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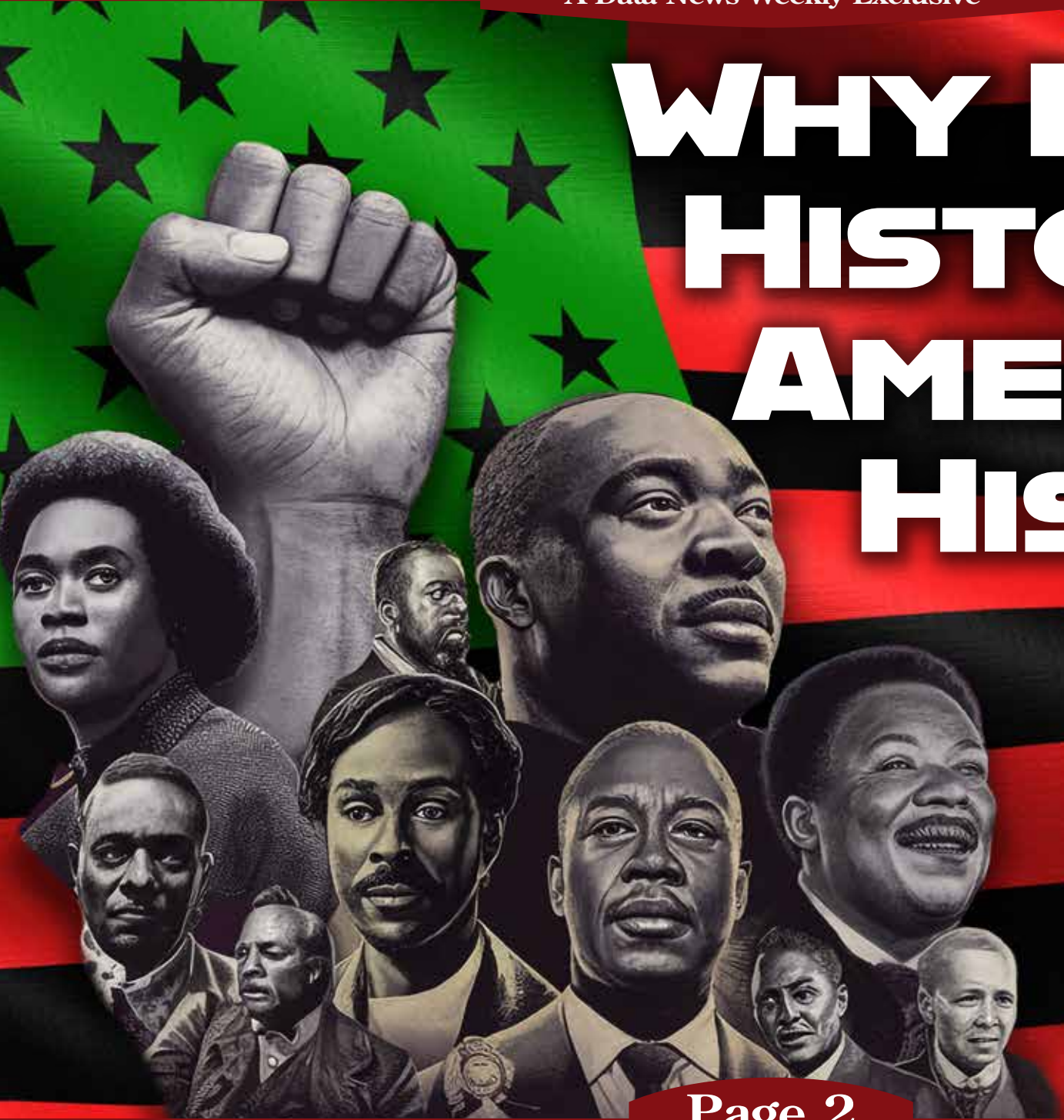
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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

