

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

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Nigel Barker
Capturing Fashion's
Defining Moments

Data Zone
Page 6

October 11 - October 17, 2025 60th Year Volume 25 www.ladatanews.com

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Data News Weekly Endorsements



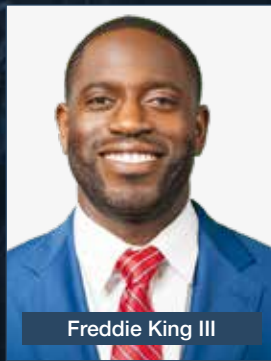
Helena Moreno



Delisha Boyd



JP Morrell



Freddie King III



Eugene Green



Jason Hughes



Edwin Shorty



Darren Lombard



Erroll Williams

Leadership for a Better New Orleans

VOTE OCTOBER 11th

Page 2



Newsmaker
Black Educators
Convene to Share
Strategies

Page 4

State & Local
Former
Lawmakers
Encourage HBCUs



Page 5

Data News Weekly Endorsements

Leadership for a Better New Orleans

VOTE OCTOBER 11th



Helena Moreno

Terry Jones
Publisher, Data News Weekly

A City at a Defining Moment

New Orleans stands at a crossroads. As our city continues to rebuild, reimagine, and reach for a brighter future, the decisions we make in this election will determine the direction of our neighborhoods, our economy, and our shared values for years to come. From City Hall to the Council Chambers, we need leaders who will act with integrity, transparency, and a true commitment to equity and progress.

Data News Weekly has always stood for leadership that listens, serves, and uplifts the people. After careful consideration, community dialogue, and evaluation of each candidate's record, we proudly present our endorsements for the October 11, 2025, election, men and women who embody competence, compassion, and courage in public service.

Helena Moreno for Mayor of New Orleans

Helena Moreno represents the best of what modern leadership in New Orleans can be: visionary, inclusive, and driven by results. As a seasoned public servant who has served with distinction on the New Orleans City Council and in the Louisiana Legislature, Moreno has consistently demonstrated her commitment to building a city that works for everyone.

Throughout her tenure, Moreno has been a tireless advocate for public safety reform, affordable housing, environmental resilience, and economic opportunity. Her pragmatic yet compassionate approach has earned her the trust of residents across political, racial, and socioeconomic lines. She has proven that she can bring people together, bridging divides in a city that too often struggles with fragmentation.

Her focus on transparency and accountability has reshaped expectations for local governance. Moreno's leadership has emphasized not just promises, but performance, ensuring that city contracts, services, and opportunities reflect fairness and inclusivity.

As mayor, Helena Moreno will bring a steady hand and a forward-thinking vision to City Hall. She understands that

Cover Story, Continued on page 3.

INSIDE DATA	
Cover Story	2
Newsmaker	4
State & Local News . .	5
Data Zone	6
Opinion	9
Commentary.	10
National News	11

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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

leadership in New Orleans requires balancing our historic identity with the demands of a changing world. Data News Weekly is proud to endorse Helena Moreno, a competent, compassionate bridge-builder ready to lead New Orleans into a new era of progress and possibility.



Delisha Boyd for City Council-at-Large, Division 1

Delisha Boyd has proven to be a dynamic and dedicated voice for her constituents as a State Representative. She has championed initiatives focused on neighborhood revitalization, public safety, youth engagement, and, most recently, anti-hazing on college campuses. Boyd understands that true progress begins at the community level and has worked tirelessly to ensure that residents have a seat at the table when critical decisions are made.

Her commitment to small business development and affordable housing has earned her widespread respect. Boyd's pragmatic approach, listening first, then acting decisively, reflects the kind of grounded leadership New Orleans needs at this moment. She has worked across lines of difference to deliver tangible results, all while maintaining her deep connection to the people she serves.

Data News Weekly proudly endorses Delisha Boyd and believes that her continued leadership will bring a vision that is inclusive of all people of New Orleans to the City Council.

JP Morrell for City Council-At-Large Division 2

JP Morrell's tenure on the New Orleans City Council has been marked by intellect, accountability, and bold reform. A lifelong New Orleanian and former State Legislator, Morrell brings a deep understanding of how city and state systems intersect, and how to make them work for the people.

