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# Greenfield Louisiana Halting Development of \$800 Million Wallace Grain Export Facility



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# Greenfield Louisiana Halting Development of \$800 Million Wallace Grain Export Facility

## *Decision to Halt Nationally Important Project Bringing Well-Paying 21st Century Jobs Impact Louisiana Workers*



Decision to halt nationally important project bringing well-paying 21st Century jobs and post-petroleum economic development follows the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' fifth permitting postponement in 18 months

Greenfield's 2024 scholarship recipient from West St. John High School.

**Eric Connerly**  
Data News Weekly Contributor

On August 6, 2024: Greenfield Louisiana, LLC, an agricultural infrastructure company, has announced it is ceasing plans for a proposed \$800 million grain export facility in Wallace, LA.

When it first filed permits with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 2021, the Wallace Grain Export Facility was expected to drive transformative social and economic benefits to the local community and to be a key link in connecting American farmers along the entire Mississippi River to global markets. The facility would have been the first new grain export hub built in

the U.S. in decades and the most advanced ever developed, with an annual throughput capacity of 11 million tons. It was projected to create more than 1,000 construction-related jobs and more than 300 permanent jobs for the nearby community, as well as generate approximately \$300 million in tax revenue for the state.

Despite usually approving similar projects in the

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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	Eric Connerly	Production
Edwin Buggage	Kenneth Cooper	Pubinator.com
Editor	DNW Staff Writer	Editorial and
Sharonda Green	Michael Hecht	Advertising Inquiries
Executive Assistant	Stacy M. Brown	datanewsweeklyad
June Hazeur	Mark Mahoney/	@gmail.com
Accounting	Dream Color Photo/NNPA	Distribution
		by Terrence Lee

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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

region in six months' time, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has continued to modify and extend the review process for the Wallace Grain Export Facility, which filed for permits nearly three years ago. Last week, the Corps pushed back the timeline it needed to reach a decision on the project by a further six months to March 2025—the fifth such delay in the last 18 months—reversing recent commitments to resolve the application expeditiously.

Lynda Van Davis, Esq., Counsel and Head of External Affairs for Greenfield, made the following statement:

“Today is a sad day for the people of Wallace and for all Louisianans. This is a blow to farmers up and down the Mississippi, to young people hoping for meaningful jobs in the community where they grew up, and to local businesses across the West Bank hoping for economic development. As a descendent of the area, I'm angry that a handful of special interest groups – many of which are out-of-state NGOs – have succeeded in denying the future genera-

tions of St. John the opportunity they deserve.

“Time kills all projects and, sadly, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers chose to repeatedly delay this project by catering to these special interest groups when it should have been listening to local voices from our community.

“Today, we are regrettably no closer to an answer in the Corps' review process than we were when we filed permits three years ago. The repeated delays and goalpost moving we have faced have finally become untenable, and as a result, our local communities lost.

“We have to ask ourselves: if a national company designs a 21st-Century export facility, promising to hire locals first can't break ground in Louisiana – who can? The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality issued Greenfield a 'minor source' air permit by in August 2020—the very same environmental impact as a hospital.

**Why has Greenfield's project been held captive for three years?**

“This was a painful decision. We did everything in our power



Greenfield executive team members out in the community.

to keep this project on track because we believe in this community. We are so deeply grateful to the people of Wallace and the support they have shown us at every stage of this process. We hope there are opportunities to collaborate in the future to bring change to the region.”

Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry

released a statement regarding the matter and how it has a negative impact on those who were looking forward to well-paying jobs coming into the parish.

“This grain facility would have been environmentally sound and brought hundreds of high-paying jobs to St. John Parish. After years of delay—it's despicable that the

Corps of Engineers had additional delays with this project—choosing to adhere to special interest groups and wealthy plantation owners instead of hardworking Louisianans. Louisiana is ready to move past our days of listening to plantation owners, but it seems our federal government is not,” said Governor Landry.

