

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

FREE COPY

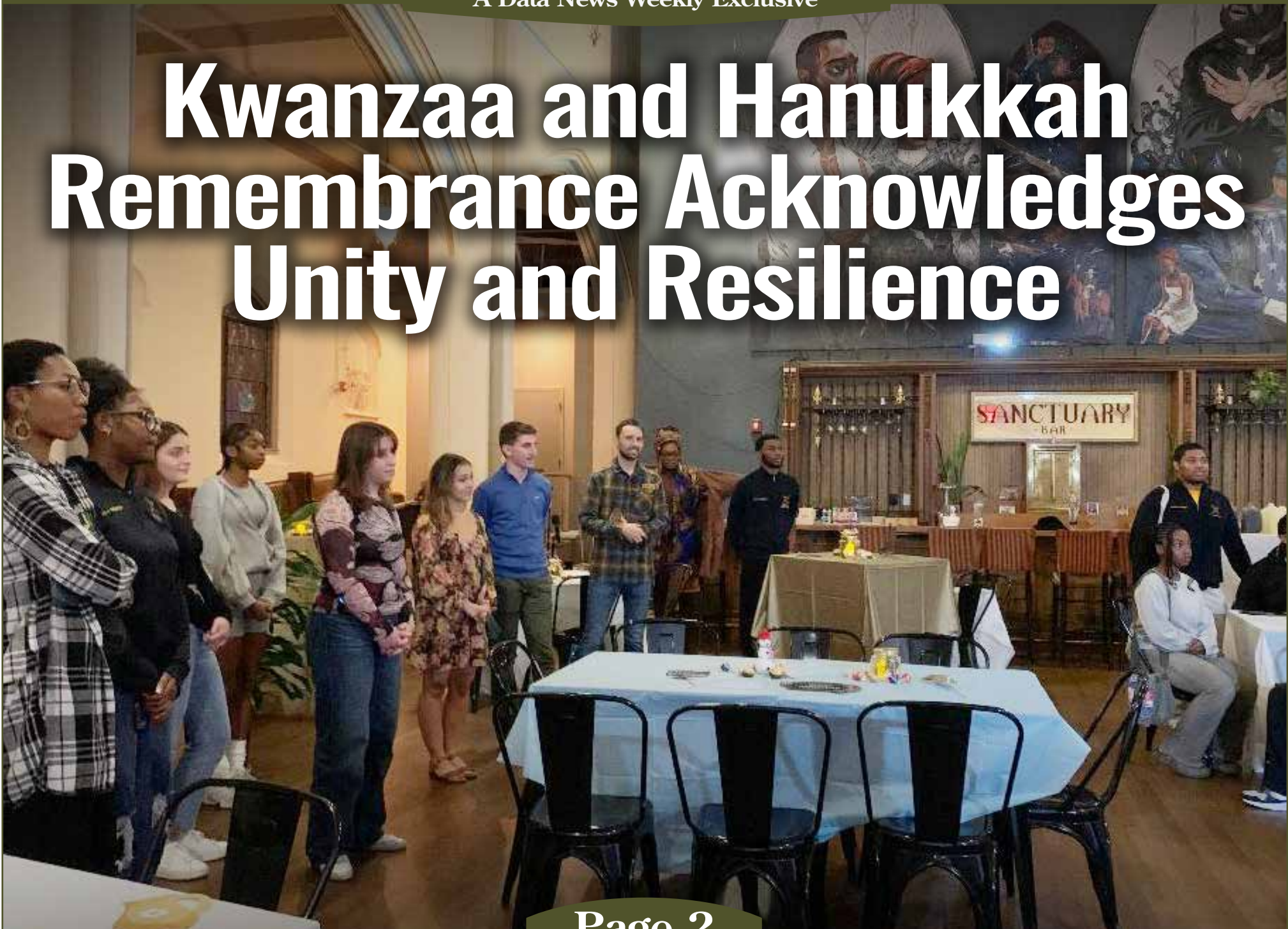
The Color Purple 2023

Data Zone Page 4

December 16 - December 22, 2023 58th Year Volume 34 www.ladatanews.com

A Data News Weekly Exclusive

Kwanzaa and Hanukkah Remembrance Acknowledges Unity and Resilience



Page 2



Newsmaker
LSU Quarterback
Jayden Daniels
Wins Heisman

Page 6

State & Local
Utility Assistance
Event for Eligible
Renters



Page 7

Kwanzaa and Hanukkah Remembrance Acknowledges Unity and Resilience



The Still We R.O.S.E. Initiative held a Kwanzaa-Hanukkah-Christmas Holiday Celebration at the Andre Cailloux Center on Bayou Road on Dec. 5. 2023.

Story and Photos by **Zamariah Strozier**
Data News Weekly Contributor

It's the time of year when families and communities come together. In the spirit of the holiday season, local experts led college students in combining the traditions of Kwanzaa, Hanukkah and Christmas at the An-

dre Cailloux Center for Performing Arts and Cultural Justice on Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2023.

Students from Xavier, Tulane, Dillard and Loyola Universities broke bread together around a spread of traditional foods and décor and designed handmade unity gifts to mark traditions of importance to African Americans and Jewish people.

"I think one of the ways we can give, celebrate Kwanza or even acknowledge it, is one, through education," said Shaddai Livingston, the Events Manager for the Andre Cailloux Center who is a member of the New Orleans Kwanzaa Coalition and the Founder and Director of the New Orleans Juneteenth Festival. Livingston, a graduate of Southern University at

Cover Story, Continued on page 3.

| INSIDE DATA | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Cover Story | 2 |
| Data Zone | 4 |
| Newsmaker | 6 |
| State & Local News . . . | 6 |
| National News | 7 |

DATA NEWS WEEKLY