Morrell has consistently advocated for fiscal responsibility and ethical governance, promoting greater transparency in city spending and



contracts. His leadership has been instrumental in modernizing city processes, promoting fairness, and ensuring that public resources benefit all citizens, not just a select few.

Known for his sharp policy acumen and fearless advocacy, Morrell continues to challenge the status quo in pursuit of a more equitable city government. Data News Weekly endorses JP Morrell for City Council-At-Large, recognizing his proven record of principled leadership and his unwavering dedication to building a more accountable, effective New Orleans.



Freddie King III for City Council, District C

Councilmember Freddie King III has brought energy, accessibility, and authenticity to his role representing District C. From Algiers to the French Quarter, King has shown up for his constituents, listening to their concerns and acting decisively on issues of infrastructure, public safety, and economic revitalization.

King's leadership has been rooted in service. He has fought to improve drainage systems, address quality-of-life issues, and ensure that residents' voices are heard in city planning. His approachable nature and strong work ethic have earned him respect across political and community lines.

Freddie King embodies the kind of practical leadership needed to move the city forward, responsive, results-oriented, and rooted in the realities of everyday people. Data News Weekly proudly endorses

Freddie King III for re-election to City Council District C, confident that he will continue to champion the needs of his constituents with integrity and vision.



Eugene Green for City Council, District D

Councilmember Eugene Green has demonstrated steady, community-centered leadership that reflects both wisdom and experience. A lifelong advocate for economic development and equitable opportunity, Green has prioritized initiatives that foster growth while protecting the character and heritage of New Orleans neighborhoods.

Green's background in business and public service has informed his pragmatic approach to governance. He has worked to strengthen small business corridors, improve public safety, and expand access to Affordable Housing. His ability to balance development with inclusion makes him a trusted steward of progress.

As a voice of calm and consistency in city politics, Eugene Green continues to deliver results without fanfare, focusing on substance over showmanship. Data News Weekly endorses Eugene Green for re-election, recognizing his thoughtful leadership and enduring commitment to the people of New Orleans.



Jason Hughes for State Representative, City Council District E

Jason Hughes has been a strong, principled advocate for New Orleans as a State Representative. Known for his integrity, intelli-

gence, and compassion, Hughes has worked to expand economic opportunities and strengthen families across his district.

As one of the state's most effective legislators, Hughes has earned a reputation for bipartisanship and moral clarity. His leadership during times of crisis has been marked by humility and courage, and his legislative record reflects a deep belief in equity, justice, and opportunity for all citizens.

Hughes represents the next generation of Louisiana leadership, one that places people before politics. Data News Weekly proudly endorses Jason Hughes for New Orleans City Council District E. We are confident that his continued service will uplift New Orleans and serve as a model for effective, compassionate people focused leadership.



Edwin Shorty for New Orleans Criminal Sheriff

Edwin Shorty is a transformative that will bring competence, passion, vision, and accountability to one of the Criminal Sheriff's office. A dedicated advocate for public safety, he is dedicated to improving the quality of life for residents.

His deep roots in the Criminal Justice System as an Attorney and Constable inform his leadership style, which is hands-on, transparent, and driven by results. Shorty understands that the Criminal Sheriff's Office deserves a leader people can trust who will get the job done without excuses. He is a proven leader who will restore pride and stability to this important position.

Data News Weekly endorses Edwin Shorty, recognizing his tireless commitment to public safety.

Darren Lombard for Clerk of Criminal Court

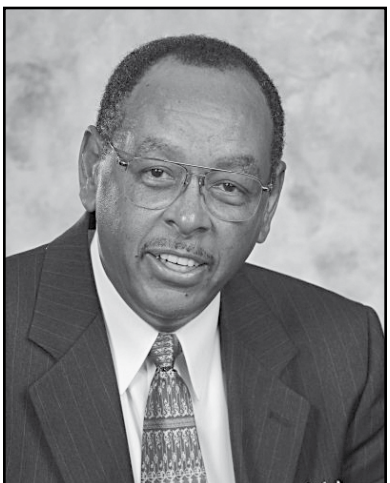
Darren Lombard has brought professionalism, modernization, and accountability to the Clerk of Criminal Court's Office. Since taking office, he has implemented reforms that improve efficiency, transparency, and public access to court records, making a complex system more responsive to citizens' needs.

