

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly


"The People's Paper"

Diana Ross Leads Crowd in Singing 'Happy Birthday' to Beyoncé

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September 9 - September 15, 2023 58th Year Volume 20 www.ladatanews.com


A Data News Weekly Exclusive




The Urban League of Louisiana 2023 Empowerment and Policy Conference

September 7-8

The Future Destiny of the Community is in your Hands



Urban League Medal for Civil and Economic Rights recipient
Clarence Lyle Barney, Jr.



Urban League Medal for Civil and Economic Rights recipient
Lajune Montgomery-Tabron

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Earns "A" Rating



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The Urban League of Louisiana 2023 Empowerment and Policy Conference

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The Future Destiny of the Community is in your Hands



Senator Royce Duplesis



Congressman Troy Carter



Sevetri Wilson Taylor

Eric Connerly
Data News Weekly Contributor

The Urban League of Louisiana 2023 Empowerment & Policy Conference is coming up soon! They are excited to announce their full agenda of plenary sessions and panels that are taking place September 7-8 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans.

The conference is FREE to attend, but space will be limited, so they are asking those who are interested in attending to be sure to save their seat today!

The Urban League of Louisiana Conference and Gala will provide many opportunities for our attendees, and other special guests, to network, discuss complex challenges, highlight solutions, and celebrate change-makers delivering positive impact, while also celebrating the legacy and continued work of the Urban League of Louisiana.

There are many important issues that will be addressed during the conference. That includes addressing the racial wealth gap, safety, and Criminal Justice Reform, voting rights and civic engagement, race, culture and creatives, health equity, education equity, and protecting history.

**A List of some of the Plenary Sessions
Guaranteed to Inform, Inspire and
Empower the Community. (Bold)**

Plenary Session

SEE CHANGE: How Some Are Working to Close the Racial Wealth Gap and Strengthen the Economy for All in Louisiana

According to growing data and analysis, there is a major gap in wealth between White households compared to Black, and Hispanic and Latino households. This panel will highlight various efforts underway in Louisiana and nationally to close the racial wealth gap and will illuminate how this work will strengthen the economy for all communities across the state.

• Deirdre Johnson Burel, Senior Program Officer, W.K. Kellogg

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Foundation

- Mayra Pineda, President & CEO, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana Location
- Jan Moller, Executive Director, Louisiana Budget Project
- Lamar Gardere, Executive Director, Data Center
- Moderated by Tyronne Walker, Vice President for Policy, Strategic Partnerships and Development, Urban League of Louisiana

Plenary Session

Off The Court: How NBA Star CJ McCollum is Helping to Lift Up Communities and Encourage Other Athletes to Do the Same

There is a growing emphasis by leading Black professional athletes to use their resources and platform to advocate for social justice and wealth creation in marginalized communities. In this conversation, New Orleans Pelicans NBA Star, and President of the National Basketball Players Association will discuss how he, and other players, are working with communities to highlight social justice, advance equity, and inspire the next generation.

- CJ McCollum, New Orleans Pelicans, NBPA

Breakout Session

Representation Matters: How Black Venture Capitalists and Investors are Changing the Game for Black Businesses

- Sevetri Wilson, Founder, SGI and Resilia
- Kelli Saulny, Co-Founder and

Managing Partner, Corridor Ventures

Breakout Session

It's a Family Affair: Building Black Wealth at Any Age

- Jasmine Brown DeRouselle, Senior Vice President for Policy,

GNO, Inc.

- Sherilyn Hayward, Owner, Leroy's Lip Smack'n Lemonade
- Ricardo Thomas, President, Thomas-Waddell & Associates
- Jarrett E. Cohen, Principal & CIO, JECohen

Breakout Session

The Alphabet Soup of Entrepreneurial Resources: SBA, LED, GNO Inc., and WBRC

- Ted James, Region VI Administrator, Small Business Administration

Breakout Session

Reimagining Workforce in Louisiana that Creates Pathways to Careers and Wealth

- Cherie Lacour-Duckworth, Vice President, Urban League of Louisiana
- Deanna Rodriguez, CEO, Entergy New Orleans

Safety & Criminal Justice Reform

Plenary Session

Democracy in Crisis with Symone Sanders Townsend

How Louisianans are on the

front lines of the fight for American democracy from voting rights to the culture wars and the impact civic engagement will have for decades to come.