P.O. Box 57347, New Orleans, LA 70157-7347 | Phone: (504) 821-7421 | Fax: (504) 821-7622
editorial: datanewseditor@bellsouth.net | advertising: datanewsad@bellsouth.net

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|--|
| Terry B. Jones | Contributors | Art Direction & |
| CEO/Publisher | City of New Orleans | Production |
| Edwin Buggage | Zamariah Strozier | Pubinator.com |
| Editor | Stacy M. Brown | Editorial and |
| Sharonda Green | DNW Staff Writers | Advertising Inquiries |
| Executive Assistant | Darrion Gray | datanewsweeklyad@gmail.com |
| June Hazeur | Saints Wire | Distribution |
| Accounting | | by Terrence Lee |

Please call 504-309-9913 for subscription information or to obtain a back issue of the paper ONLY.
Dated material two weeks in advance. Not responsible for publishing or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photos.

Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

New Orleans, joined with her fellow New Orleans native, Nancy Pesses, a local baker and Founder of Challah Creations by Nancy, to showcase how both traditions are designed to showcase remembrance and resilience of both African American and Jewish communities.

"The similarities of what we value like unity is really important for what this holiday is about not just in commemoration, but also just for bringing our family together, and then the collective importance of working together," said Pesses, a Louisiana State University graduate, who is a small animal relief veterinarian in Southeast Louisiana. "We're always stronger in numbers is kind of the overarching theme for every holiday gathering that I've had in my family and kind of within the Jewish community. And so, why, why I feel like it is essential to work together, not just in the Jewish community, but outside of the Jewish community with each other. Because I feel like we are stronger together," Pesses added.

