

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

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Portraits by Polo Silk

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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

On The Right Track



Karr High School Male Track and Field Team... Excellence Personified

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On The Right Track

*Karr High School Male Track and Field Team...
Excellence Personified*



The Karr High School male track team had a stellar year winning in local, state and regional meets.

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief, Data News Weekly

Inspiration For the Next Generation
News narratives regarding Black males in the City of New Orleans tend to often focus too much on the

negative and not the positive things that are happening where young men are achieving excellence. This is on full display at Edna Karr High School in New Orleans that is part of the Inspire NOLA Charter School Network, where their boys track and field teams are becoming champions both on and off the field. This year the team dominated the relays, taking first places

in the 4x100, 4x200 and 4x400 races. Data News Weekly had the privilege to speak to Karr's School Leader, Latoye A. Brown, Track Coach Errin Singleton, along with several members of the various relay teams and their parents, who shared their recipe for success. It is something that can hopefully inspire and change the narrative surrounding Black

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males in New Orleans and provide models of success to be replicated.

What Does It Take to Become a Champion?

Edna Karr, located on the Westbank of New Orleans has for many years been a school that produces graduates that are showcasing the best of young people reaching their full potential. This is something that runs counter to mainstream news outlets that seem focused on presenting the worse images of Black males. While these are in some instances a reality for some, many more are doing the best they can to pursue excellence. This is on full display at Karr, where champions are being made every day.

What is it that's being done with these young men that is making them successful? Ra'Hji Dennis, who is one of the standouts on the team gives insight into their success, "When you are running a relay you bond like brothers. We count on each other; working together to reach our goals as a team. This year we were able to do that, and we hope to continue to be more successful next track season."

One of the newest members on the team Bryson Osborne II, who transferred from Lusher remarks, "At first there were some obstacles, and as a team it took some time. There were some bumps in the road, but when it came down to it, we were able to get it done as a team. We saw the bigger goal and rose together as a team to become champions this year."

Being a success is about identifying something you love and working hard to become better at it. It takes dedication, focus and people around you that will help your vision come to fruition. "I found something I loved and invested the time in it and got better. I think it is important for young people to find something they love and invest the time in getting better at it. It is also important that people around you support you while you are pursuing your goals. This is what my mom and others have done," says Markel Myles, while sitting with his mother Bea, who is a registered nurse, and placing all her efforts investing in her son's success.

Building Character

Sports is something that has many things about it that can be used off the field. Teamwork, the importance of practice, discipline, good sportsmanship, discipline, and most importantly character. This is something Edna Karr's Track Coach Errin Singleton is trying to instill in the members of his team. "It's all about character in my mind, what are you doing when no one is watching," says Single-

ton, using a saying that's repeated by several on his team that guides their mission to greatness.

Competing in sports can induce both the stress and pressure of performing at a high level; Coach Singleton, works with his team encouraging them and giving them the tools to become winners. It is something he says is necessary to win not just in sports, but in life. "I tell my guys all the time to enjoy the moment, do not get frustrated, and you will be successful. I also challenge them to be their best; and to always work to do what is best for them and the team. It is something I think that can help all of them do whatever it is they want to do on the next level."

These young men embody dedication, discipline and a work ethic that is an example of the best of young Black men in New Orleans. "When Edna Karr's relay team takes to the track, it's truly a sight to behold. These student athletes train tirelessly together, and with the help of their coaches, they grow every day into disciplined, successful, and excellent young Black men. They are taking those skills off the track and into the classroom and their communities to show what real teamwork looks like. This year, they brought home two relay state championships, the 4x100 and the 4x400 and Ra'Hji Dennis won first place individually in the 200. We continue to be proud of their hard work and dedication," states Latoye A. Brown, MBA, M.Ed, SHRMP, Chief of Strategy and Advancement at Karr High School.