WHY BLACK HISTORY IS AMERICA'S HISTORY



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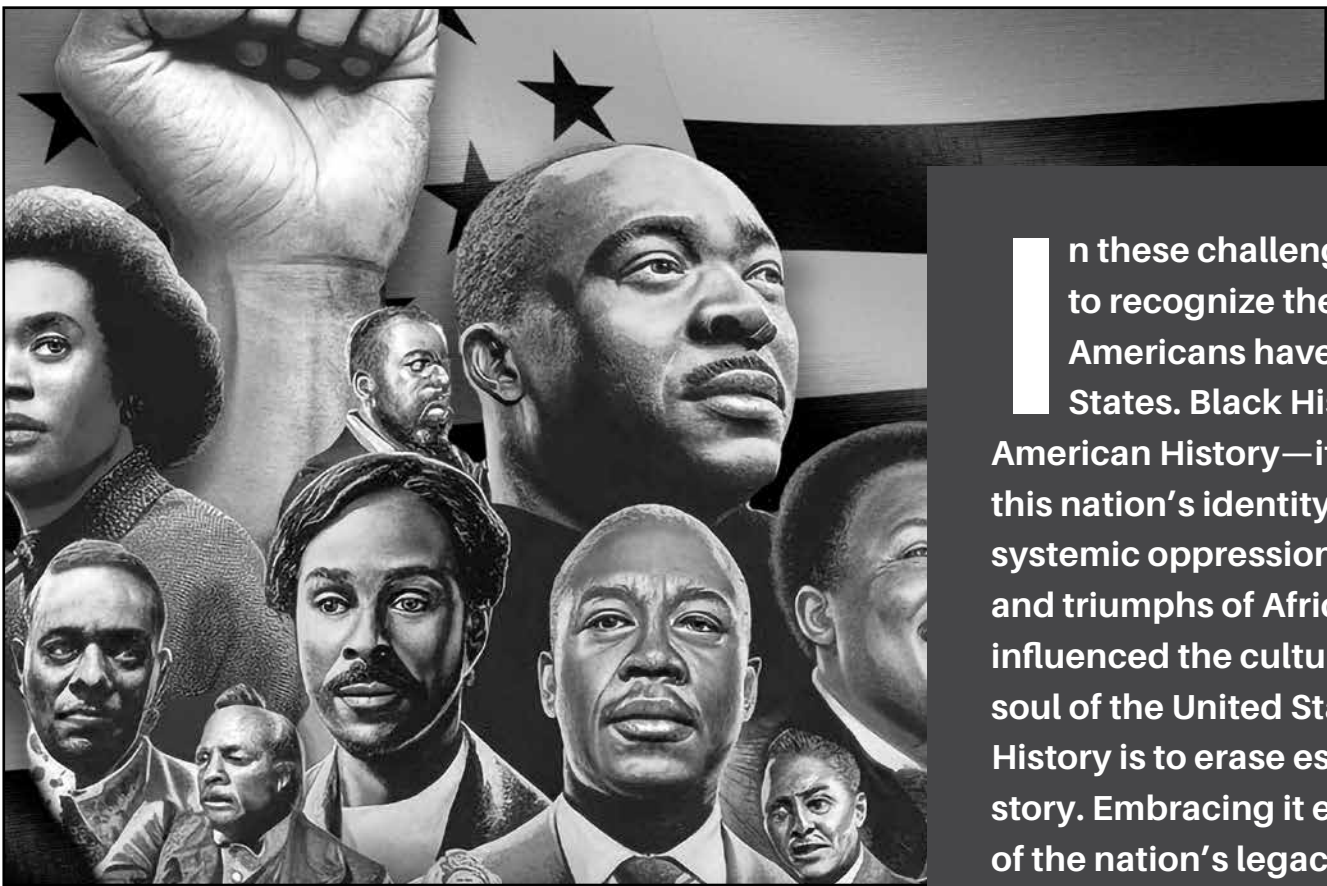
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Why Black History is America's History



African Americans throughout the history of the United States have contributed to advancing the nation for all people. Also, being at the forefront leading the charge of movements fighting for justice that's benefitted all Americans.

In these challenging times, it is crucial to recognize the invaluable role African Americans have played in shaping the United States. Black History is not separate from American History—it is woven into the very fabric of this nation's identity. Despite enduring centuries of systemic oppression, the contributions, resilience, and triumphs of African Americans have profoundly influenced the culture, politics, economy, and soul of the United States. To overlook Black History is to erase essential chapters of America's story. Embracing it enriches our understanding of the nation's legacy and reaffirms that Black Americans are an integral part of "We the People."

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief Data News Weekly

The Foundation of a Nation

From the moment this nation was conceived, African Americans were there, building its foundations.