Both Livingston and Pesses explained to students the role of different foods in each celebration. Pesses shared that Jewish families



Shaddai Livingston, the Festival Producer and Director of the New Orleans Juneteenth Festival and a member of the New Orleans Kwanzaa Coalition and Nancy Pesses, Owner of Challah Creations by Nancy shares how both Kwanzaa and Hanukkah These are celebrations of family, heritage and unity.

eat fried and sweet foods from potato latkes to jelly donuts – sufganiyot, to remember the miracle that lit the menorah for 8 days, instead of 1. Like Kwanzaa, Jewish people acknowledge their liberation from oppression and the freedom to worship when the tradition first

began over 2,000 years ago. Livingston added that the seven Kwanzaa candles are symbolic of the seven values of Umoja (unity), Kujichagulia (self-determination), Ujima (collective work and responsibility), Ujamaa (cooperative economics), Nia (purpose), Kuum-



Nancy Pesses, the owner of Challah Creations by Nancy shares on the traditions of Hanukkah on Dec 5. at the Andre Cailloux Center.

ba (creativity) and Imani (faith).

There are three red candles representing struggle, three are green and represent land and hope, and one is black to represent people of African descent. Livingston shared that since Kwanza is not a religious celebration but a cultural one,

people of African descent whether Christian, Muslim or Jewish all celebrate Kwanzaa between Dec. 26th and Jan. 1st each year. Hanukkah is observed earlier from Dec. 7th through Dec. 15th, with the Christ-

Cover Story, Continued on page 7.

**ROUSES
MARKETS**



**OFFICIAL SUPERMARKET
OF THE NEW ORLEANS SAINTS**

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE
WEEKLY SPECIALS

WWW.ROUSES.COM/WEEKLY-ADS

Prices good at New Orleans, Metairie, Gretna, Kenner, Marrero, Covington, Mandeville and Slidell locations
December 13th thru December 24th, 2023.



**Hormel Cure 81
Spiral Sliced Ham**

Offer good with a \$25 purchase. Ham price is included in the \$25 purchase total. Limit 1 offer per customer.



**CHIQUITA
Golden Pineapple**

Limit 4



VALUE PACK
93% Lean
Ground Beef

\$3.99
LB



3 LB BAG U.S. #1
Yellow
Onions

2/\$3
Limit 4



LARGE
ONE POUND PACK
Louisiana
Crawfish Tails

\$9.99
Limit 2



14.5 - 15.25 OZ SELECTED
Rouses Green Beans,
Corn or Sweet Peas

2/\$1
Limit 12

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS**

Stores will close at 7pm Christmas Eve
and remain closed Christmas Day.

Oprah and 'The Color Purple' Stars on the New Musical Remake: "It's Bright. It's Vibrant. It's Us"

Data News Staff Edited Report

Of all the emotions that *The Color Purple* evokes, joy is typically not among them.

After all, the movie based on Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-Winning Novel centers on a Black woman who suffers unspeakable sexual and physical abuse from the men in her life, sees her children taken away from her at birth, lives during the punishing times of a Post-Slavery South and is belittled by the outside world as unworthy of love. While her journey, told through her letters to God, eventually arrives at an intersection of peace and forgiveness, joy is something that seems fleeting for much of Celie's story.

The musical remake of the 1985 Classic Film, out Dec. 25th, doesn't change the narrative, but does filter it through a different lens - focusing on the moments that inspire Celie, the women in her life who lift her to that point and, more important, the healing that restores not only her humanity, but that of those around her.

Reflecting on the story, the three female stars - Fantasia Barrino, Danielle Brooks and Taraji P. Henson - speak in reverence of the original film and the book. Henson likens it to Shakespeare for the Black community, and Brooks says, "I've been describing it as our Cinematic Heirloom. And I just really truly feel that's what it is. It's the thing that you cherish the most that was passed on since 1985. You take care of it, and you pass it on to the next."

Despite that reverence, Henson can also see some of its flaws. "The first movie missed culturally. We don't wallow in the muck. We don't stay stuck in our traumas. We laugh, we sing, we go to church, we dance, we celebrate, we fight for joy, we find joy, we keep it. That's all we have," Henson tells THR during a recent interview, with Barrino and Brooks sitting by her side. "We don't have power. We are continuously oppressed, kept under a thumb. So, what else can we do but laugh and celebrate life? We have to, otherwise we would die. So, as soon as you see the first frame, you're going to know that this movie is different. The coloring is different. It's light, it's bright, it's vibrant. It's us."