- Symone Sanders Townsend, Author, Former Political Strategist, Host of "SYMONE" on MSNBC

Breakout Session

More Work to Do: Criminal Justice Reform Progress and What's Ahead

- Flozell Daniels, Chief Executive Officer of the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation
- Senator Royce Duplessis, Louisiana State Senate

Urban League of Louisiana Statement on 2023

Gubernatorial Debate By Urban League of Louisiana CEO Judy Reese Morse

"The Urban League of Louisiana is proud to be a nonpartisan organization who unapologetically advocates on behalf of Black Louisianans and other underserved communities. Likewise, we stand

Cover Story, Continued on page 7.

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Deion Sanders Potential Impact on College Football on Full Display

Data News Staff Edited Report

When two-time Super Bowl winner Deion Sanders signed a \$29,500,000 deal to become Colorado Buffaloes Head Coach, some fans were concerned it was way out of their budget.

But after the Buffaloes beat National Championship finalists TCU 45-42 in their season opener it settled some of the nerves about the head coach. Sanders has come off the back of two brilliant years with Jackson State, finishing 11-2 in 2021 and 12-1 in 2022, and is targeting similar numbers in Colorado.

However, even away from the on-field action his arrival has already had a major impact on the team and the college. Merchandise sales are up 700 percent, and their social media account has already welcomed over one million new followers. Over 80 new players have joined the team and season tickets are completely sold out for 2023, an impressive accomplishment for a team which went 1-11 last year. And the largest coaching deal in team history could end up paying for itself.

Sports and business expert Joe Pompliano looked into the long-term impact



2X Super Bowl Champion Deion Sanders is showing he has the stuff with a recent victory over TCU in his NCAA Division 1 head coaching debut with Colorado. Also, showing the fruit doesn't fall far from the tree, Colorado quarterback/son Shedeur Sanders set a Pac-12 record throwing for 510 yards.

that Sanders' reign as coach could have on the team and believes \$30 million is a small price to pay for what it could bring them. "Deion Sanders can win games, put them on the national stage, get them recognition, into ESPN, and

potentially get them in the college football playoffs," Pompliano said.

Sanders made an inspiring speech to the team and after they beat TCU, he likely has the whole roster on his side. "This has nothing to do with the

team that's opposing us," Sanders said to the team before they faced the high-ranking school.

"This is about us. This ain't got nothing to do with the naysayers, the unbelievers, the haters, the doubters. This is about us. When we started this journey, we told you it was gon' be trying, it was gon' be tough, but you endured because it's about us.

"That man next to you is a miracle. That man next to you is a believer. That man next to you is a go-getter. That man next to you is a dog. That man next to you [is] somebody who want(s) this thing. That man next to you is somebody who believes. That man next to you got to have it today!" We ain't got tomorrow. We got now. We ain't got next. We got now. We ain't coming no more."

During the game Colorado quarterback Shedeur Sanders - who is the son of the head coach - set a new school-record with 510 yards. His odds on Caesars Sportsbook to win the Heisman Trophy went from 100-to-1 to 28-to-1, one of the biggest changes in NCAA history after a season opener.

Diana Ross Leads Crowd in Singing 'Happy Birthday' to Beyoncé

Data News Staff Edited Report

Beyoncé was serenaded on her birthday by none other than Diana Ross during her "Renaissance Tour."

The "Renaissance" singer turned 42 on Sept. 4th, which is also when she had her third and final concert in Inglewood, California.

Ross, the former lead singer of The Supremes, guided the crowd in singing "Happy Birthday" to the mother of three, a clip posted to X shows, and the two held hands for the duration of the song.

