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New Orleans

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News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

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**Area Residents
Reflect on
President-Elect
Obama's Victory**



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Barack Obama

and the **American Dream**



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Barack Obama and the American Dream



by Edwin Buggage

History in the Making

In the not so distant past, the U.S seemed hopelessly tied to a legacy of racial strife and animosity and to a history where some of its citizens were locked out of fulfilling the true meaning of the American Dream. Tuesday Nov. 4, 2008 was a watershed moment that has shattered that perception

forever. The election of Barack Obama as the nation's 44th President has sent a sign that this nation has racially matured to vote for a person not based on the color of his skin, but by the content of his character.

Barack Obama was the winner of a hotly contested election where everything was thrown out by

the opposition to thwart his message of hope and change. When he was declared the victor, a tide of emotion overcame many as people from around the globe celebrated a campaign that promised hope and change. And while the world celebrated his triumph, the election held a special place for African-Americans. Throughout their experiences

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in America, African-Americans have had to endure the hardships of the dark days in this country's past where those of talent and in-

ences and didn't fall victim to tribalism, nativism, and xenophobia that have been such an integral part of conservative American

And it was this same man who spoke of a blank check marked insufficient funds on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial during the March on Washington in 1963. But on Inauguration Day 2009, this check will be cashed in the bank of redemption for America and what it stands for. This day is

generation has become an inspiration.

Across the globe he has become a symbol for change, and not since the storied days of J.F.K. have citizens been so engaged in the political process. And his ascension has caused a psychological shift in the way people view race and view

red baiting and questioning one's patriotism were evident in an attempt to polarize the electorate. But as this election has ended, it is time for this nation to heal, to close the wounds so that it can become a great nation moving forward into the 21st century as one nation, under God, indivisible,

“It's been a long time coming, but tonight, because of what we did on this day, in this election, at this defining moment, change has come to America.

—President-Elect Barack Obama on Election Night.”

telligence were not able to realize their full potential simply because of their race. On this night many saw history unfold right before their eyes with streams of tears rolling down the cheeks of countless Americans for they thought they would never live to see this day. In this transformative moment Americans voted across racial and class lines for an African-American. The election of Obama is a poignant symbol that this nation has turned the page on a sad part of its history, using the polls to proclaim that today is the beginning of a new day.

One Nation....One People

Americans on this day helped usher in change with their collective voices at the ballot box, and on this joyous day it was hard to imagine that this nation less than a half a century ago grappled with African-Americans fighting for their rights as full citizens in this land of liberty. Today an African-American will occupy the White House; today citizens in this nation came together to support President-Elect Obama taking heed to his messages and saying, “We can change America,” and “Yes We Can.”

The election of this new President is a turning point in America history, where like-minded people moved beyond superficial differ-

political strategy for the last 40 years. Today, with Obama's resounding victory, the politics that places fear and division at its center fanning the flames of resent-



President-Elect Obama delivers a speech with several American flags as his backdrop.

ment may have been permanently extinguished.

The Fulfillment of the Dream

Jan. 20, 2009, Inauguration Day, will coincide with the celebration of MLK Day this year and will hold a special significance. In this year's race for the presidency, the nation paid tribute to a man who, 40 years ago fell victim to an assassin's bullet that ended the life of a man who dared to dream.

more than a victory for the Obama campaign, but a victory for hope, a victory for love, and a victory for the dawning of a new day for this country where anyone regardless of their background can aspire to reach for goals that not long ago were thought of as unthinkable. These goals are now possible and through hard work and sacrifice, African-Americans can be the best that they can be. Barack Obama's candidacy and ascension to the highest office in the land for this



President-Elect Obama speaks out to supporters while on the campaign trail prior to Nov. 4.

America, but its long term impact will not be known immediately. Barack Obama's win is a positive sign that hope trumped fear, and that this country is on the road to charting a new path for itself in a world where increasingly nations of the world are more interdependent on one another. And where old ideas concerning the nation have been challenged in the face of redefining what America represents in the 21st century; Obama is the drum major of this sea of change and is a transformational figure who can march this country back to its rightful place in the global community.

Towards Becoming a More Perfect Union

His election has made America examine itself concerning its core beliefs and values. This election cycle has run the gamut showing Americans at their best working together to prove how far this nation has come. Diverse people who came to these shores on different ships in search of the American Dream now recognize they are in the same boat trying to stay afloat. And conversely it has also shown Americans at their worse where

with liberty and justice for all.