Lombard's leadership reflects



his belief that justice must be both fair and functional. His efforts to digitize records, streamline court processes, and enhance collaboration with other agencies demonstrate his commitment to integrity in public service.

A lifelong public servant with a deep connection to the New Orleans community, Lombard continues to lead with competence and compassion. Data News Weekly endorses Darren Lombard for re-election, confident that his steady leadership will continue to strengthen public trust in the city's judicial institutions.



Erroll Williams for Orleans Parish Assessor

Data News Weekly proudly endorses Erroll Williams for re-election as Orleans Parish Assessor. With more than a decade of dedicated service, Williams has built a record defined by fairness, professionalism, and a commitment to transparency in one of the city's most essential offices.

Under his leadership, the Assessor's Office has modernized operations, improved accuracy in property assessments, and provided greater public access to information. Williams has worked diligently to ensure that assessments are equitable, that property owners understand their rights, and that all residents, whether homeowners or business owners are treated with respect and consistency.

A lifelong New Orleanian with

Cover Story, Continued on page 10.

Black Educators Convene to Share Strategies for Boosting the City's Public Schools

Story and Photos by
Daelyn House
Data News Contributors

Despite improved high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates, New Orleans students continue to lag behind their peers statewide in core curriculum subjects. This gap has pushed Black educators to work together to boost academic achievement through community-driven and peer-led solutions. With the new school year underway, Black educators from New Orleans are focusing on boosting student performance in the city's classroom.

"New Orleans is really special in that we are one of the cities in the country that has an amazing legacy of Black institutions, Black teachers, Black schools that have been shaping the minds of Black



Leon Waters, guest speaker for the Black Is Brilliant Summit, speaks during a discussion session at Xavier University of Louisiana.

children since the beginning," said Adrinda Kelly, the Founding Executive Director of Be NOLA Black Education for New Orleans.

Kelly spoke on local initiatives

to improve student achievement as part of the "Black is Brilliance Summit" on Saturday, Oct. 4, 2025, hosted by BE NOLA at Xavier University of Louisiana's Campus. The



Adrinda Kelly speaks during a breakout session at the Black Is Brilliant Summit at Xavier University of Louisiana.

event provided a space for local educators to share strategies, connect with peers, exchange ideas, and tell the stories of why they became educators, all while inspiring

one another and spreading a sense of community.

"To be Black and brilliant is to have this deep confidence in knowing who you are and why you are here," said Kelly, highlighting the summit's focus on empowering educators through self-knowledge and heritage.

The summit empowered educators and students through self-knowledge and heritage, while addressing the challenges Black-led schools face in gaining recognition. Educators pointed to some successes out of New Orleans Public Schools including Benjamin Franklin High School's ranking as the number 1 in Louisiana High Schools and a national ranking of number 99 by the U.S. News and World Report with a graduation

Newsmaker, Continued on page 8.

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State & Local News

Former Lawmakers Encourage HBCUs Students to Remain Engaged Despite State of National Politics

Story and Photos by
Deon Arnold
Data News Weekly
Contributor

In a show of bi-partisan support and as Congress continues to remain polarized, two former members of Congress are visiting Historically Black Universities across the country, hoping that in presenting a unified front, they will be able to cut

this country is not sustainable," said former U.S. Rep. Abby Finkenauer, D-Iowa, when she spoke to Xavier University of Louisiana students during a stop in New Orleans. "We need leadership that tones down the rhetoric and finds bipartisan solutions. Leadership means ensuring guns aren't in the hands of those who shouldn't have them."

Finkenauer made the comments in response to the death of right-

wing conservative personality Charlie Kirk, who was murdered on a college campus on Sept. 10th, while she engaged students about challenges facing American Democracy from attacks on freedom of speech to misinformation and cuts in funding to higher education.