The "Crazy in Love" singer, who made history earlier this year when she became the artist with the most Grammys of all time, thanked Ross when the ballad ended.

"Thank you so much," Beyoncé beamed. "You are so amazing. This is the legendary Diana Ross."



Beyoncé continues to captivate audiences across the globe. Recently, the Virgo celebrated her 42nd birthday. During the show in Los Angeles, legendary entertainment icon Diana Ross led a singing of Happy Birthday.

Beyoncé Renaissance Tour will be coming to New Orleans on September 27, 2023

Rouses Holds a Media Day Luncheon

Rouses held a Media Day Luncheon on Thursday, August 24th, 2023, at 10:00 A.m. at the Sheraton Metairie Hotel, #4 Galleria Blvd, in Metairie.

As Rouses plans for growth, they wanted to collaborate with media expertise to reach the communities they serve. During this meeting they talked about the opportunities available to grow with them and how working together they can better serve the communities where we live. And Data News Weekly was there!!!



Tim Acosta, Director of Advertising & Marketing for Rouses and Terry Jones, Publisher of Data News Weekly.



Ron Bonacci VP of Advertising and Marketing and Terry Jones, Data News Weekly Publisher



Media Expertise in attendance.



Schuyler Williams, General Manager of WBOK Radio Station and Terry Jones



Terry Jones, Publisher/CEO, Data News Weekly and the current CEO of Rouses Markets, Donny Rouse, who is the third generation to run the company.



Rouses employee manning the media table.

Welcome Back!

Let's Have an Amazing 2023-2024 School Year

New Orleans Agenda

I hope this message finds you well and filled with anticipation for an amazing 2023-2024 school year. As the summer draws to a close, I am thrilled to extend a warm welcome back to each and every one of you. Whether you are returning scholars, new faces, dedicated families, or valued community partners, your presence and support are integral to the vibrant tapestry of our educational journey.

The beginning of a new school year marks a fresh chapter filled with opportunities for growth, exploration, and achievement. Our schools have always been more than just buildings; they are places of inspiration, transformation, and connection. This year, we are committed to fostering an environment where every student feels valued, empowered, and excited to learn.

To our scholars, I encourage you to approach this year with an open



Class Notes

by Superintendent Dr. Avis Williams

Equity. Excellence. Joy.

"It's our mission to provide culturally compassionate healthcare to all our community. Receiving this honor solidifies that we are working in the right direction and leading the way in health equity, says Takeisha Davis, MD, and Chief Executive Officer of New Orleans East Hospital.

heart and an eagerness to embrace new challenges. Each lesson, each project, and each interaction will contribute to your personal and intellectual development. Remember that learning is a lifelong journey, and every step you take brings you closer to your dreams.

To our families, your partnership is invaluable. Your unwavering sup-

port at home translates into success within our classrooms. We invite you to engage with us, communicate openly, and share your insights as we work together to nurture the potential within each student.

To our community members, your involvement shapes the future of our schools. We are deeply grateful for your commitment to educa-

tion and for your contributions that enrich our programs. Whether through mentorship, volunteering, or collaboration, your presence makes a positive impact.

This year, we will continue to prioritize academic excellence while also focusing on the social and emotional well-being of our students. Our educators are dedicated

to creating a safe and inclusive space where diversity is celebrated, and empathy is practiced. We will provide resources and support to help students navigate challenges, build resilience, and develop the skills needed for a rapidly changing world.

In the spirit of unity, let's embrace the journey ahead. Let's celebrate the triumphs, learn from the setbacks, and support one another every step of the way. Together, we can create an environment where curiosity is nurtured, talents are discovered, and potential is realized.

With the beginning of the new school year in full swing, know that our commitment to your growth and success remains stronger than ever. I am truly excited to see the remarkable accomplishments that this year will undoubtedly bring.

Welcome back to school, dear scholars, families, and community members! Here's to a year of inspiration, discovery, and endless possibilities.