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# Greater St. Stephen Ministries Hosted A Free Back to School Extravaganza

*Backpacks, Hair Cut Vouchers, School Supplies, Medical Resources, Hairstyle Vouchers, Flu Shots, Cosmetology School Scholarships, Gift Cards, Onsite Voter Registration, and Literary Resources Were Distributed to the Community.*

Data News Staff Edited Report  
Photos: Greater St. Stephen Ministries

As summer winds down and the new school year approaches, Greater St. Stephen Ministries is excited to host its Back-to-School Extravaganza. This free community event was designed to support families as they prepare for the upcoming academic year. It took place on Saturday, August 10th.

This community event was a collaborative effort of other community organizations and sponsors. The goal of the Back-to-School Extravaganza was to ensure that every child in the community has the necessary supplies and resources to succeed in school. Greater St. Stephen Ministries distributed three hundred backpacks filled with school supplies, along with gift cards, vouchers for haircuts provided by Xclusive Barber Shop and hairstyle vouchers provided by The Cosmetology Institute. The event also offered two scholarships, one for \$500 and another for \$1,000, for aspiring cosmetologists to attend The Cosmetology Institute. To qualify for the scholarship, applicants had to be sixteen or older and have eleven high school credits.

“Greater St. Stephen Ministries is deeply committed to giving back to our community and ensuring that every child is ready for the new school year,” said Bishop T. Delbert Robinson, Senior Pastor of Greater St. Stephen. “Our goal is to support families and make a positive impact by providing essential resources, creating a memorable experience for students, and instilling a sense of hope and readiness for the future.”

Flu shots were administered by Walgreens. Additionally, information on local healthcare services were provided on-site by JenCare Senior Medical Center and Oak Street Health. The East New Orleans Regional Library was also on-site making bookmarks, giving away books, and helping attendees sign up for library cards. Metropolitan Human Services District offered youth mental health services. The Back-to-School Extravaganza featured youth activities, games, and face painting, providing fun and entertainment for children of all ages. On-site voter registration was conducted as well.





# Kurte Pellerin's 66th "All-White" Birthday Celebration

Kurte turns 66 years young this year. He held his usual "all-white" celebration on Saturday, August 10th, at the new "Le Roux's on the Lake" on Hayne Blvd. It was a fabulous event with great food and comradery. Everyone in attendance wore their favorite all-white attire. Entertainment was provided by N'Tune. Everyone had a great time and Data News Weekly was there to enjoy the festivities!



(l-r) Lawrence Martin, Kurte Pellerin, Lloyd Dennis and Terry Jones.



N'Tune



Herbet Alexander and Kurte.



Brother Charles Andrews and his wife.



Audrey Williams and Lolita Phillips



Lloyd Dennis and his wife Ann.



Elray Holmes and his wife, Tammy.



Kurte Pellerin and his wife, LaToya.



(l-r) Nettie's Cousin and Nettie Burns



# Bloomberg Philanthropies Announces \$600 Million Gift to Historically Black Medical Schools

**Stacy M. Brown**  
NNPA Newswire Senior  
National Correspondent

In a monumental move to address the underrepresentation of Black physicians in the United States, Bloomberg Philanthropies has announced a \$600 million donation to the endowments of four Historically Black Medical Schools. Officials said the donation is part of Bloomberg Philanthropies' Greenwood Initiative, which aims to advance racial wealth equity and address systemic underinvestment in Black institutions and communities.

Howard University College of Medicine, Meharry Medical College, and Morehouse School of Medicine will each receive \$175 million, while Charles R. Drew University of Medicine & Science will receive \$75 million. Additionally, Bloomberg said \$5 million in seed



identify as Black or African American. This is despite Black Americans comprising 13% of the population. According to research, treating Black patients by Black doctors' results in better health outcomes and more frequent medical care. For instance, Black patients are 34% more likely to receive preventative care if they see Black doctors.

funding will support creating a new Historically Black Medical School in New Orleans, the Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine. The historic investment will more than double the endowments of three medical schools, significantly boosting their financial stability and capacity to educate future Black physicians.