Finkenauer (D-Iowa) visited campuses in the city along with former U.S. Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-Va) and the bi-partisan duo say that since they left Washington, many members of the Former Members of Congress Association hope to continue advocacy in communities, from protecting civil liberties to advocating for social justice.

Finkenauer, who works on youth social justice issues, said

that while Kirk's death grabbed global headlines, gun violence remains the leading cause of death among U.S. children and teens, surpassing car accidents in 2020, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Johns Hopkins University reported that firearms killed more than 2,526 children and teens in 2022 alone.

across divisions among voters and the political tensions in the country. From rising political violence in the country to the support HBCUs need given changes in federal funding, they hope to restore hope in young people to inspire the next generation of public servants.

"From gun violence to political extremism, what we're seeing in



Members of the Former Members of Congress Association former U.S. Rep. Abby Finkenauer, D-Iowa and former U.S. Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-Va. Are travelling the country, speaking at HBCUs to provide a bi-partisan front given polarization in the electorate and in Washington, D.C.



Xavier University of Louisiana students engage former Congressional Representatives on what can be done to address political polarization and the state of American Democracy during a visit to New Orleans.

Roll to the Polls

FARE FREE DAY

October 11TH - Election Day

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Through the Lens

Nigel Barker Capturing Fashion's Defining Moments



Tracee Dundas
Fashion Stylist

Photos: Courtesy of
Nigel Barker &
Sergio Arturo Cabrera

For more than three decades, Nigel Barker has viewed fashion through a rare dual lens—first as a model on the world's most iconic runways, then as a photographer

Data Zone,
Continued on page 7.



Delisha Boyd
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#28
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ELECTION DAY: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2025
EARLY VOTING: SEPTEMBER 27 - OCTOBER 4

PAID FOR BY DELISHA DELIVERS RESULTS

Delisha Boyd is a self made business leader, state representative and community advocate. But most importantly, Delisha is a mother and grandmother who wants a brighter future for all of New Orleans.

Since taking office in the Louisiana House in November 2021, Delisha has **authored legislation** standing up for our homeowners, fighting insurance companies, advocating for transparency on local boards, strengthening continuing education for state claims adjusters and championing mental health initiatives.

VISION & PRIORITIES

- Economic Empowerment & Equity**
As a business owner, Delisha has witnessed firsthand the challenges facing entrepreneurs, especially women and women of color. She will work to expand economic opportunities, enforce living wage standards, and champion equitable pay.
- Infrastructure & Public Safety**
Delisha will leverage state relationships to secure resources for improved roads, public spaces, and community services. Ensuring safety is fundamental—Delisha supports community policing and critical initiatives like restoring the Judicial Security Task Force following the Orleans jail break.
- Education & Public Services**
Delisha will support strengthening teacher pay, enhancing mental health access, and developing youth-focused initiatives.
- Housing & Fairness**
Housing should be a right, not a privilege. As a longtime real estate broker, I will enforce fair housing guidelines and accessible homeownership.

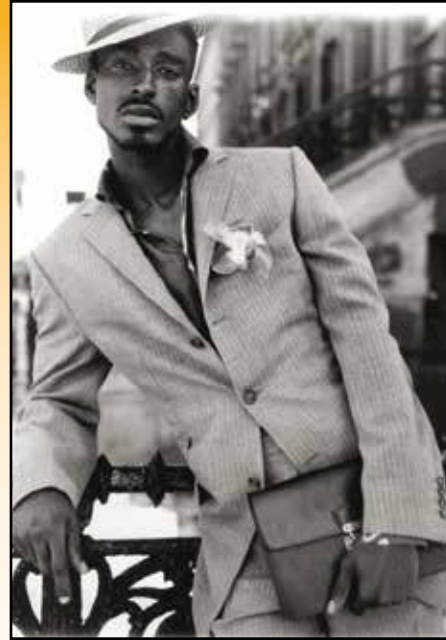
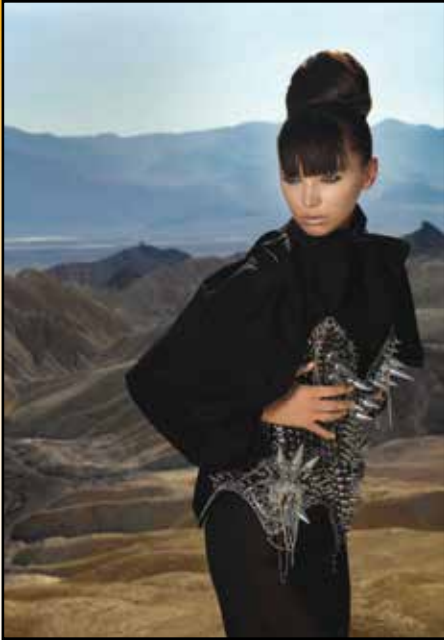
"Having built a successful real estate business from the ground up, I am passionate about fostering economic growth in New Orleans. My extensive experience in business principles and practices has equipped me with the insights needed to revitalize our economy. Our city is uniquely positioned to attract businesses, by capitalizing on regional cooperation, higher education, and business-minded leadership."