Enslaved Africans, brought to America through the horrors of the transatlantic slave trade, became the backbone of the country's early economy. The labor of millions fueled the cultivation of cotton, tobacco, sugar, and other cash crops, propelling the United States into global economic prominence. It was through the blood, sweat, and tears of enslaved people that Ameri-

ca's wealth was born. This legacy cannot be ignored or minimized—it is an undeniable truth that underscores the country's beginnings.

The Unyielding Struggle for Equality

Black History is far more than a tale of oppression; it is a story of resilience, courage, and triumph.

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DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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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.

From revolts on plantations to the covert operations of the Underground Railroad, enslaved Africans fought for freedom and dignity at every turn. The abolition of slavery marked a monumental shift, culminating in the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. Yet, these victories were only the beginning of an ongoing battle for equality.

During Reconstruction, African Americans achieved remarkable progress, holding political office, building businesses, and forming thriving communities. However, this progress was brutally curtailed by the rise of Jim Crow laws, which entrenched racial segregation and disenfranchisement. Even in the face of such systemic barriers, Black Americans built self-sufficient communities, including the renowned Black Wall Streets across the nation—powerful symbols of excellence, innovation, and resilience.

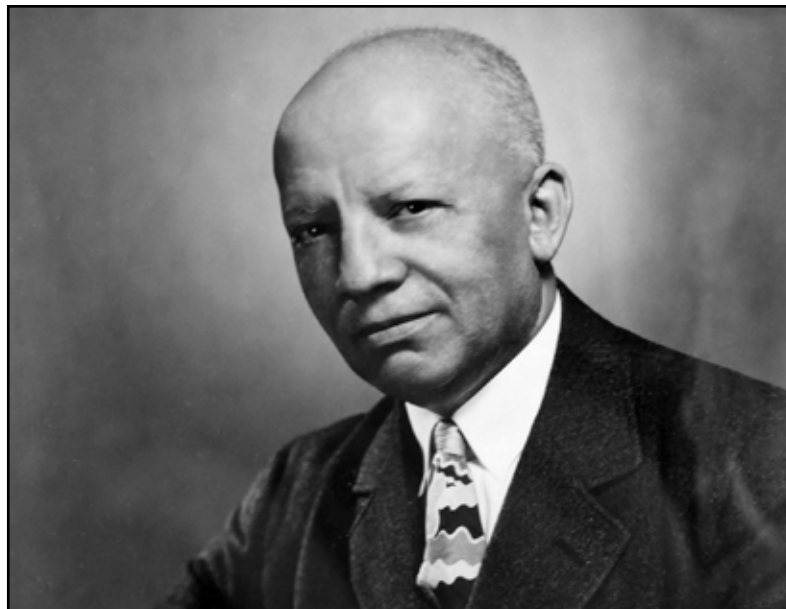
The Civil Rights Movement of the 20th Century stands as a beacon of hope and determination. Icons such as Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, and countless others demanded justice

and inspired a nation to confront its moral failings. Their efforts led to transformative legislation, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, proving that progress, while hard-fought, is possible. Their legacy continues to inspire movements for justice and equality today.

Cultural Brilliance and Innovation

Beyond the political and economic realms, African Americans have profoundly shaped global culture. From the soulful melodies of jazz and blues to the electrifying beats of hip-hop, Black artists have revolutionized music. Writers like Langston Hughes and Maya Angelou, musicians like Louis Armstrong, and thinkers like James Baldwin have enriched the world with their creativity while challenging societal norms and shining a light on racial injustice. Today, contemporary voices continue this legacy, blending artistic brilliance with advocacy for financial literacy, justice, and generational wealth.

The contributions of Black inventors, scientists, and entre-



Carter G. Woodson, historian, author and journalist, and founder of the Association for the Study of Negro (African American) Life and History. He is credited as the Father of Negro History Week which began in 1926 (becoming a month in 1976) to honor the achievements of Black Americans across all fields of endeavor.

preneurs have also left an indelible mark. Innovators like George Washington Carver, Garrett A. Morgan, Dr. Charles Drew, Madam C.J. Walker, and Katherine Johnson exemplify the genius and ingenuity of a people too often overlooked in traditional his-

torical narratives. Their work has advanced industries, saved lives, and redefined what is possible.