A recent study highlighted the need for such support, revealing that only 5.7% of U.S. physicians

The four Historically Black Medical Schools receiving funding reportedly graduate around half of all Black doctors in the U.S. but have been traditionally underfunded due to systemic inequities, including lower federal and state support. Since the early 1900s, discriminatory practices and the impacts of the Flexner Report have led to the closure of 10 Black Medical Schools in the United States. The financial

boost from Bloomberg Philanthropies should have a transformative impact.

Michael Bloomberg, the former New York City mayor, Democratic presidential candidate, and founder of Bloomberg LP, will formally announce the donation at the National Medical Association's Annual Convention. "This gift will empower new generations of Black doctors to create a healthier and more equitable future for our country," Bloomberg said.

In 2020, Bloomberg Philanthropies granted \$100 million to these same medical schools to reduce the debt load of enrolled students facing severe financial burdens exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Valerie Montgomery Rice, President of Morehouse School of Medicine, noted that the 2020 gift relieved an average of \$100,000 in debt for each student, significantly enhancing the school's ability to

fundraise and support its students.

Denise Smith, Deputy Director of Higher Education Policy and Senior Fellow at The Century Foundation, emphasized the importance of such philanthropic gifts. She pointed to MacKenzie Scott's donations to HBCUs in 2020 and 2021 as pivotal in sparking increased support from other large donors. "Donations that have followed are the type of momentum and support that institutions need in this moment," Smith told the Associated Press.

Dr. Yolanda Lawson, President of the National Medical Association, expressed relief upon hearing about Bloomberg's gift, especially in light of the Supreme Court's recent decision striking down affirmative action and attacks on programs promoting inclusion and equity.

"This opportunity and this investment affect not only just those four institutions but our country's health and future," Lawson asserted.

## State & Local News

# Healthcare Innovation Booms in Louisiana

**Michael Hecht**  
President & CEO, Greater  
New Orleans, Inc.

According to the latest economic intelligence dashboard from the Committee of 100, the healthcare sector in Louisiana has added nearly 15,000 jobs over the past five years, making it the fastest-growing industry in the state. Highlights include:

Earlier this year, Xavier University, one of the top-ranked HBCU's in America, and Ochsner Health, Louisiana's largest private employer, announced that they are partnering to form a new medical school, the Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine (XOCOM). XOCOM will be the only HBCU medical school in the Gulf South, and just the fifth one nationally; the last HBCU medical school to open was Morehouse in 1975.

Also recently, a partnership between LCMC Health and Tulane



The healthcare sector continues to create well-paying jobs in the State of Louisiana adding 15,000 jobs over the past five years. Additionally, Ochsner Health announced they've partnered with Xavier University of New Orleans to form the Xavier Ochsner College Of Medicine (XOCOM) that will be the only HBCU in the Gulf South and one of five nationwide.

University created a formal link between one of Louisiana's largest healthcare systems and the state's only existing private medical school. Together, the two organizations will advance academic medicine to enhance the care provided to patients, increase investment in research, and expand opportunities to train the next generation of healthcare professionals.

And this weekend, LSU Health

Shreveport celebrated its first graduation ceremony in the school's new \$79 million Center for Medical Education. The new facility was created to enhance the educational experience and interdisciplinary collaboration for students and faculty.

Driving healthcare innovation, last month Ochsner Ventures teamed up with Louisiana Economic Development to launch the Ochsner Louisiana Innova-

tion Fund, which was created with funds from the U.S. Treasury's SSBCI 2.0 Program. The duo came together to back early-stage health startups with cutting-edge solutions and has already invested in a promising healthcare company, Nest Health.

For place-based development, plans are moving ahead for the BioDistrict New Orleans, which covers hundreds of acres of land

that includes the VA Hospital, University Medical Center and the former Charity Hospital building. The initiative has secured up to \$70 million in local support over the next 18 years to help foster the growth of the city's biosciences industry and has already announced that the aforementioned Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine will be located in the district.