Delisha



ENDORSED BY:





Data Zone, Continued from page 6.

capturing their magic. His work reflects a mastery of storytelling, light, and emotion, portraying fashion not just as style, but as culture in motion.

New Orleans Fashion Week was thrilled to host Nigel for an unforgettable evening at Longue Vue Gardens. The renowned photographer, author, and former America's Next Top Model Judge captivated the audience with behind-the-lens stories from his amazing career, offering rare insight into the creative process that defines his artistry. Accompanying his fireside chat was an incredible slide presentation highlighting his work and his discerning eye from America's Next Top Model, where he helped shape iconic moments

in modern fashion photography alongside Tyra Banks. His ability to connect, inspire, and entertain left the audience in awe.

Adding a delicious twist, guest that attended the event enjoyed the Barker Espresso Martini—Nigel's next project, a ready-to-serve creation that perfectly matched the evening's sophistication. In recognition of his contributions to fashion and creative excellence, the newly formed Fashion Council of New Orleans proudly presented him with an honorary membership.

It was a night that celebrated artistry, inspiration, and the transformative power of fashion—through the eyes of one of industry's most respected photographers.



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#8



Re-Elect
Eugene GREEN
City Council, District D

Dear Friend,
As the New Orleans Councilman for District D, I am reaching out to ask for your support and to seek your help in my re-election campaign. Together, we have built a stronger city, and there's still much more work to be done.

Thank you for your support!

Endorsed by the Following Organizations:



Election Date: Saturday, October 11th

RE-ELECT
JP MORRELL
CITY COUNCIL AT-LARGE
DIVISION 2

#33



ELECTION DAY
OCT. 11

@jpmorrell

PAID FOR BY FRIENDS OF JP MORRELL



News maker, Continued from page 4.

rate of over 95-percent. Ben Franklin's Principal, Dr. Kendall McManus-Thomas has worked across New Orleans Charter Schools and is a graduate of Xavier University of Louisiana's Educational Leadership Graduate Program.

"I think that, to be honest, a lot of Black education is getting overshadowed, and when I say Black education, I mean they have a Black leadership and they have a Black governing board," said Stevona Elem-Rogers,



Jasmine Johnson, Founder of Twerk NOLA, leads participants in a dance activity during the Black Is Brilliant Summit at Xavier University of Louisiana.



Andrea Heard, a New Orleans educator, stands by a desk and says, "I work for children," during the Black Is Brilliant Summit at Xavier University of Louisiana.

BE NOLA's Chief of Community Programs and partnerships and coordinator of the Black is Brilliant Summit.

Rogers pushed back on the characterization of Black education in New Orleans as being defined by low-income status, "Black education is not a monolith. Half of us who are Black people in America are a step away from being in any given class, so taking care of our kids in that way is really important," Elem-Rogers said

According to the latest Louisiana Department of Education Data the New Orleans Public Schools are trailing behind statewide. About 24-percent of students in grades 3 through 8 scored "mastery or higher" in Math, compared to 33-percent statewide, and 37-percent reached that level in Language Arts, versus 43-percent statewide. Parents gave the city's schools a "C" in a 2024 Tulane University Survey.