Success On and Off the Field

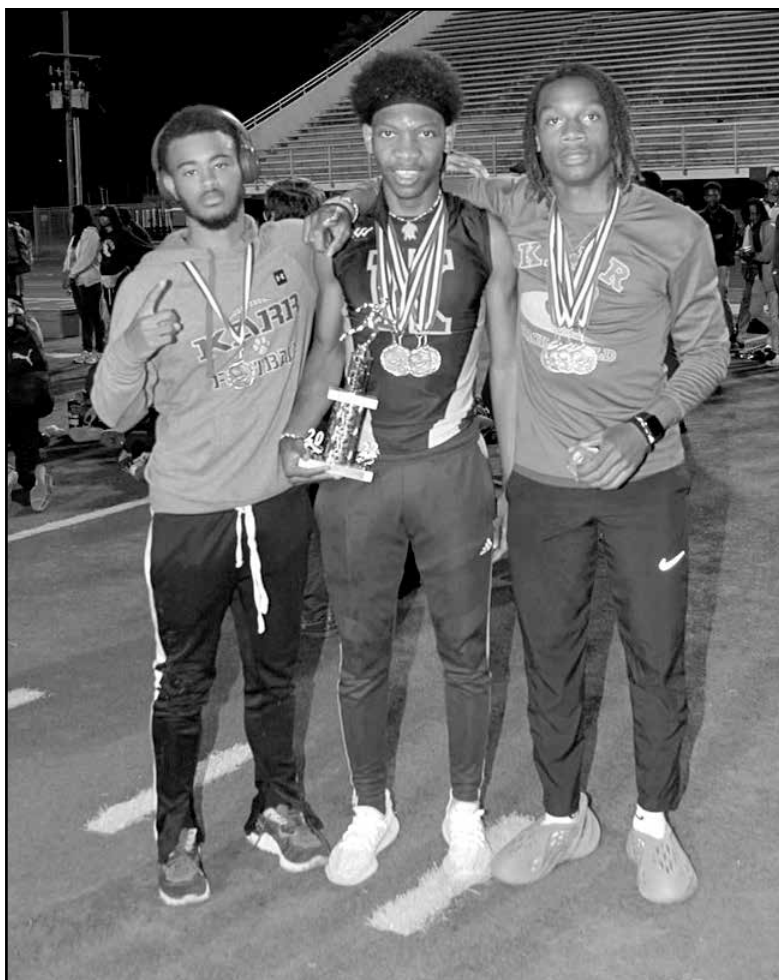
In addition to being great on the field, many of them are stellar students, "I work as hard in the classroom as I do on the track. I also have plans to attend college after high school," remarks Bryson Osborne II.

His father, Bryson Osborne I, was a former athlete, but feels education is the most important thing in his son's life. "For me, him academically excelling is much more important. He started out at Lusher, and we moved him over to Karr because his ability exceeded what they had to offer in Athletics. One of the coaches from Karr reached out to us about Bryson. I thought it was a good fit, he is getting better at sports than he was at his previous school and continuing to excel in his academic work as well."

Jeremy Geary Sr., father of Jeremy Geary Jr., is an Assistant Principal at Warren Easton High School. He says describing what ingredients are necessary to assist in young people becoming high achievers. "The first thing we need



Jeremy Geary Sr. is an Assistant Principal at Warren Easton High School, and is raising his son, Karr champion relay team member Jeremy Geary Jr. Additionally, he is also helping other young people in the City of New Orleans pursue excellence.



L-R Bryson Osborne II, Markel Myles, and Ra'Hji Dennis

to do regarding our young people is to change their mindset. Also, teach them how to carry themselves. In addition, to teaching character and how to deal with adversity in their lives. It is my belief when you learn to master these things, then it is easily transferrable into academics and extracurricular activities where anyone can be successful in school and in life."

Bea Myles, mother of Markel Myles also stresses the importance of education, "We encourage him. We make sure he does his best at everything he does. We work together to make sure his grades are good, because it is all a team effort."