State & Local News

NOEH Earns "A" Rating

Mya Jacobs
Digital Marketing Manager/
Bright Moments

NEW ORLEANS- New Orleans East Hospital has been recognized by the Lown Institute for outstanding social responsibility, receiving an "A" grade on the 2023-24 Lown Institute Hospitals Index. This honor was achieved through strong performance across metrics of health equity, patient outcomes, and value of care.

New Orleans East Hospital ranked #8 out of #76 hospitals evaluated in Louisiana. Nationally, New Orleans East Hospital ranked in the top 4% of over 3,600 hospitals on the equity metric. This acknowledgment reflects the hospital's commitment to advancing health equity, inclusivity, and investment in community health.

"It is our mission to provide culturally compassionate healthcare



New Orleans East Hospital

to all in our community. Receiving this honor solidifies that we are working in the right direction and leading the way in advancing health equity. This level of recognition is always encouraging in the midst of nonstop hard work on behalf of our staff, our physicians, and board at New Orleans East Hospital," says Takeisha Davis, MD, and Chief Executive Officer of New Orleans East Hospital.

"When communities have access to socially responsible healthcare,

our nation grows stronger," said Vikas Saini, MD, president of the Lown Institute. "That's why it's so important to hold up these high-performing hospitals as examples for others to follow."

The Lown Hospitals Index for Social Responsibility is the only ranking to include metrics of health equity and value of care alongside patient outcomes, creating a holistic view of hospitals as total community partners. In the fourth annual and largest set of rankings to date,

the 2023-24 Lown Index evaluates hospitals on 50+ measures—including novel metrics such as community benefit, racial inclusivity, and avoidance of overuse—for more than 3,600 hospitals nationwide. Data sources include Medicare fee-for-service and Medicare Advantage claims, CMS patient safety data and hospital cost reports, and IRS 990 forms, among others. Full methodology can be found on the Lown Index website.

The Lown Institute is a nonpartisan think tank that generates bold ideas for a radically better system of health. To learn more about this honor and the Lown Institute Hospitals Index, please visit www.lown-hospitalsindex.org

About New Orleans East Hospital

New Orleans East Hospital (NOEH), proud member of LCMC Health, is committed to provid-

ing extraordinary healthcare and educational empowerment to the community with courtesy, concern, kindness, and compassion. We look forward to building a healthier community and serving as an active partner in the revitalization of Eastern New Orleans. For more information on New Orleans East Hospital, visit www.NOEHospital.org.

About LCMC Health

Established in 2009, LCMC Health is a Louisiana-based, not-for-profit hospital system serving the healthcare needs of the Gulf Coast region. LCMC Health currently manages Children's Hospital New Orleans, East Jefferson General Hospital, Lakeside Hospital, Lakeview Hospital, New Orleans East Hospital, Touro, Tulane Medical Center New Orleans, and West Jefferson Medical Center.

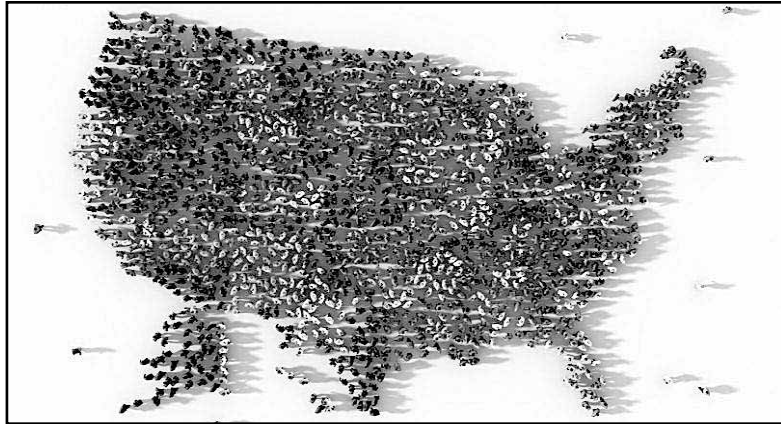
New COVID-19 Variant, "Pirola," Raises Concerns Amidst Ongoing Crises

Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

Amidst a news cycle that now routinely features wildfires, former president indictments, and extreme weather events, the world is grappling with the resurgence of COVID-19 as a new and concerning variant, BA.2.86, emerges. This variant, informally dubbed "Pirola," has ignited alarm among public health experts due to its substantial spike protein mutations.