"You need knowledge in order to fuel yourself into whatever you're going to do next," said Andrea Heard, a New Orleans Educator. "Education is an important staple anywhere you go. It is your power; it is your leverage," Heard said, defining education's purpose as the acquisition of knowledge, which she framed as a tool for personal revolution and empowerment.

"Your knowledge can't be taken from you. It's your tool to fight," Heard said.

VOTE

Defending Democracy

Why Louisiana v. Callais Demands Our Support for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund



Vincent T. Sylvain
Publisher, The New Orleans
Agenda | Convener, Louisiana
Unity Coalition, National
Coalition on Black Civic
Participation (NCBCP)

community's voice is heard. That promise is now on trial in Louisiana v. Callais—a landmark case before the U.S. Supreme Court that will

determine whether Louisiana's newly drawn congressional map, which includes two majority-Black districts, honors the Voting Rights Act or violates the Constitution.

At the center of this fight stands the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF), led by Attorney Stuart Naifeh, whose advocacy is not just legal—it is moral, historical, and deeply rooted in the struggle for Racial Justice. Their argument is clear: the 2024 map, enacted after years of litigation and community mobilization, finally reflects the political power of Black Louisianians, who make up one-third of our state's popula-

tion. It corrects the injustice of the 2022 map, which offered only one district where Black voters had a meaningful opportunity to elect candidates of their choice.

Opponents claim that race played too dominant a role in the redistricting process. But this critique ignores the reality of Systemic Discrimination and the legal mandate of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, which requires states to ensure fair representation for historically marginalized communities. As Naifeh and the LDF Team argued before the Court, the new map satisfies both the VRA and the Equal Protection

Clause of the 14th Amendment—a balance that is not only lawful but essential to a functioning Multiracial Democracy.

Let us be clear: this case is not just about lines on a map. It is about the soul of our democracy. It is about whether Black voters in Louisiana—and across the nation—will continue to be denied equal political power through gerrymandering cloaked in Constitutional Rhetoric. It is about whether the Supreme Court will uphold decades of precedent that protect the right to vote for all Americans, not just the privileged few.

As someone who has witnessed

the resilience of New Orleans communities and worked to amplify their voices, I stand firmly with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Their work in Louisiana v. Callais is a continuation of the Legacy of Thurgood Marshall, Charles Hamilton Houston, and so many others who fought to make democracy real for all.

We must not allow this moment to pass quietly. We must raise our voices, support the LDF, and demand that the Supreme Court affirm the right of Black Louisianians to be fairly represented. Because when democracy is on trial, silence is complicity.

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LIFE

ELECTION DAY: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2025

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Wake Up Youth, It's Time to Mobilize for Our Future



Terrol Perkins
Data News Weekly Contributor

It has always been my belief that, in our Political System, the power of one to cast a ballot equates to that person expressing their voice in society. In a Democracy as diverse and ever-growing as ours, it is natural for different groups to seek to expand political influence and support officeholders who champion their specific issues. Whether it be the immigration situation that resonates with the Hispanic Community

or the fight for governmental/corporate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs to promote equity for African Americans, every demographic group in our country seeks to exercise voting power in order to advocate for their respective agenda of progress.

Although the United States is the wealthiest country in the world and proudly identifies as to having the largest economy among the community of nations, many of our citizens do not feel the benefits of this privilege. In many areas of this country, Americans are struggling to survive, with many having to work multiple jobs weekly just to avoid being homeless and to care for their children. The rising cost of living is affecting generations of American citizens, deterring some from purchasing homes and reconsidering whether to obtain a college

education due to increasing student loan costs. In my opinion, the Demographic Group that is affected by the rapidly changing economic/social domestic situation is America's youth. We are the people who will have to grapple with the problems of this nation for years to come, and it is time for more of us to become politically engaged and concerned about the state of our nation.