Fantasia Barrino, Oprah Winfrey, Taraji P. Henson and Danielle Brooks.

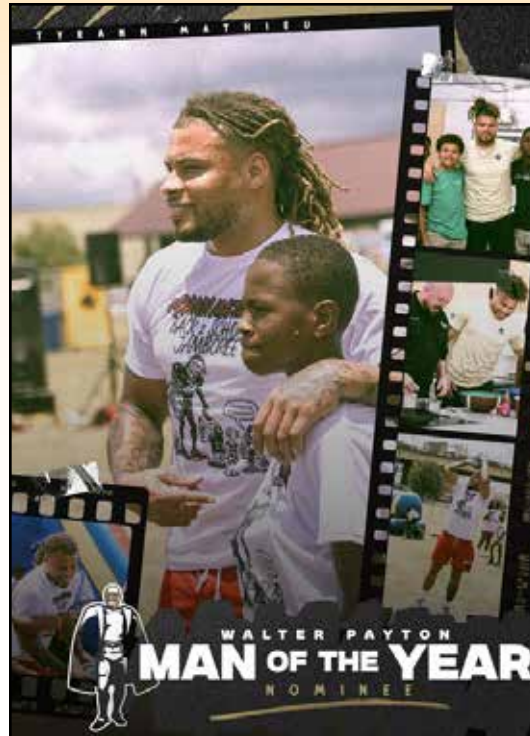


Tyrann Mathieu is the Saints' Walter Payton Man of the Year Nominee

Darrion Gray Saints Wire

The New Orleans Saints have nominated safety Tyrann Mathieu for the Walter Payton Man of the Year Award. For many around the league this is considered the Most Prestigious Award the NFL hands out every year. The award is based on a player's contributions in the community away from the field as well as their on-field production. This award is placed on a pedestal because it values who the player truly is.

This is Mathieu's second time being nominated. In 2021, Mathieu was the Kansas City Chiefs' nominee. Clearly, he ingratiates himself into the community he plays in. That was no hard task in New Orleans, as coming to the Saints meant returning to his hometown. His involvement and impact on the city have only grown since joining the Saints.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Discrimination Financial Assistance Program

\$2.2 billion in assistance is available to agricultural producers who experienced discrimination by USDA in USDA Farm Loan programs before January 1, 2021.