Dr. Scott Roberts, an infectious diseases specialist at Yale Medicine, warned that Pirola exhibits over 30 spike protein mutations compared to the previously dominant XBB.1.5 variant in the United States. The spike protein is critical for the virus's entry into human cells, and such a high number of mutations raises red flags. In an online Yale Medicine article, Dr. Roberts compared the mutation count to the shift from the Delta to the Omicron variant in 2021, which caused a significant surge in cases due to its immune evasion capabilities.

What's particularly concerning is that Pirola has been detected in at least six countries, and these cases appear unrelated. Experts said that suggests undetected community transmission and international spread, sparking concerns of a potential resurgence.



According to medical experts, BA.2.86 is a designated variant of Omicron, a variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus responsible for COVID-19. BA.2.86 stems from BA.2, a previously circulating Omicron subvariant. The variant was first identified in Denmark in late July and made its way to the United States in August. Knowing that cases aren't linked indicates broader circulation, significantly as COVID-19 surveillance has waned, medical experts asserted.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that current COVID-19 tests and medications, such as Paxlovid, Veklury, and Lagevrio, seem effective against Pirola. However, Pirola may be more adept at infecting individuals who have had COVID-19 or have been vaccinated. There isn't any current evidence that it causes more severe illness.

The increase in COVID-19 hospitalizations in the U.S. is attributed to XBB lineage viruses rather than Pirola. The multitude of mutations in Pirola raises concerns about its potential to bypass immunity from natural infection or vaccination.

Dr. Roberts emphasized that ongoing studies would reveal the true nature of Pirola's threat. The unprecedented number of mutations in Pirola is reminiscent of significant shifts seen in other respiratory viruses, such as the 2009 swine flu. However, he noted that these variants sometimes fade away without causing a significant impact.

The critical question now is whether Pirola will follow the explosive growth pattern of Omicron or fade away, as everyone hopes. As of August 30, the CDC has identified Pirola in at least four U.S. states through samples from individuals or wastewater.

Some regions have reinstated mask mandates in response to the spike in COVID-19 cases. Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, New York, is among the institutions requiring masks in clinical areas to protect patients and staff. The CDC reports a nearly 19% increase in weekly new COVID-19 hospitalizations in the U.S., marking the sixth consecutive week of rising admissions.

The arrival of new COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer, Moderna, and Novavax in mid-September is expected to offer robust protection against variants. Until then, experts stress that masking remains a crucial tool for safeguarding against COVID-19, even for individuals with normal risk levels, depending on their location and contacts.

Dr. Stephen Thomas of the Upstate Medical University in Syracuse told NPR that the facility has reverted to mandating masks.

"We wanted to, No. 1, protect our patients, and, No. 2, protect the men and women who work in our facility, and take care of them," Thomas told NPR. "So, we implemented universal masking for staff, visitors, and patients only in clinical areas. So, we're a university. We're large. We have a lot of non-clinical regions. Universal masking is not being mandated in non-clinical areas."

Cover Story/ Continued
from page 3.

by our policy prescriptions, both past and present, which are rooted in data and that champion a more equitable Louisiana. As it relates to our forthcoming debate, hosted in conjunction with WWL and media partners throughout the state, our singular focus is to ensure that candidates seeking the office of Governor have the ability to share their platform and reasons they believe voters should have confidence in their ability to lead our great state. We have unwavering faith in the journalistic integrity of our media partners and look forward to a fair and robust debate on Thursday."

To RSVP for the conference go to URBANLEAGUELA.ORG/85 for more information on the work of the Urban League of Louisiana please contact urban@urbanleagueula.org

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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!

