in nine Black

Americans do not have health insurance. One in three Black children live in poverty."

Chambers then pulls out a lighter emblazoned with his initials and ignites the Confederate Flag.

It is important to note that his

words seem not to inflame, but to give voice to the contradictions of justice, fairness, and equality for African Americans.

This race will be one to watch as we get closer to the November Primary.

### State & Local News

## Congressman Carter and DA Williams Announce \$2.3M+ in Federal DOJ Grants to Orleans Parish Civil Rights Division

Data News Staff Edited  
Report

NEW ORLEANS - Congressman Troy Carter joined District Attorney Jason Williams, Louisiana State Representative Royce Duplessis and several advocates and stakeholders to announce more than \$2.3 million in Federal Grant Funding from the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA).

Awarded specifically to the Orleans Parish District Attorney's Civil Rights Division (CRD), these funds will be used both to advance these leaders' shared goal of increasing safety and delivering justice for the people of New Orleans. These grants, among other actions, will allow the District Attorney's office to increase DNA testing and cold case investigations in order to identify the correct violent perpetrators and restore trust in the Criminal Legal System.

Managed by the BJA, the four grants were awarded by four funding programs including

1. Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence,



District Attorney Jason Williams



Rep. Troy Carter (D-LA 2nd)

2. Emmett Till Cold Case Investigations and Training and Technical Assistance,
3. Innovations in Reentry Initiative: Building System Capacity & Testing Strategies to Reduce Recidivism and
4. Upholding the Rule of Law and Preventing Wrongful Convictions Site-Based and Training and Technical Assistance.

Congressman Troy A. Carter Sr. spoke at the press conference and shared the following statement:

"I am proud to have played a role in securing over \$2.3 million in federal grants for New Orleans that will help us achieve our goals

of building safer communities, advancing justice, and holding wrongdoers accountable within our Criminal Justice System.

"These grants will advance the District Attorney's office's ability to protect the public and deliver justice by increasing DNA testing, reviving cold case investigations and more.

"When crimes go unsolved, and innocent people are put in prison, people lose faith in the Criminal Justice System and criminals believe they can act with impunity. We cannot let this stand.

"That's why I am proud to have assisted in providing resources to

assist in clearing our DNA testing backlog, investigate cold cases and prevent wrongful convictions.

"Alongside programs to reduce recidivism, these resources will expand law enforcement's capacity, stretch taxpayer dollars, and will protect the community while ensuring the justice system is truly providing justice.

"I am also so proud that these grants will aid people as they re-enter society after incarcerated having served their sentence.

"I would like to thank Chad Sanders for being here on behalf of the First 72, an organization that does such great work ensuring the formally incarcerated not only don't reoffend but become successful members of society.

"One of these grants will create a task force that will be responsible for reentrants who have been released as a result of the efforts by the Civil Rights Division.

"Those who have spent longer times incarcerated may need enhanced services to address specific needs – this task force will tackle those issues and help reduce recidivism, bring workers back into the

economy, and save taxpayer dollars.

"From both moral and policy perspectives, helping people find jobs, re-join communities, and avoid recidivism, is the right thing to do.

"I am proud to have advocated with the Biden Administration for these grants and grateful that they have been awarded to New Orleans.

"I know public safety is at the top of mind for the people of this great city and of the Second Congressional District, and it's my number one issue as well.

"I will continue to partner with local, state and federal officials to help bring resources and supports to Southeast Louisiana and will continue to support policies that both improve public safety and continue to infuse greater justice into our judicial systems.

"Thank you, DA Williams, State Rep. Duplessis, Chief Maw, Andrew Hudley, Chad Sanders, and all of the other officials, government staff and advocates, for all that you do to make our communities safer and more just.

"I look forward to doing all I can at the federal level to support your critical on-the-groundwork."

# CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure Makes History Among the Most Diverse White House Administration

**Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, the first Black woman to lead the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).**

By Stacy M. Brown,  
NNPA Newswire Senior  
National Correspondent @  
StacyBrownMedia

A White House photo featuring dozens of African American members of the Biden-Harris Administration circulated the internet during the opening days of Black History Month, and one would be hard-pressed to find anyone as proud as Chiquita Brooks-LaSure.

The first Black woman to lead the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Brooks-LaSure offered the brightest smile when mentioning the historic photo that featured Vice President Kamala Harris and a host of Black staffers who help push the administration's work forward.

"I'm so proud and really moved," the Philadelphia-born Brooks-LaSure asserted.

"When I got nominated, I heard from women across the country, and I didn't realize how meaningful it would be for so many people for me to sit in this chair," she continued.

"I have older women and younger women come up to me and say how proud they are. That really fuels me to want to use this role in a way to change people's lives, and I feel so grateful for that opportunity."

"The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) resolutely salutes and congratulates Chiquita Brooks-LaSure for her outstanding leadership at Health and Human Services (HHS) CMS. We look forward to expanding the partnership between CMS and the NNPA. Medicare and Medicaid are vital to the present and future of African Americans and other communities of color," affirmed Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr, NNPA President and CEO.

A former policy official who played a crucial role in guid-



Chiquita Brooks-LaSure is making history as the first Black woman to lead the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

ing the Affordable Care Act – or Obamacare – through passage and implementation, Brooks-LaSure enjoys decades of experience working in government and the private sector.

As Deputy Director for Policy at the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight, and earlier at the Department of Health & Human Services as Director of Coverage Policy, Brooks-LaSure led the agency's implementation of Obamacare coverage and insurance policy provisions.

She assisted the House of Representatives leaders in passing several healthcare laws, including the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008, as part of the Democratic staff for the House's Ways and Means Committee.

As administrator for CMS, Brooks-LaSure oversees programs that include Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and the HealthCare.gov health insurance marketplace.

"I was born in Philadelphia, raised in New Jersey, and have been living in Virginia for a big chunk of my life," said LaSure, who's married with a young daughter.

"I was always interested in policy from a young age," she explained.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has upped the pressure on CMS and other agencies, but Brooks-LaSure recalled similarities to when the ACA became law.

"Before we passed the law, not everyone thought we should focus on health policy. We had the Great Recession, and one of the pieces of people's financial security was healthcare because one out of every three bankruptcies resulted from medical costs.

"So, it became imperative to pass the ACA, and I think we're at the same moment today. The pandemic has made it more difficult in terms of wanting to do so many things with healthcare policy."

Brooks-LaSure asserted that Americans now have a greater appreciation of why healthcare is vital and why the uninsured and those not having access to vaccines and drug treatments affect everyone.

"I think people have seen health disparities at a different level," she stated.

"I think we now have an opportunity to address those [disparities] if we seize this moment."

She told NNPA Newswire that a record 14.5 million signed up for 2022 health care coverage during the enrollment period.

"Investing in financial assistance

and outreach allows more people to have access to the care that they need," Brooks-LaSure stated.

As part of Vice President Kamala Harris's Call to Action to Reduce Maternal Mortality and Morbidity, HHS, through CMS, has taken steps to improve maternal health and support the delivery of equitable, high-quality care for pregnancy and postpartum care.

CMS has proposed a "Birthing-Friendly" designation to drive perinatal health outcomes and maternal health equity improvements.

According to a release, the designation would initially identify hospitals that provide perinatal care, participate in a maternity care quality improvement collaborative, and implement recommended patient safety practices.

CMS has also encouraged states to take advantage of the American Rescue Plan's option to provide 12 months of postpartum coverage to pregnant individuals enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP.

Brooks-LaSure said history would ultimately smile upon the unprecedented diversity.

"I think that representation matters so much, and we will have changed this country because so many of us are in these roles with our diverse perspectives strengthen policymaking," Brooks-LaSure said.

"The more you have people who come from different experiences, you make stronger and better policies and making sure the next generation see they can sit in these roles."

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