For on the historic day of Nov. 4, the people spoke and chose Barack Obama, to lead this country in a new direction. Where we will end up and what his legacy will be...only time will tell. But Nov. 4, 2008 will forever be etched into the minds of people around the world, for on this day history was made and the audacity of hope became a reality. On this day as people cheered, cried and celebrated, the accomplishment of the evening was one giant step for Obama the man, but on this day it was an even greater step for mankind toward becoming a place where the only race that matters will be the human race. The U.S. has taken a step in that direction by electing Barack Obama its 44th President; and in doing so, has made people believe anything is possible in this great country. As Lady Liberty's light shines a little brighter today, we take another step toward becoming a more perfect union.

Obama Vows to Confront Economic Crisis 'Head On'

Zenitha Price
NNPA Columnist

(NNPA)- With an ailing economy needing immediate attention, President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden had little reprieve before they were huddled, three days after his election, with a 17-member transitional council of economic advisers.

The advisers included former Treasury Secretaries Lawrence Summers and Robert Rubin, former Fed Chairman Paul Volcker, billionaire businessman Warren Buffett and other leaders in business and politics.

"I do not underestimate the enormity of the task that lies ahead," Obama told reporters at the Hilton Hotel in Chicago at his first post-election news conference. "We have taken some major action to date, and we will take further action."

Obama said that passing a stimulus package will be his first move if the lame-duck Congress fails to do so before he takes office Jan. 20.

Those looking for a detailed, in-depth policy briefing from the president-elect's first press outing, which was held immediately after his council of economic advisers' meeting, were disappointed.

"I don't feel like we got any more detail than we got during his campaign," said Heidi Shierholz, an economist with the Economic Policy Institute based in Washington, D.C.

Obama defended the paucity of new information by asserting that "the United States only has one government and one president

at a time and until Jan. 20 of next year, that government is the current administration."

His intention, it seemed, was to project an air of confidence and ease anxiety about his administration's commitment and ability to restore the nation's economy to an even keel.

"Immediately after I become president I am going to confront this economic crisis head on by taking all necessary steps to ease the credit crisis, help hard-working families and restore growth and prosperity," said Obama, surrounded by Rahm Emanuel, his pick for chief of staff, and his economic advisers, who he said were already working on developing "a strong set of policies" to respond to the crisis.

"Some of the choices we make are going to be difficult," he continued. "It is not going to be quick and easy to dig ourselves out of the hole that we're in. But America is a strong and resilient country and I know we will succeed if we put aside partisanship and politics and work together as one nation. That's what I intend to do."

The Obama-Biden appearance came on the heels of more dour economic news. According to the Labor Department's monthly jobs report issued Nov. 7, 240,000 jobs were lost in October, increasing the tally of lost jobs to 1.2 million this year and pushing the unemployment rate up to 6.5 percent. The nation hasn't seen such a towering jobless rate in 14 years.

And as corporate giants falter, it's expected to get worse.

Also on Nov. 7, Ford Motor Co. said it may have to cut staff and stem spending after a \$3 billion



President-Elect Barack Obama

operating loss in the last quarter. And limping auto behemoth General Motors Corp. announced it bled a copious \$4.2 billion in losses and that it, too, is in danger of running out of cash.

This "hardship goes far beyond the individual auto companies to the countless suppliers, small businesses and communities throughout our nation who depend on a vibrant American auto industry," Obama said. "The auto industry is the backbone of American manufacturing and a critical part of our attempt to reduce our dependence on foreign oil."

The President-Elect said he would like to see President Bush push through the resources for retooling the auto industry that Congress has already OKed and reiterated his commitment to investing in alternative sources of

energy.

More generally, he renewed his commitment to carefully overseeing the administration of the \$850 billion Wall Street bailout package and to championing a short-term and long-term rescue plan for the middle-class, an issue on which he spoke with the most authority.

"One thing I can say with certainty is we're going to need to see a stimulus package passed," Obama said, emphasizing his preference to see it passed "sooner rather than later."

"If it doesn't get done during the lame duck session of Congress, it will be the first thing I get done as president of the United States," he added.

In addition to a stimulus package, Obama said he would also extend unemployment insurance benefits and award tax cuts to 95 percent of working-class families.

"The kind of stimulative elements they're talking about are the right ones," Shierholz, the economist, said.

On the uppermost question in people's minds, however—Obama's choice for treasury secretary—he said not a word.

Some names being bandied about so far include Summers and Volcker, who, as Obama's current advisors may have an inside track.

Summers was the World Bank's chief economist from 1991 to 1993. From July 1999 to January 2001 he served as treasury secretary under President Bill Clinton.