Why Black History is American History

Black History is the embodiment of America's ideals—and its contra-

dictions. It reflects the ongoing struggle for freedom, equality, and justice that lies at the heart of the American experiment. The experiences of African Americans illuminate the nation's imperfections while holding it accountable to its promises of liberty and justice for all.

Acknowledging Black History is not merely an act of inclusion; it is a necessary step toward understanding the full scope of America's story. By embracing this history, we foster a collective identity rooted in truth and inclusivity. By reckoning with the past, we can better confront the inequalities of the present and work toward a future where every American has the opportunity to thrive.

To declare that Black History is American History is to affirm the undeniable truth that African Americans have shaped and continue to shape this nation. Despite the challenges of our present political climate, recognizing this truth brings us closer to fulfilling the promise of a more perfect union—a union enriched by the contributions, sacrifices, and brilliance of its Black citizens.

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Washington Mardi Gras 2025

A Party with a Purpose

Congressman Troy A. Carter, Sr. Data Contributor

"It was a privilege to be the 2025 Chairman of Washington Mardi Gras! This year's theme—Grounded in the Values of Duty and Honor—reminded us of the legacy we carry forward as Louisianians. Washington Mardi Gras offers so much, from its world-renowned cuisine and music to the camaraderie and joy that made this event so special. "Washington Mardi Gras is a party with a purpose. It's an opportunity for people invested in growing Louisiana's economy to come to our nation's capital and meet with decision-makers. While it recognizes our Louisiana culture and the History of Mardi Gras, it also teaches people about our state and allows our local government officials to get face time for discussions about funding, programs, and future federal opportunities," said Congressman Troy A. Carter, Sr. (LA-02).



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

In Loving Memory of Senior Master Sergeant Mark Jones, USAF

Co-Owner of Bertha's Place a Beloved New Orleans Nightspot

Story and Photos by Glenn
Summers Data News Weekly
Contributor

It is with heavy hearts that we gather to honor and remember Senior Master Sergeant Mark Jones, who departed this life on January 15, 2025, at the age of 55. A proud servant of the United States Air Force and Co-Owner Bertha's Place., Mark dedicated his life to protecting our freedoms and serving his country with unwavering commitment and integrity.

Born in the vibrant city of Pensacola, FL, Mark carried the spirit of the Gulf Coast with him throughout his life. His journey took him from the sun-soaked shores of his childhood to the bustling streets of Washington, DC, where he embraced the challenges and responsibilities of military service. Most recently, he found solace and a sense of community in the lively culture of New Orleans, LA, where he contributed his unique spirit and warmth to the city he loved.

Mark was not only a distinguished member of the Air Force, but he was also a beloved friend, husband, father, and mentor. His humor could light up a room, and his smile had a way of making even the darkest days seem a little brighter. He was a guiding light for many, providing support and wisdom to those lucky enough to know him.

His legacy of service will forever be etched in the hearts of those he touched. Mark exemplified the core values of the Air Force: integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do. He believed in the power of teamwork and always encouraged others to strive for greatness, both on the battlefield and in their personal lives.

As we gather to celebrate his life, let us remember Mark not just for his exemplary military career, but for the extraordinary person he was. His laughter, his kindness, and his enduring love for family will remain with us, a beacon of hope and inspiration.

To Mark's loving family, we extend our deepest condolences and support during this painful time. We recognize the profound loss you have suffered, and we stand with you, sharing in your grief and honoring the incredible man you have lost.

Today, we bid farewell to a remarkable individual who dedicated his life to service and who enriched our lives in so many ways. Senior Master Sergeant Mark Jones will forever be remembered as a patriot, a leader, and a friend. May he rest in peace, knowing that his spirit and legacy will continue to live on in the hearts of all who knew him.



