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# NORD Commission Kicks Off FitNOLA Spring Season with Health Expo



NORDC stays true to its mission of empowering the entire New Orleans community through recreation, culture, and education.

**Eric Connerly**  
**Data News Weekly Contributor**

As we enter the New Year, many will say their New Year Resolution, is to be more fit. This week the New Orleans Recreation Development (NORD) Commission today announced that the FitNOLA Spring Season

Kickoff and Health Expo will take place on Saturday, January 4, 2025, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Rosenwald Recreation Center, located at 1140 S. Broad St. All residents are invited to participate.

This free, family-friendly event will feature group exercise sessions led by local fitness partners Shao-lin NOLA, ANEW Fitness, By Our Hands Wellness,

CrossFit NOLA, and Footprints to Fitness.

In addition, the Health Expo will showcase several resources and wellness activities provided by organizations including No Wrap/No Tap (CrescentCare), All of Us/LSU Health Sciences Center, New Orleans East Hospital, Bike Easy, STRIVE, Heart N' Hands, and Ochsner Health.

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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	Benjamin Bates	Production
Edwin Buggage	Elise Schenck	Pubinator.com
Editor	Stacey M. Brown	Editorial and
Sharonda Green	Glenn Summers	Advertising Inquiries
Executive Assistant	Eric Connerly	datanewsweeklyad@gmail.com
June Hazeur	N.O. Agenda	Distribution
Accounting		by Terrence Lee

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As a special feature, Ochsner Health will provide biometric screenings, including cholesterol, BMI, blood pressure checks, and personalized consultations. Participants are encouraged to pre-register online for expedited entry and to access the full schedule of activities. Walk-ins are also welcome.

“We are thrilled to launch another season of FitNOLA and provide our community with opportunities to prioritize health and wellness,” said Larry Barabino Jr., CEO of NORD Commission. “By working alongside exceptional fitness and health partners, we are empowering New Orleanians to embrace healthier lifestyles while making

fitness fun and accessible for all.”

The New Orleans Recreation Development (NORD) Commission’s Mission is to “advance the physical, mental, and social well-being of New Orleanians by providing safe and welcoming environments for recreational, athletic, and cultural experiences.”

In a recent statement, NORD emphasized its commitment to enhancing community recreational spaces and programs. In 2024, NORD engaged over 1,600 teens through internships, summer camps, and sports challenges, with support from the Cantrell Administration and New Orleans City Council. These initiatives aim to provide



Larry Barabino Jr., CEO of NORD Commission says of their partnership with FitNOLA, “By working alongside exceptional fitness and health partners, we are empowering New Orleanians to embrace healthier lifestyles while making fitness and fun accessible to all.”

quality recreational opportunities for the youth of New Orleans.

NORD continues to work towards improving its facilities and programs to better serve the community’s needs. For more information on NORD’s Mission and ongoing projects, please visit their official website.

To register, and for more information, call (504) 658-3052 or visit [www.nordc.org](http://www.nordc.org).



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# The 10th Anniversary Gala of the Whitney Plantation

*A Celebration of Collective Commitment to Educating Future Generations on Louisiana History and Untold Stories of those who Endured Slavery*

Photos by Glenn Summers

Since its establishment as a Site of Remembrance in 2014, the Whitney Plantation has been more than a historical landmark; it has become a beacon for truth, remembrance, and resilience telling the stories of Louisiana and American history.

Last weekend, Whitney Plantation celebrated its 10th Anniversary with a party with a purpose, marking a decade of dedication to preserving the history of slavery and honoring the stories of descendants. The evening brought together supporters, historians and cultural leaders to reflect on the plantation's journey as a vital center



Members of the Morial family accept presentation in memory of Mrs. Sybil Haydel Morial.

for education, remembrance, and dialogue.

Marc H. Morial, event co-chair said, "This milestone not only celebrates Whitney Plantation's accomplishments but also reaffirms the mission to inspire change by telling untold stories. This event was especially meaningful to my family and I as it honored the memory of my mother, Mrs. Sybil Haydel Morial, an iconic educator, civil rights advocate, and pillar of the community."

The gala inspired others to support ongoing preservation and educational efforts, expanding the impact of Whitney Plantation's work and making sure that this critically important chapter of American history is not forgotten.

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# Heisman Trophy Winner Travis Hunter Signs Deal with Rapper Lil' Wayne's Young Money Sports Agency

**Benjamin Bates**  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

In a not so surprising move, Heisman Trophy Recipient Travis Hunter will enter the NFL Draft and forego his senior year at Colorado, all but confirming the move after signing with a sports agency on Sunday.

Hunter, who many expected to sign with one of the larger sports agents has opted to sign for a lesser-known sports agency in signing for Young Money Sports Agency, which is owned by Rap Legend Lil Wayne, where he'll become their biggest client. The agency will handle his On-Field Representation in the NFL as well as his playing contracts.



Travis Hunter has signed with Lil Wayne's Young Money Sports Agency ahead of the NFL Draft.

In addition to being signed with Young Money Sports Agency, Hunter will remain with SMAC Entertainment, which is part-owned by Michael Strahan, who will handle his Off-Field Representation.

He has been with SMAC for multiple years, who had recently worked with him to sign his Adidas Deal. The same agency also represents Shedeur, Shilo and Deion Sanders - his former teammates and Coach at Colorado.