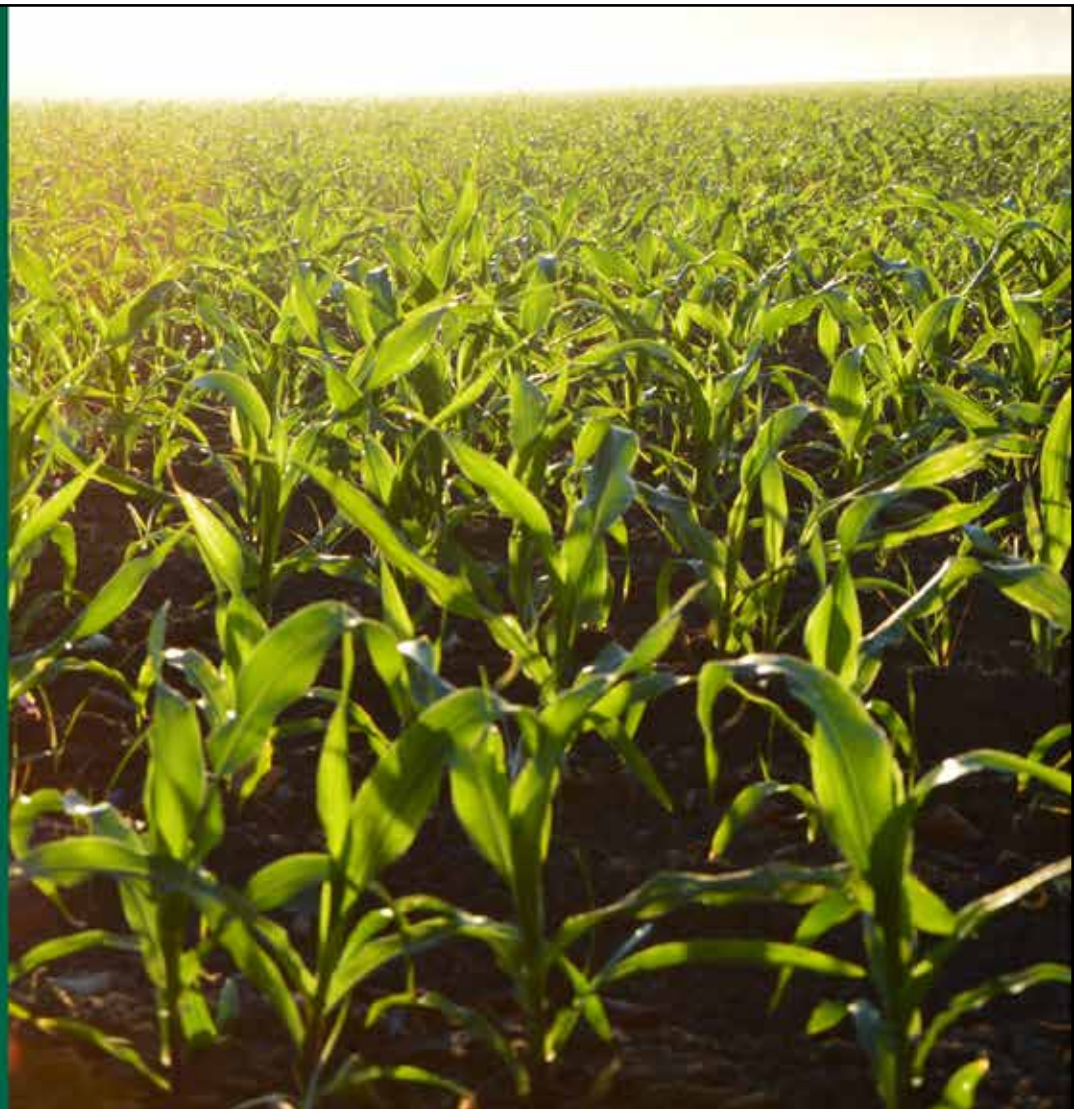
For more information:

1-800-721-0970 or www.22007apply.gov

Application deadline:

January 13, 2024

*Filing an application is free



**Discrimination
Financial Assistance
Program**

follow on social media



@22007apply

Louisiana State University Quarterback Jayden Daniels Wins Heisman Trophy

Data News Staff Edited Report

LSU Quarterback Jayden Daniels capped off a standout season with the Tigers by winning College Football's Most Prestigious Award.

Daniels, who began his college career at Arizona State before transferring to LSU in 2022, earned the coveted Heisman Memorial Trophy Saturday night. He is the third LSU player to ever win the Heisman after Joe Burrow in 2019 and Billy Cannon in 1959.

Daniels received 503 first-place votes and 2,029 total points, to win the honor of this year's most outstanding player.

"Thank you. This is a dream come true. I want to first give thanks to God, for all the glory. He's my rock, my savior. He blessed me with the talents and ability to get here, all the special people here to develop these skills," he said in his acceptance speech. "To Bo, Mike, Marvin... you guys are amazing. I



LSU Quarterback Jayden Daniels holds Heisman Trophy that goes to the best player in college football.

enjoy watching you all, but the competition is never over. I look forward to seeing you guys on Sundays."