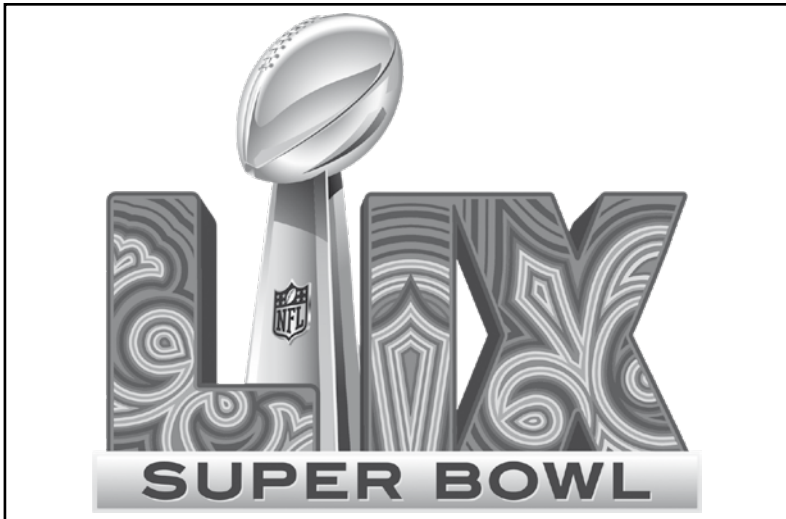
Super Bowl In New Orleans

Kansas City Chiefs vs. Philadelphia Eagles

Fleur De Lis
Data News Weekly
Contributor

On February 9, 2025, the City of New Orleans will be on the world stage, hosting Super Bowl LIX at the Caesars Superdome. This will mark the city's record-tying 11th time hosting the NFL Championship Game.

The matchup features the Kansas City Chiefs and the Philadelphia Eagles, a rematch of Super Bowl LVII from two years prior. The Chiefs, led by Quar-



terback Patrick Mahomes, aim to make history as the first team to win three consecutive Super Bowls will face Jalen Hurts and the Eagles.

The historic game is scheduled to kick off at 5:30 p.m. CST. Grammy-Winning Artist Kendrick Lamar will headline the halftime show, with special guest SZA.

In a city recognized for its rich musical heritage, Pre-game performances will feature amazing artists such as Jon Batiste, Lauren Daigle, Trombone Shorty, and Ledisi.

State & Local News

New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation

2025 Community Outreach Tickets

Data News Staff
Edited Report

The New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation supports community involvement in the 2025 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival presented by Shell. Thousands of free tickets are distributed to Louisiana Social Service Nonprofits through the Community Outreach Ticket Program. Applications are currently being accepted until Monday, March 17th at 5:00 pm (CT)

The Community Outreach Ticket Program was created by the Foundation to distribute thousands of free Jazz Fest tickets via nonprofit organizations. Tickets go to those who otherwise wouldn't be able to attend the festival because of finances or other hardships. Louisiana-based community groups: high



schools, religious organizations, government agencies that provide services to the needy, and nonprofit organizations are intended recipients of the tickets. This program is for Louisiana based nonprofits that provide DIRECT Social Services.

Mayor Cantrell Announces Love Your City Cleanup Initiative

Citywide Event to Unite Communities and Beautify New Orleans



LaToya Cantrell, New Orleans Mayor

City of New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS – Mayor LaToya Cantrell and the City of New Orleans Neighborhood Engagement Office, in collaboration

with the Department of Public Works, are excited to announce the Love Your City Cleanup—a citywide initiative aimed at uniting communities, fostering civic pride, and enhancing the natural beauty of New Orleans.

This multi-date event invites residents, organizations, and businesses to roll up their sleeves and make a tangible impact. Together, we can keep the Big Easy beautiful for generations to come!

Event Dates:

Saturday, February 1
District A: Hollygrove
District B: Central City
District C Eastbank: Tremé
District D: 7th Ward
District E: Rosedale
Sunday, February 2
District C Westbank: Algiers

To sign up as a volunteer, please visit Love Your City.

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As Attacks Against DE&I Heighten, Costco and Apple Prove Inclusion Remains Good Business



Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

Under President Donald Trump's Project 2025, the administration has launched an unprecedented effort to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) programs. Federal agencies are now prohibited from observing Black History Month, and employees involved in DE&I initiatives have been terminated. Critics argue these measures represent a full-on attack on marginalized communities and signal a clear directive for corporations to follow suit. Trump's administration, which has no diversity in its ranks, has been accused of setting a dangerous precedent.

Some companies, however, remain committed to their DE&I efforts. Organizations like Costco, JPMorgan Chase, Delta Airlines, American Airlines, Southwest Airlines, and Apple continue to view diversity as a cornerstone of their workforce strategies, refusing to back down despite mounting pressure from conservatives and the White House.