It Takes a Village

There is an African Proverb that states, "It takes a village to raise a child." This is truly the case with the young men on the Karr's Track relay team. "Markel Myles is a village child, without the village I don't know where I would be," states his mother, Bea Myles. "I am extremely thankful to the men in the community and people in the neighborhood looking out for him when I am at work. Shout out to all the coaches. They have put a great deal of work into Markel, both in school and out of school. They have been a great sense of support; we need the village."

Markel echoes his mother's sentiment saying, "Everyone needs a village and people to support them. We all need someone to uplift us and be there to help us get to the next level and reach our greatness."

His teammate Jeremy Geary Jr., also notes the importance of mentors and being around positive people, "Having the right people around you are key to success. It is something that's helped me stay focused on my goals of being a good student in my academic work as well as an athlete. Also, if I had to say something to people my age, I would say, set goals for yourself and put in the necessary work and you can accomplish anything in life."

"Helping to nurture the best that is in our young people is the responsibility of all community members. We must demand accountability from our entire community if our children are to become the best versions of themselves," says Coach Singleton, who believes if the community were more intentional in this way, there we would see less crime and violence among young men in New Orleans.

Black Male Excellence: Changing the Narrative

To achieve excellence, a great support system is necessary. The young men in this story understands this fully. "There are so many people who are there for me in every way. My mom, dad and grandpa are giving me all I need to thrive. They are always in my corner," says Bryson Osborne II.

Hearing those heartfelt words coming from his son, Bryson Osborne I, says, "It makes me feel good because I grew up in a single parent home without my father. It was important for me to be there for my son, but I remind him that it's not just me, but the support of his mother Tiffany S. Crusto, and his grandfather, Alvin Crusto, who always saying he's his biggest fan. When I fall short financially, he's always there. He also has the support of his uncle Geric Osborne, who pays for his cryotherapy. He has a support network that's much stronger than what I had. I really believe it is the whole network that makes Bryson who he is."

Changing the narrative requires making different and better choices. This is something these young men are doing to stay on the right track. Harkening back to the words of Coach Singleton, Ra'Hji Dennis says, "It is about doing the right thing when no one is looking and putting in the time to do things other won't. Additionally, you are going to work while other people

Cover Story

Cover Story/ Continued from page 3.

are sleeping, pushing harder and harder because you want to be better than everybody else. This is a mentality you must have to be great."

The common thread that connects these young men is to have strong men in their lives as well as support from many others. It is because of this they are on the right track. Robert Dennis' words are prescriptive for a community that seeks to change the narrative around young Black males. "As a father I made a vow to do whatever it takes to make sure my children have everything they need to be successful. That my children would not have to do things like break the law and become a negative statistic. I have four boys and I've raised five. I feel today you can do anything you want to do if you are doing the right thing. Putting God first, you have no obstacles, you look at them as speed bumps and keep it moving."



Karr 4x100 and 4x200 team dominated the competition this season (Bryson Osborne II, Kylen Lampton, Ra'Hji Dennis and Deantre' Jackson).



Markel Myles and his mother Bea Myles, who says it takes a village to raise our children and encourages more men to get involved with the young Black males in the City of New Orleans.



Karr High School male relay track team are a great example of excellence both on and off the track. These young men excel in athletics as well as academics.



Bryson Osborne I with son Bryson Osborne II



Family support is important in raising successful young men. Robert Dennis (Father), Ra'Hji Dennis, LaTasha Dennis (Mother) and Ra'Saan Dennis (Brother).



Bryson Osborne II, a young man showing the stuff greatness is made of as a standout student and athlete.



Ra'Hji Dennis, is a one of the young men that's making his mark in track and field winning both on the relay team and solo event. He is pictured with Karr's track coach Errin Singleton, who continues to build young men who are poised to become winners at whatever they pursue in life.