Daniels, who led the country in total yards, total touchdowns, passing touchdowns, and rushing yards for a quarterback, thanked his teammates for their support.

The Heisman Trophy is the

cherry on top of Daniels' award-filled season. In addition to taking home the Davey O'Brien Award, he was named the Associated Press College Football Player of the Year and the Walter Camp Player of the Year.

"Being a college athlete and winning this award has been a dream

come true. I want to dedicate this award to every boy and girl who has a dream or faith, with hard work you never know what's possible," Daniels said.

"They said I was too skinny, so I had to wait. Then they said, I relied on my legs a little bit too much, so I went to work, com-

pleted all those passes, had the season I had. They said I was too quiet, so I became more vocal. I stepped out of my comfort zone and now I'm here today."

Daniels and the Tigers will take to the field together one more time this season to play Wisconsin in the 2024 Reliaquest Bowl on January 1st.

City of New Orleans to Host Final Utility Assistance Event to Eligible Renters in Danger of Service Disconnection

City of New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS — The Mayor's Office of Housing Policy and Community Development (OCD) today announced it will host its final community-based outreach event of the year to provide financial assistance to eligible renters who are at risk of electric or water disconnection.

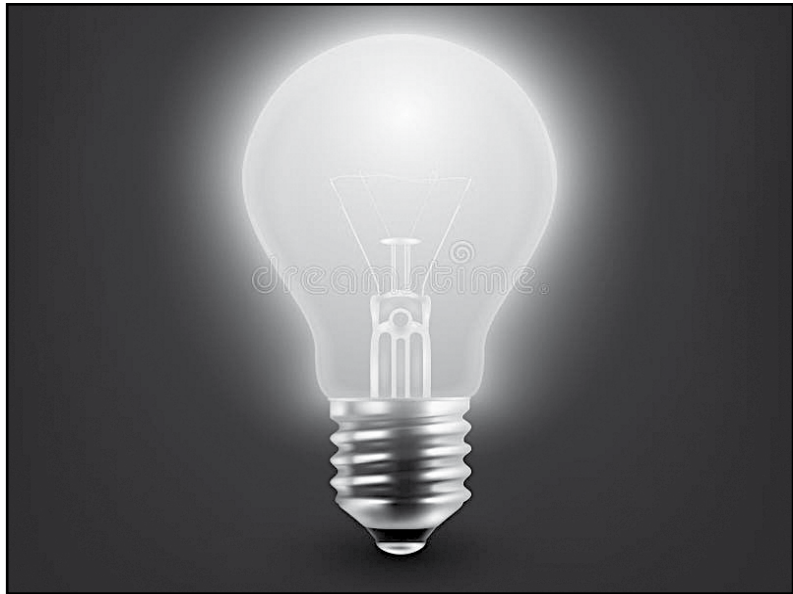
Residents who have applied for rental assistance through the City of New Orleans but have not received utility assistance can attend the outreach event taking place Wednesday, Dec. 13th and Thursday, Dec. 14th, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., or until capacity is reached, at the Joe Brown Park Recreational Center (5601 Read Blvd.). The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) will be available on-site to assist customers. Translators will be on-site to provide assistance as well.

Utility assistance will be fast-tracked for eligible renters that have past due balances and have not received prior assistance. The city must be provided with the utility account number to make delinquent payments on each account. Payments will be made directly to the utility provider.

City employees will be onsite to review documentation for past due utility assistance applicants. Residents are encouraged to complete the online application located at nola.gov/community-development/utility-assistance-program/ prior to the event.