Corporations Holding the Line

Costco's board of directors recently rejected the National Center for Public Policy Research (NCP-PR) proposal that sought to force the company to publish risks associated with its DE&I programs or eliminate them entirely. The board reaffirmed the company's commitment to inclusion ahead of a January 23 shareholder vote.

"Our success at Costco Wholesale has been built on service to our critical stakeholders: employees, members, and suppliers," the board said in a statement reported by Forbes. "Our efforts around diversity, equity, and inclusion follow our code of ethics. These efforts remind and reinforce with everyone at our company the importance of creating opportunities for all."

JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon has also resisted calls to retreat from diversity programs. "We will continue to reach out to the Black community, the Hispanic community, the veterans community, and LGBTQ. We have teams with second chance initiatives — governors in blue states and red

states like what we do," Dimon said in an interview with CNBC.

Apple's leadership has similarly rejected proposals to scale back DE&I, labeling such measures as attempts to "micromanage" the company's operations. The board stated, "The proposal is unnecessary as Apple already has a well-

established compliance program," as reported by Tech Xplore.

Advocates Warn of Long-Term Consequences

Leaders in DE&I initiatives continue challenging corporate roll-backs, warning of the harm such decisions could cause. Tinisha Bookhart, co-founder and director of IT and DE&I at Primary Talent Partners, described the move to abandon diversity programs as deeply troubling. "When implemented correctly, DE&I solutions aim to provide opportunities to qualified individuals who, due to conscious or unconscious bias, might not otherwise have them. Abandoning DE&I altogether is a grave misstep that only serves to perpetuate existing disparities in the workforce," she said.

In an interview with CWS 3.0, Omni Inclusive CEO Perry Charlton said corporations like Costco and Apple serve as shining examples of why DE&I matters. "Diversity in the contingent workforce is not just a moral imperative — it's an essential driver of innovation, growth, and long-term success. Abandoning these efforts now undermines progress and jeopardizes the future of equitable work environments," Charlton said.

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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.

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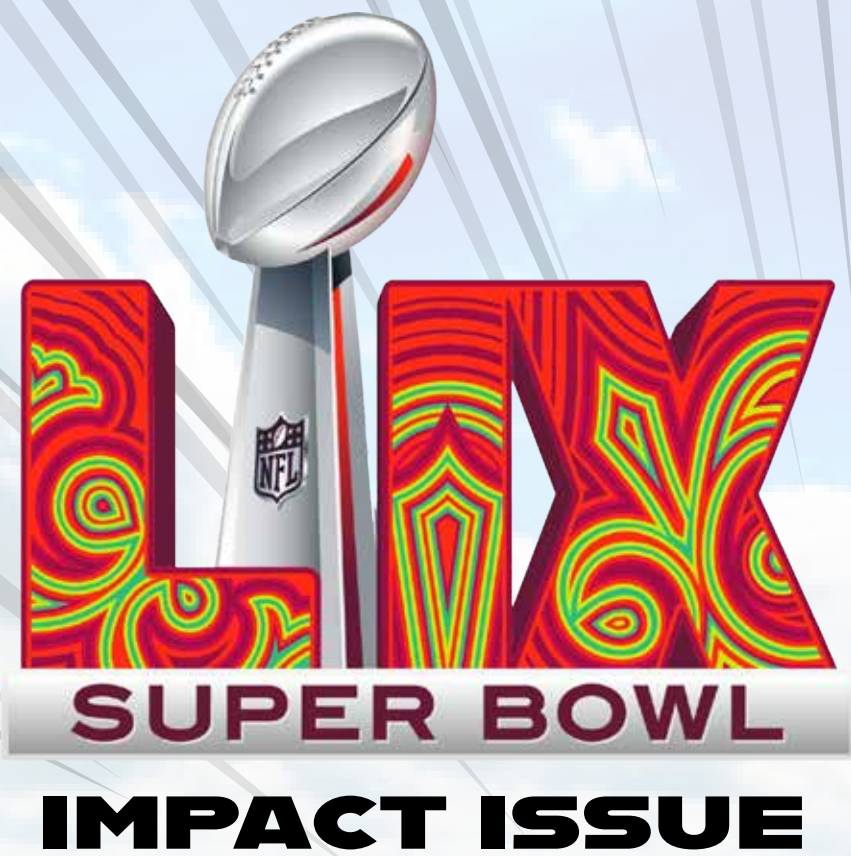


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