Here at GNO, Inc., we've assembled a group of 12 healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, startups, and universities to foster the development of Greater New Orleans as a destination for Neurological Research and Care, to improve lives and create jobs. Called NeuroNOLA, the initiative is envisioning New Orleans as the premier destination for research and care related to diseases of aging and the nervous system and is working with aligned groups like Team Gleason and the Split-Second Foundation.

# Historic Victory for Black Farmers: \$2 Billion in Relief Payments Announced



Ben Crump (second from left) with John Boyd, President of the National Black Farmers Association (NBFA) announced a class action suit against the United States government on behalf of the National Black Farmers Association. Photo: Mark Mahoney / DreamInColor Photo / NNPA

**Stacy M. Brown**  
**NNPA Newswire Senior**  
**National Correspondent**

Recently, a monumental victory for Black farmers as they begin receiving payments from the \$2.2 billion Discrimination Financial Assistance Program (DFAP). After decades of advocacy and struggle, John Boyd, President of the National Black Farmers Association (NBFA), declared the day “a huge win.”

Nearly two years ago, President Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Section 22007, authorizing compensation for farmers who faced racial discrimination in the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) farm lending practices before 2021. This week, around 43,000 farmers will receive payments of up to \$500,000, with the average award being \$82,000.

Reflecting on this long-awaited achievement, Boyd recounted his journey, which began almost 40 years ago when he first experienced these injustices. “No matter how it is sliced, the \$2.2 billion in payouts is historic,” he said. This follows previous settlements, including a \$1 billion payout in 1999 and a \$1.25 billion settlement in 2013.

The NBFA’s relentless efforts have also paved the way for similar settlements with Hispanic and women farmers (\$1.3 billion), Native American farmers (\$800 million), and the Cobell case settlement (\$3.4 billion).

Boyd’s dedication to justice has been challenging. He faced hateful phone calls, mail, and even death threats. Despite these obstacles, he remained steadfast in his fight. “Total restoration is impossible, but for me, the fight was about justice,” Boyd emphasized.

Midtown Group, an unbiased third-party administrator, oversaw the DFAP’s administration to ensure a fair adjudication procedure for each farmer’s case. Although the 40-page application process and long wait times added to the farmers’ pain, the payments represent a bittersweet victory. Boyd acknowledged that issues such as banks denying operating funds or farm ownership loans persist, as do recent allegations of racial discrimination against companies like John Deere.

For those denied assistance through the DFAP, there is no appeal or review process, a reality Boyd profoundly regrets. Many Black farmers have died waiting for justice, but today’s announcement brings some

closure. Boyd reflected on his tireless efforts, from lobbying Congress to protesting with his mules “Struggle” and “Forty Acres,” and riding his tractor, “Justice,” to Washington. Listening to Senior White House Advisor Stephen Benjamin detail the award notifications and check disbursement made it all worthwhile.

“Today is a huge win for the NBFA,” he declared.

In October 2022, civil rights attorney Ben Crump announced a class action suit against the United States government on behalf of the NBFA. The lawsuit came after findings that Black farmers lost approximately \$326 billions of land due to discrimination during the 20th century. Crump and the farmers argued that the federal government breached its contract with socially disadvantaged farmers under the American Rescue Plan Act.

Despite these challenges, President Biden reaffirmed his commitment to addressing inequities in farming. “Farmers and ranchers work around the clock to put food on our tables and steward our Nation’s land. But for too long, many farmers and ranchers experienced discrimination in farm loan programs and have not had the same access to federal resources and support. I promised to address this inequity when I became President. Today that promise has become a reality,” Biden stated.

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A young woman wearing a dark blue graduation cap with a gold tassel and a blue graduation gown is smiling and hugging someone from behind. Her eyes are closed, and she has a joyful expression. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in graduation attire.

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