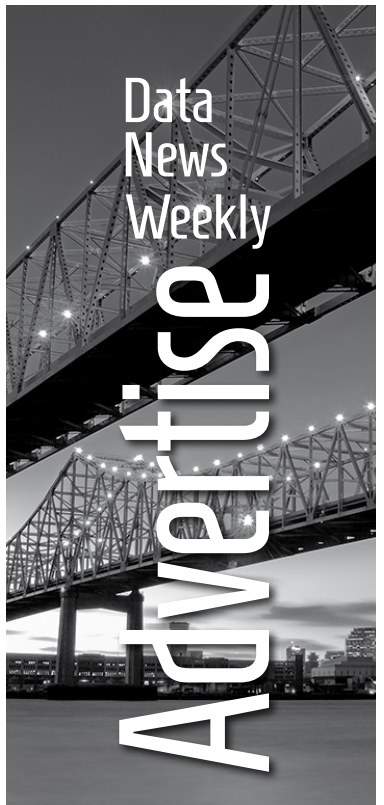
Applicants must provide the following:

- A form of identification
- Proof of address and/or current lease
- Proof of current total household income



- Documentation evidencing the past due utility bill(s)
- The City of New Orleans has provided more than \$4 million in emergency utility assistance. Approxi-

mately 4,500 households have been assisted since the beginning of the Pandemic. For questions or for more information, residents should contact OCD at (504) 658-4200.



FDA Approves Groundbreaking Cell-Based Gene Therapies for Sickle Cell Disease

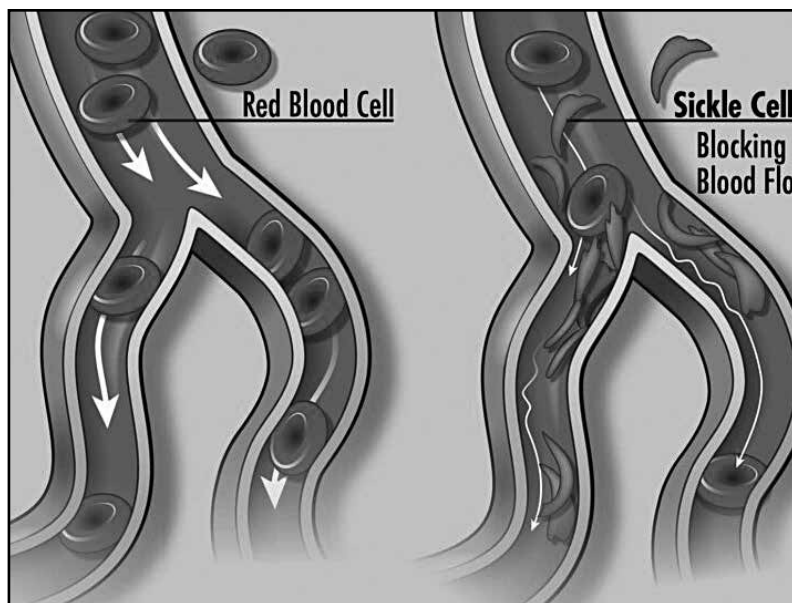
Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has greenlit two revolutionary cell-based gene therapies, Casgevy and Lyfgenia, marking a significant leap forward in treating sickle cell disease (SCD) for patients aged 12 and older.

The approval by the FDA signifies the commencement of a novel epoch in managing sickle cell disease, providing optimism to individuals whose lives have been significantly disrupted by the arduous condition.

Sickle cell disease, a group of inherited blood disorders, affects around 100,000 individuals in the United States and is predominant among African Americans. Health officials said the root cause of SCD is a mutation affecting hemoglobin, a crucial protein in red blood cells responsible for oxygen delivery. The genetic problem causes red blood cells to have a unique "sickle" shape, which can lead to vaso-occlusive events (VOEs) or vaso-occlusive crises (VOCs), which are very painful and damage organs. The recurrence of these crises poses life-threatening risks and potential disabilities.

"Sickle cell disease is a rare, debilitating, and life-threatening blood disorder with significant unmet need, and we are excited to



advance the field," said Nicole Verdun, M.D., director of the Office of Therapeutic Products within the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research.