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

Picture Man

Portraits by Polo Silk

*July 16th, 2022 - January 8th, 2023 Exhibit
at the New Orleans Museum of Art*

Fleur De Lis

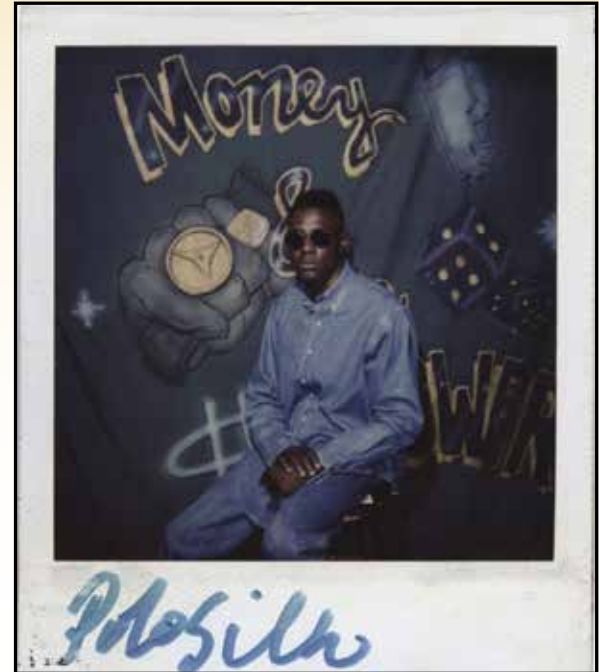
Data News Weekly Contributor

His work tells the story of Black New Orleans and its rich celebration traditions. For more than three decades, Selwyn Sthaddeus "Polo Silk" Terrell has been photographing the people of the "Real New Orleans". His work captures the essence and the heartbeat of what makes New Orleans a city that people want to continue to come to and experience. He is an underground legend that his work is now being discovered by a whole new audience who is seeking an authentic portrayal of urban life in New Orleans. He's created a unique body of work that blends elements of portraiture, fashion, performance, and street photography.

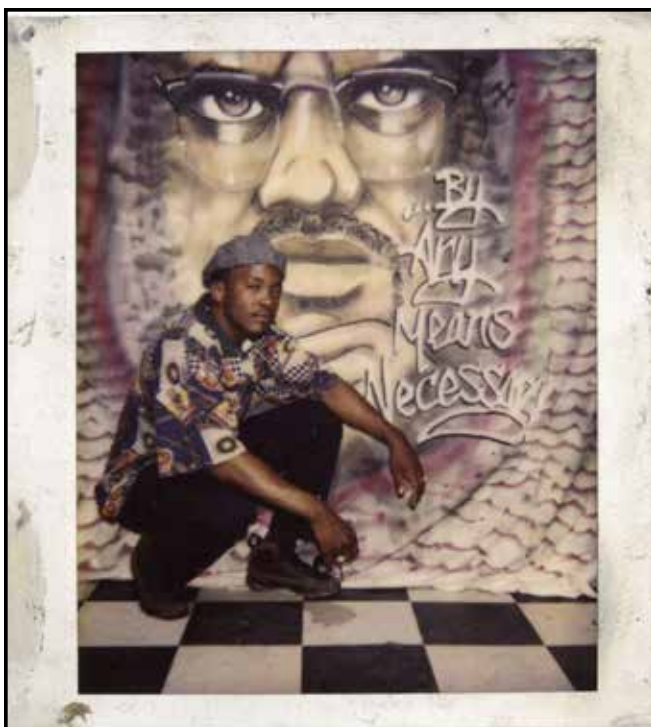
More than a photographer, he is an archivist and historian, whose audience continues to grow, as people from across the globe are becoming fans of his work. He has been featured in international magazines, and he has appeared in the Smithsonian book on the History of Hip-Hop. He's also worked with brands such as Reebok and ROC Nation on design concepts. Polo is a renaissance man from up-



Mardi Gras, Orleans and Claiborne 1999
Polo Silk
Unique Polacolor print
4 1/4 x 3 1/2 inches
Museum purchase, Tina Freeman Fund, 2021.73



Lo Life, Lo Down, Club Detour 1993
Polo Silk
Unique Polacolor print
4 1/4 x 3 1/2 inches
Museum purchase, Tina Freeman Fund, 2021.68



Phillip Green, Mr. Big Stuff, Club Detour 1992
Polo Silk
Unique Polacolor print
4 1/4 x 3 1/2 inches
Museum purchase, Tina Freeman Fund, 2021.70

town New Orleans, who is stepped in the history of his native city.