As stated earlier, seeking to live comfortably on a financial level in the United States is becoming increasingly more difficult due to inflation, rising healthcare costs, expensive housing, higher education tuition expenses, etc. Frannie Comstock, a writer for Consumer Affairs, states, "Baby boomers paid an inflation-adjusted average of \$3,519 for tuition at a public college, compared to \$9,750 in 2023 — a 177% increase. The cost of private college tuition has also risen by 158%,

from \$13,639 in 1973 to \$35,248 five decades later" (pg. 1). Because of this information alone, it would be logical to assume that young people over the age of 18 have one of the highest voter turnout rates, that the youth vigorously support candidates who preach student loan forgiveness, and that we seek out political rising stars who propose tangible policies to make this economy more affordable. However, both on the national level and in local instances, this scenario of high youth participation is not happening. Estelle Anderson, a journalist for The Tufts Daily, asserts, "approximately 42% of young voters ages 18 to 29 voted during the 2024 Presidential Election, representing a lower youth turnout rate than the 2020 Presidential Election" (pg. 1). These data results are particularly alarming because they indicate that many young voters are not enthu-

siastic nor engaged about being active participants in our political process.

The trend of America's youth not being particularly interested in the political process must change! More of us need to understand that politics translates into policy that effects our entire nation and, yes, our day-to-day lives. It is for this reason that I am urging Americans in my age group to get involved at the local level by joining community organizations that advocate for positive changes where you live, at the state level to make sure that your state leaders are fighting for your future; and at the national level to ensure that our lawmakers are moving America forward and not leaving us behind! Never let anyone tell you that your vote doesn't matter because, in our country, your vote is your voice, and you should refuse to be silenced!

IMPORTANT MUST READ PRESS RELEASE

Sept. 16, 2025

Registrar of Voters Reminds Residents About Upcoming City Council District Adjustments.

New Orleans, LA — The City of New Orleans reminds all residents that, in accordance with **Section 3-103(2) of the City's Home Rule Charter and Ordinance No. 28968** of March 2022, changes were approved for some wards and precincts that may affect **City Council Districts**.

Although these adjustments won't take effect administratively until the new council is seated in **January 2026**, some voters may notice changes on their **upcoming Oct. 11, 2025, ballots**.

Before any **election**, the **Registrar of Voters** encourages residents to **verify their voter registration**, voting locations, and districts using the online voter portal at **geauxvote.com**, by downloading the **free GeauxVote mobile app**, or by contacting the **Orleans Parish Registrar of Voters**.

Sample ballots are also available through the portal and app to confirm the candidates available on the **voter's ballot**.

For **more information** about the redistricting process, including maps, **visit nola.gov/council-maps**.

If voters have additional **questions**, **contact the Orleans Parish Registrar of Voters at (504) 658-8300. ###**

Cover Story, Continued from page 3.

deep ties to the community, Williams understands that fair assessments form the foundation for a stable local economy and public trust in government. His steady hand and integrity have earned him bipartisan respect and the confidence of citizens citywide.

For continued professionalism, accountability, and fair property valuation that serves all New Orleanians, Data News Weekly endorses Erroll Williams for Orleans Parish Assessor.

A Call to Civic Engagement

The future of New Orleans depends on leaders who listen, act, and deliver. But it also depends on you, the voter. Democracy only works when we show up. These candidates represent the best of our city's potential: integrity, inclusion, and innovation.

On October 11, 2025, Data News Weekly urges every eligible voter to make their voice heard. Together, let's continue building a New Orleans where opportunity, equity, and excellence define our next chapter.

State & Local, Continued from page 5.

Goodlatte, who served 13 terms in the House of Representatives, added that criminalization of minors for nonviolent offenses like vaping and edibles is cluttering the Criminal Justice System and hardening low level offenses from a young age. He said that education, not punishment, is the best course of action to take. "The answer isn't giving kids felonies," Goodlatte said on Sept. 15th.

"It's educating them about the long-term risks and limiting their access through tighter regulation," he added.

For instance, in states like Alabama in the Deep South, according to the Alabama Department of Public Health, minors caught with vape pens or synthetic gummies can face felony charges under new legislation signed in 2024. Critics, including youth advocates, warn that such policies disproportionately affect Black and low-income teenagers while doing little to address addiction or health risks.