Casgevy, a groundbreaking cell-based gene therapy, is the first FDA-approved treatment employing CRISPR/Cas9, a revolutionary genome editing technology. The therapy is for individuals 12 years of age or older who have recurrent vaso-occlusive crises. It changes the patient's hematopoietic stem cells using CRISPR/Cas9, a technology that can precisely edit DNA.

The edited cells are then transplanted back into the patient, enhancing the production of fetal hemoglobin and preventing the sickling of red blood cells.

Lyfgenia is another cell-based

gene therapy that uses a lentiviral vector to change genes. The FDA approved it for those 12 years of age or older who have SCD and a history of vaso-occlusive events. Lyfgenia changes blood stem cells to make HbA187Q, gene-therapy-derived hemoglobin that looks like adult hemoglobin and makes it less likely that red blood cells will sickle. Both therapies utilize the patients' blood stem cells, administered through a one-time, single-dose infusion following myeloablative conditioning.

"These approvals represent an important medical advance with the use of innovative cell-based gene therapies to target potentially devastating diseases and improve public health," said Dr. Peter Marks, director of the FDA's Center for

Biologics Evaluation and Research.

The Casgevy and Lyfgenia applications received Priority Review, Orphan Drug, Fast Track, and Regenerative Medicine Advanced Therapy designations. Casgevy was granted approval to Vertex Pharmaceuticals, Inc., and Lyfgenia to Bluebird Bio, Inc.

The FDA said its approval of Casgevy was based on a single-arm, multicenter trial evaluating its safety and effectiveness in adult and adolescent SCD patients. Of the 44 treated patients, 93.5% achieved freedom from severe VOC episodes for at least 12 consecutive months. Common side effects included low platelet and white blood cell levels, mouth sores, nausea, and musculoskeletal pain.

Lyfgenia's approval was based on a 24-month multicenter study, with 88% of patients achieving complete resolution of VOEs between 6- and 18-months post-infusion. Side effects included stomatitis, low blood cell levels, and febrile neutropenia. A black box warning highlighting the risk of hematologic malignancy accompanies Lyfgenia's label, emphasizing the need for lifelong monitoring in patients.

"Today's actions follow rigorous evaluations of the scientific and clinical data needed to support approval, reflecting the FDA's commitment to facilitating the development of safe and effective treatments for conditions with severe impacts on human health," Dr. Marks asserted.

DATA CLASSIFIED

Call 504-821-7421 to
place your classified ad.

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.

Compensation is competitive and detail orientation will be appreciated.

If you are interested, please email your resume to: terrybjones@bellsouth.net

This space can be
yours for only \$80

Call Now!

504-821-7421

Cover Story/ Continued from page 3.

mas holiday falling in between both festivities. "It is a good time to be amongst family and so it was always a family-centered holiday spread out amongst eight days," Livingston said. "Really, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandma, if I didn't see them all on the first night or the last night, I would see them on nights in between," she added.

The holiday celebration was hosted by the Still We R.O.S.E Initiative, an effort launched by students in Xavier's Exponential

Honors Program to foster better understanding among Black and Jewish communities. The event was supported through a micro-grant by Shine-A-Light to combat rising Anti-Semitism.

"I love Hanukkah, and it was so nice to learn about Kwanzaa," said Cameron Kowitt, a service engagement intern with Tulane Hillel. "I really didn't know a lot about it, and I really appreciated broadening my horizon. Thank you," Kowitt said.



In Kwanzaa the Mishumaa Sabaa seven candles represent the seven principles. In Hanukkah the eight candles represent each night the oil lasted in the menorah.



ladatanews.com - The People's Website

WOMEN ARE 80% MORE
LIKELY TO BE POOR
IN RETIREMENT BECAUSE
THEY'RE TOLD,
**"TALKING
ABOUT
MONEY IS
IN POOR
TASTE."**



Learn how to save for your
retirement at **WeSaySaveIt.org**.

National Institute on Retirement Security, 2016.