This exhibit at the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) is historical, as well as a homecoming for this amazing artist and visual storyteller from the Crescent City.

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Councilmembers React to Trial Court Ruling for Entergy in \$1M Reliability Fine Case

City of New Orleans

This week, City Councilmembers Helena Moreno and JP Morrell reacted to the news that a trial court blocked the Council's landmark \$1 million fine assessed against Entergy New Orleans in 2019 for distribution grid reliability failures.

"I've consistently believed we must use every tool in the Council's authority to get New Orleanians the reliable electricity grid they need and deserve," said Council President Moreno. "Entergy sued to stop this fine because they want to avoid accountability for their failures. That is unacceptable. We continue to believe in the justice of our efforts and will pursue legal remedy on appeal to enforce this



City Council Members-at-Large, Helena Moreno and JP Morrell

fine – a fine that the company duly earned after years of repeated power disruptions that hurt our health, safety, and businesses."

"Today's decision is unfortunate and sends a dangerous signal to large power utilities that they can operate without regard to how their behavior affects rate payers and then avoid penalty altogether. This decision flies in the face of our regulatory authority and weakens the Council's best tool to hold Entergy New Orleans accountable when their actions harm the people of this City," said Council Vice President and Utilities Chair JP Morrell. "So much of our ability to ensure quality and reliable utility service rests on the Council's ability to take decisive action against Entergy when their conduct falls below standard. We have no choice but to challenge this ruling."

The Council voted in 2019 to assess the \$1 million fine after an

Entergy New Orleans-sponsored third-party report by Quanta confirmed failures in the company distribution maintenance. The fine amount grew out of information that Entergy New Orleans had previously reduced its maintenance budget by \$1 million, leading to increased outages and customer disruptions. It was the second fine the company earned after the Council fined them \$5 million for their actions around the "paid actors" scandal.

Pending written judgment, the Council will appeal this decision.

Entergy paid the \$5 million fine for the "paid actors" scandal in 2019. Regulators throughout America use monetary penalties to correct utility failures and promote customer satisfaction.

State & Local News

Rep. Royce Duplessis to Seek Louisiana Senate District 5 Seat

Data News Staff Edited Report

NEW ORLEANS - State Representative Royce Duplessis will seek the vacated Louisiana Senate District 5 seat in the November 8, 2022, election.

"I am running for Senate District 5 because people are in pain, the concerns of this district are vast, and I have the necessary track record of building coalitions around diverse needs and delivering for my constituents," said Rep. Duplessis. "Residents deserve an effective servant leader who understands the challenges of everyday working people, families, and business owners and is willing to fight for them. I was determined to finish out the job that the people of House District 93 elected me to do this past legislative session before announcing my candidacy. The work was just too important to interrupt for a campaign. And after lots of prayer and talks with family, I have decided to announce my candidacy."

"Senate District 5 also deserves an effective legislator who under-



Royce Duplessis

stands the challenges of everyday working people, families, and business owners. Despite the many challenges we are currently facing, I know we can create a safer, healthier, and more prosperous community," said Rep. Duplessis. "We are at a critical point, and it's time for less rhetoric and more results to help people thrive. We must continue to take action on increasing public safety, creating more jobs with living wages, investing

in streets and drainage, protecting women's health, advocating for our vulnerable LGBTQ+ youth, and so much more."