Job Opportunity

Administrative Assistant Wanted

Data News Weekly, "The People's Paper," is looking for an administrative assistant.

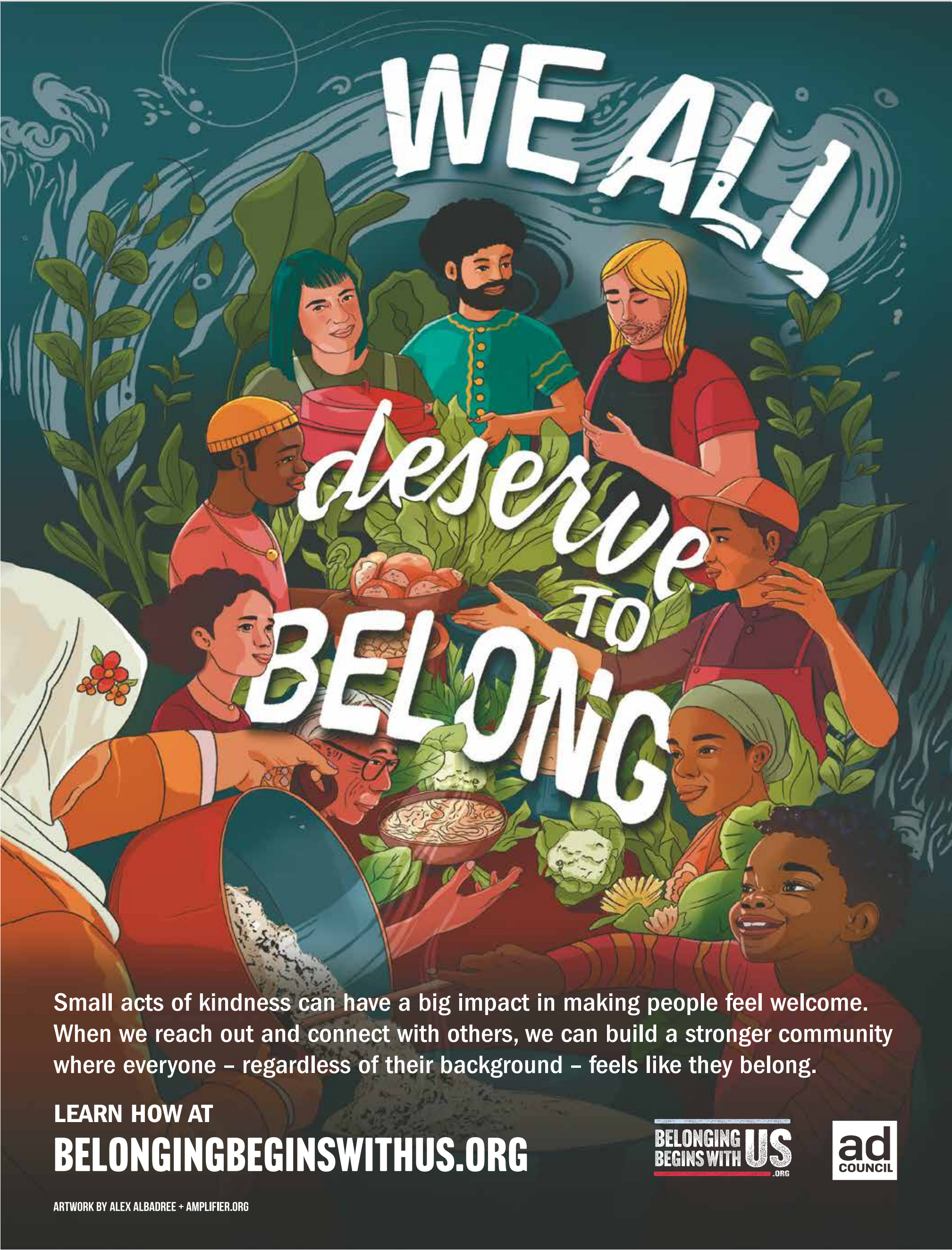
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