Louisiana Rapper Lil Wayne, his real name Dwayne Carter Jr, had been at Hunter's Heisman Trophy Ceremony earlier this month, where it had first been suggested that he could opt to sign with his agency.

Hunter and the aforementioned Shedeur Sanders spent three years playing together at Jackson State and Colorado, both being set to enter the draft together where the latter hopes to be the first quarterback taken in the class.

## State & Local News

### NOLA Public School Alumni Shine at Beyonce' Christmas Halftime Show



Graduates of New Orleans public schools' renowned fine arts programs were center stage during Beyoncé's half-time performance showcasing their talent as members of the Texas Southern University (TSU) Ocean of Soul Marching Band and Motion of the Ocean Dance Team.

**Elise Schenck**  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

Queen Bey's Reign was on full display during her recent halftime show, which was seen by millions. During this amazing set, graduates of New Orleans Public Schools took part and were center stage during Beyoncé's halftime performance, showcasing their talent as members of the Texas Southern University (TSU) Ocean of Soul Marching Band and Motion of the Ocean Dance Team.

These talented New Orleanians hailed from several high schools, including Edna Karr, John F. Kennedy, L.B. Landry, Booker T. Washington, G.W. Carver, Abramson, Sarah T. Reed, Warren Easton, and McDonogh 35.

This show was one for the ages, and New Orleans has been considered by many to be the secret ingredient to her success throughout her career. On this day, young people from the city were part of a show that made history as Queen Bey continues to make an impact both on and off the stage.

## New Year, New Career!

*Job Fair Hosted by Volunteers of America  
Southeast Louisiana, January 18, 2025*

### New Orleans Agenda

Volunteers of America Southeast Louisiana (VOASELA) will host a Career Job Fair for those within the Greater New Orleans region that are interested in life-changing work within the community.

As a leading non-profit in Southeast Louisiana, and has over 450 employees with a wide range of career interests and job openings available in:

**Care Coordination/Case Management  
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**Direct Supportive Care  
Property Management  
Resident Monitoring  
Skilled Construction Professionals  
Human Resource Professionals  
Community Program Management  
Housing Specialists  
Maintenance Technicians  
Landscaping**

VOASELA's Career Fair will showcase multiple aspects of the organization's 30+ programs, professional career development paths, and positive company culture. The

Career Fair will include "meet & greets" with top executives, opportunities to learn more about community programming, and specific community impact.

**On-site interviews will take place on the day of the event.  
Saturday, January 18th, 2025  
Volunteers of America Southeast Louisiana  
4152 Canal St.  
10:00 AM- 2:00 PM.**

To learn more about how you can join the VOASELA Team, visit





# As Trump Era Begins, Carter's Legacy of Inclusion Endures

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

As Black America and other minority groups brace for hostility and uncertainty under the incoming administration of Donald Trump, the death of former President Jimmy Carter has reignited an appreciation for a leader who championed equality, justice, and humanity over self-interest and division. Carter, who died at 100, leaves a legacy rooted in humility and service, demonstrating what true leadership can accomplish.

Carter's presidency from 1977 to 1981 brought meaningful progress in Civil Rights and Inclusion. He appointed Patricia Harris as the first Black woman to a presidential cabinet, naming her Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and later Secretary of Health and Human Services. Andrew Young served as the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, further demonstrating Carter's commitment to inclusion. His administration included a record number of Black federal judges, strengthened rules preventing discriminatory schools from claiming tax-exempt status, and expanded Food Aid Programs for impoverished communities, many of which benefited Black families in rural areas.

Carter's ability to rise above the racism entrenched in his Southern roots defined much of his political career. As a young school board member in Plains, Georgia, he resisted pressure to join the White Citizens' Council and objected to his church's exclusion of Black worshippers. Rachel Clark, a Black woman who worked on the Carter



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family farm, helped influence his moral compass. She taught him about selflessness and community, lessons that guided him throughout his life. "He even got teased in school for sounding Black," said Jonathan Alter, author of "His Very Best: Jimmy Carter, a Life."

When Carter ran for Governor of Georgia in 1970, his campaign initially used dog whistles to appeal to White voters. However, after his victory, his inaugural address declared, "The time for racial discrimination is over." Carter appointed Black judges, supported fair housing laws, and challenged Systemic Racism in ways that surprised even his critics. Martin Luther King Sr. praised Carter, writing, "I know a man I can trust, Blacks can trust, and that man is Jimmy Carter."

Carter's connection to the Black Press also marked a historic milestone. In 1977, he invited Black journalists to the White House for the first time and issued

Proclamation 4507, declaring Black Press Day. That year coincided with the 150th Anniversary of "Freedom's Journal," the nation's first Black Newspaper.

"Whenever I had a chance to spend time with President Carter, it was clear that he didn't just profess these values," said former President Barack Obama. "He embodied them. He made that choice again and again over the course of his 100 years, and the world is better for it."

From a peanut farmer to President of the United States, "his incredible life, legacy, and leadership are a testament to the power of the American dream," said House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries. "His commitment to humility, kindness, and service to others will continue to be a North Star for future generations of public servants."

Carter once said during his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, "God gives us the capacity for choice. We can choose to alleviate suffering. We can choose to work together for peace."



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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](mailto:terrybjones@bellsouth.net) and [datanewseditor@bellsouth.net](mailto:datanewseditor@bellsouth.net).

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### Job Opportunity

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