Rep. Duplessis currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Innocence Project New Orleans, he is a member of the Governor's Justice Reinvestment Implementation Oversight Council and is a volunteer mentor to male teenagers through the nationally renowned Silverback Society. In his legal practice with the Duplessis Law Firm, he has had many successes primarily focusing on civil litigation.

Prior to serving in the Legislature, Rep. Duplessis worked as Chief of Staff to former New Orleans City Councilmember James Carter, Law Clerk for Judge Thomas J. Motley on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, and Special Counsel for the Louisiana Supreme Court. He is also a past President of the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, a former Chairman of the New Orleans City Planning Commission, and co-founder and past President of the A.P. Tureaud, Sr. Legacy Committee.

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10 Facts About Juneteenth

Battefields.org

Juneteenth is the oldest nationally-celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. Learn about the history of this holiday — celebrated annually on June 19th — by exploring the following ten facts.

FACT #1: Following the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, not all enslaved people immediately found freedom.

The Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves in states then in rebellion against the United States. Union troops operating in said states gave teeth to the Proclamation. This, however, did not apply to the border states.

FACT #2: The Civil War ended in the summer of 1865. Union General Gordon Granger and his troops traveled to Galveston, Texas to announce General Orders No. 3 on June 19, 1865. June 19th would go on to be known and celebrated as Juneteenth.

General Orders No. 3 stated: "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor."

FACT #3: Part of General Order No. 3 encouraged the newly freed people to remain with their past owners.

"The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed



Photograph of Emancipation Day Celebration, June 19, 1900.

to collect at military posts and that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere."

FACT #4: The period after Juneteenth is known as the 'Scatter.'

Undeterred by the recommendation to remain in place, many former slaves left the area during the original reading. In the following weeks formerly, enslaved people left Texas in great numbers to find family members and make their way in the postbellum United States.

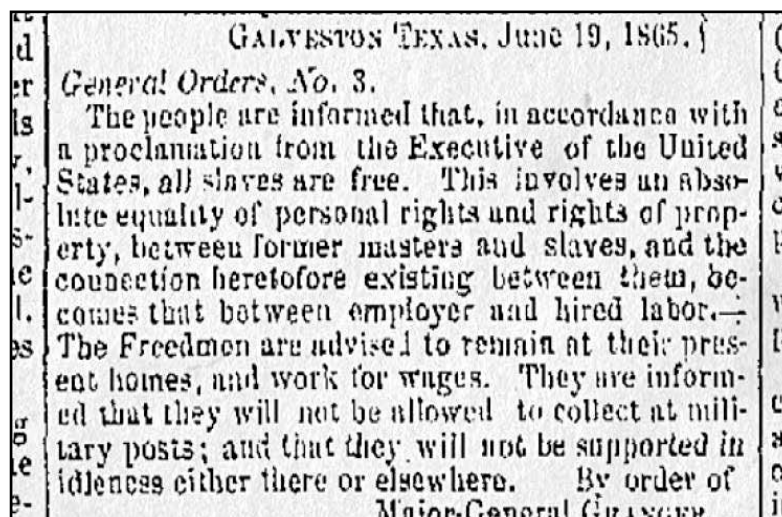
FACT #5: Juneteenth has been celebrated under many names.

Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, and Cel-Liberation Day, Second Independence Day, and Emancipation Day to name just a few.

FACT #6: Emancipation Park in Houston, Texas was bought specifically to celebrate Juneteenth.

The 10-acre parcel of land was purchased by former slaves, Richard Allen, Richard Brock, Jack Yates, and Elias Dibble for \$800 in 1872.

FACT #7: During the early 20th-Century Juneteenth celebrations declined.



The Galveston Tri-Weekly News, which printed General Order No. 3 on June 20, 1865, the day after it was issued. Texas Newspaper Collection, Briscoe Center for American History, UT Austin

The enactment of Jim Crow laws dampened the celebration of freedom. In addition, the Great Depression forced many Black farming families away from rural areas and into urban environments to seek work—resulting in difficulty taking the day off to celebrate.