Both representatives pointed to the role of HBCUs in shaping future leaders. Goodlatte praised Xavier for creating an environment where students can thrive. "HBCUs like Xavier provide a comfortable and supportive environment," he said. "They are critical for offering choice and fostering leadership."

Their remarks echo recent federal reports showing that HBCUs make up just 3-percent of all universities nationwide but produce nearly 20 percent of all Black graduates, according to the U.S. Department of Education. Despite this outsized role, HBCUs have historically received fewer resources compared to predominantly White institutions, a gap advocates continue to push Washington to address.

Finkenauer shared her own struggles with misogyny, threats, and misinformation while in Congress, tying them to a national rise in extremism and local violence. She said she supports stricter background checks, red flag laws, and face-to-face dialogue to restore civility in politics.

"The only way forward is to humanize each other," she said. "We need more conversations like the one we had here today."

Students said the former representatives motivated them to think differently about politics and their own role in shaping the future. "There's no other way to get around polarization than through connection," said Donovan Armstead, a Xavier student who attended the campus visit. "We live in a representative democracy, so it should definitely be about compromise. This is everybody's country."

Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provided this guide on Autism Spectrum Disorder as part of a series of briefs that offer basic information about common disabilities and tips for educators as they support children with disabilities.

Overview

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental disorder that leads to distinctive social, communication, and behavioral strengths and challenges. A diagnosis of ASD now includes what used to be a few separate autism diagnoses: autistic disorder, pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS), and Asperger Syndrome. ASD is a

spectrum disorder, which means that each person with autism has a unique set of strengths and challenges.

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), a guide created by the American Psychiatric Association for diagnosing psychological disorders, people with ASD show:

- Difficulty communicating and interacting with other people
- Highly specific interests and repetitive behaviors
- Symptoms that affect the person's ability to function in school, at home, and in other areas of life
- Symptoms for ASD generally appear by age 2 or 3, and it can be diagnosed as early as 18 months. While research shows that early intervention can lead to positive outcomes later in life, many children are diagnosed at a much

later age. The first step to supporting a child showing signs of ASD is identification. Some early signs of ASD can include little to no babbling or noise-making, delayed language development, little to no response to name, or avoiding interactions like eye contact, back-and-forth exchanges, and gesturing.

Support Strategies

- Educators can implement a variety of strategies to support a positive experience for children with ASD in their learning environment.
- If the child already has an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP), coordinate with the intervention team.
- Provide structured routines, transitions, and environments.

- Display a daily schedule with pictures of routines and activities.
- Use visual cue cards during transitions and routines to help the child predict next steps.
- Let the child know ahead of time that a transition is coming.
- Gradually increase the time the child is expected to remain on task during learning activities.
- Create, read, and discuss personalized "social stories" or "teaching stories" with the child to help them prepare for or cope with various situations.
- Create verbal and nonverbal communication opportunities.
- Create and use picture cards to cue transitions and routines.
- Create a communication book — with pictures of items or activities the child enjoys or may need to communicate about — that the child can use to communicate

- with others.
- Offer wait time for the child to verbalize ideas or requests.
- Read familiar, repetitive books and provide opportunities for the child to fill in the blanks.
- Limit the time spent with desired items and activities so that the child is motivated to request them again.
- Support positive social interactions.
- Use first-ten boards and cue cards to support the child while engaging in turn-taking activities.
- Model, prompt, and reinforce appropriate responses to common greetings and interactions.
- Create and repeatedly read social stories with the child. Include pictures along with descriptions of activities, others' feelings, and directives about how the child can respond in the situation.



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Entergy is proud to call New Orleans home. More than 2,000 members of the Entergy family live in New Orleans, and that's why we're committed to doing more for our neighbors and communities. Our team is working on new projects across the city to reduce outages while working hard to keep our rates 20% below the national average.

And we power New Orleans in more ways than one. Our operations alone generated nearly \$20 million in tax revenue for the city. We're proud to power our hometown, and we'll never stop working as hard as we can to build a stronger, brighter future for New Orleans.

Learn more at [EnergizeNewOrleans.com](https://www.energizeneworleans.com).

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