FACT #8: The celebration of Juneteenth was revived during the Civil Rights Movement.

The Poor People's March planned by Martin Luther King Jr. was purposely scheduled to coincide with the date. March participants took the celebrations back to their home states and soon the holiday was reborn.

FACT #9: Celebrations of Juneteenth continue today.

Traditions include public readings of the Emancipation Proclamation, singing traditional songs, and reading of works by noted African American writers. Celebrations can also take the form of rodeos, street fairs, cookouts, family reunions, park parties, historical reenactments, and Miss Juneteenth contests.

FACT #10: On June 17, 2021, President Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, which officially made Juneteenth a federal holiday.

This holiday is the first holiday to be approved since President Ronald Reagan signed a 1983 bill that approved Martin Luther King Jr. Day as a federal holiday.

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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 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!

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and support

LISTEN TO BLACK WOMEN
REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE is the **HUMAN RIGHT** to control our bodies, our sexuality, our gender, our work and our reproduction. That **RIGHT** can only be achieved when **ALL** women and girls have the complete economic, social and political **POWER** and resources to make healthy **DECISIONS** about our **BODIES**, our **FAMILIES** and our **COMMUNITIES** in all areas of our lives.

Right now, we are faced with an attack on our **HUMAN RIGHTS** as global **CITIZENS** by a conservative, activist U.S. Supreme Court.

Our **FREEDOM** depends on **DISMANTLING** systemic racism, misogyny, anti-blackness and white supremacy.

Historically, we have **WON** battles for our human and civil rights when we **LISTEN TO AND TRUST BLACK WOMEN**:

71%

of Black women support **ABORTION** services.

85%

believe whether she has “private or government-funded health coverage, **EVERY** woman should have **HEALTH COVERAGE** for the full range of pregnancy-related care, including **ABORTION**.

91%

believe a woman's ability to **CONTROL** whether or when she has children is an important part of **FINANCIAL STABILITY** for herself and her **FAMILY**.

Therefore,

WE

the undersigned

PLEDGE

To do everything in our **POWER** to ensure all Black women and birthing people have the freedom, resources and power they need to assert **AGENCY** over their **BODIES** and to ensure that their **FAMILIES** can **THRIVE**.

Bernard Center for Women, Politics & Public Policy, Black Feminist Future, Black Voters Matter Fund, Black Women in STEM 2.0, Black Women Meet Up, Black Women's Health Imperative, Black Women’s Democratic Club, Cafe Mocha Broadcast Network, California Black Women's Collective, California Commission on the Status of Women & Girls, Cedar River Creative Productions, Chanda Robinson Consulting, LLCv, Collective Grant Writing & Consulting, Community Hero Impact Alliance, Crowned Glory Yoga, Delta for Women in Action, DirtyGirlsAg, Feminist Women's Health Center, Georgia Coalition for the Peoples Agenda, Gods Natural Wonder, Harlem Network News, In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda, Interfaith Voices for Reproductive Justice, Kinnamon Holdings, KWH Law Center for Social Justice and Change, Los Angeles African American Women’s Public Policy Institute, Mercedes Medina, Esq., Middleton4u, MS Black Women’s Roundtable, NAACP, Washington DC Branch, National Action Network Orange County, National Birth Equity Collaborative, National Coalition on Black Civic Participation/Black Women's Roundtable, New Voices for Reproductive Justice, NJ Perinatal Quality Collaborative, Paths to Peace, She the People, SHERo Mississippi, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Sisterlove Inc, SisterReach, SisterSong the National Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective, Skyline Advocacy, SoulStirring, LLC, South Alabama Black Women’s Roundtable, SPARK Reproductive Justice NOW!, Inc., SYE Strategies & PR, The Afiya Center, The Brown Girls Guide to Politics, The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), The Spectrum Circle, Win With Black Women, Women's Equity Center and Action Network (WE CAN), Women of Color Coalition, Women with a Vision, Inc.

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