Volcker, an investment banker by trade, served as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board under Presidents Carter and Reagan and headed the investigation into the U.N. oil-for-food program for Iraq.

Also in the running is Timothy Geithner, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Geithner has the advantage of being already baptized in the crucible of the current financial crisis. Earlier this year, he helped steer the acquisition of Bear Stearns by JPMorgan Chase and the bailouts of American International Group Inc. and Lehman Brothers.

"There's no doubt people want to know who's going to make up our team. And I want to move with all deliberate haste but I want to emphasize 'deliberate' as well as 'haste,'" he said.

"I'm proud of the choice I made of vice president partly because we did it right. I'm proud of the choice we made of chief of staff because we thought it through, I think it's important in all these key positions to get it right and not be so rushed that we end up making mistakes."

Obama's Election-Eve Message to Black People: 'You Have Done This'

Hazel Trice Edney
NNPA Columnist

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – In perhaps the most candid direct message to Black people since his Democratic nomination, then Democratic Presidential nominee Barack Obama, on election eve Monday, credited Black voters for his historic political rise, promising to make a difference in their lives if elected.

"Everyone under the sound of my voice understands the struggles we face. Everyone understands the fierce urgency of now. You all know what's at stake in this election," Obama said in a live telephone conference with Black leaders Monday morning.

The "listen only" call included a spectrum of speakers, including civil rights icon Rev. Joseph Lowery, Oprah Winfrey, Democratic strategist Donna Brazile, rapper

Sean "Diddy" Combs, and Democratic Whip Jim Clyburn.

Obama listed a string of issues disparately faced by African-Americans, including the struggle to recruit good teachers and, the struggle against under-funded schools, double digit jobless rates and having to work two and three jobs to make ends meet.

"I mention these issues because this community, our community, the African-American community,

during these challenging times, suffers more than most in this country," he said. "Double digit inflation, double digit unemployment, stagnant wages, our kids are more likely to drop out, more likely to be in jail, more likely to die. We're going to have to do better. And if we continue the momentum we've seen across this country over the last several weeks, we can do better."

Obama credited his success in

key states to the record turnout of Black voters that had already participated in early voting.

Pollsters show near Black solidarity behind Obama, about 95 percent.

"We've seen record turnouts for early voting among African-Americans in states that have not been in the Democratic column

*See Election-Eve
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President-Elect Obama's Win Inspires Young African-Americans

Drew Daniels
Data News Weekly
Contributor

As many African Americans tuned into their televisions on Nov. 4, thoughts of electing the first African American President crossed their minds as they patiently waited to see the results. While the states changed colors in front of the eyes of millions, the thought of America having an African American President became more than just a dream.

The historic significance of America electing its first African American President came to life at Grant Park in Chicago where President-Elect Barack Obama delivered his acceptance speech.

Boisterous groups chanted "Yes, We Can" and camera flashes flickered throughout Grant Park, as Obama celebrated his campaign victory to capture the top position in the nation.

Obama began the speech by telling the crowd if there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible; who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time; who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer.

In becoming the first African American President on Jan. 20, 2009, Obama will join a long list of African-Americans who broke through inequalities and made history in their chosen, and unchosen, lives. With strides made by influential leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Andrew Young, African Americans

are starting to feel more and more accepted in society.

"It's been a long time coming, but tonight, because of what we did on this day, in this election, at this defining moment, change has come to America," Obama said.

Obama supporters have been working diligently for two years to promote the campaign's mantra "Change You Can Believe In." The Obama campaign effectively used grassroots promoting tactics to gain supporters.

"Some of the activities included going from door to door making sure residents [were] registered to vote in the area [and] taking time to be included in the planning with others," said Brian Perkins, who served as a volunteer for the Obama campaign.

Perkins, 23, said he is overjoyed and happy about the results of this election, because of the unity showed across the board and cannot wait to see what will happen in his first years of candidacy.

Obama reaching victory by stringing together a series of crucial wins in battleground states, including Florida, California and Pennsylvania helped him capture the Presidential bid.

"This was the first Presidential campaign I worked on with my neighbor where I got to see the process of which we go in making voters voices and opinions really count," said Perkins.

Nationally, Obama won the election by five percent, getting 52 percent of the vote to McCain's 47 percent.

"I'm very overjoyed and happy about the result of this election,



President-Elect Barack Obama

because we showed so much unity," Perkins said. "I just can't wait to see what will happen during President Obama's first term because I think he will do excellent."

Faced with fixing the economy, providing affordable health care and restoring the country's standing abroad are challenges Obama will be faced with as soon as he steps into his new role of President.

"Besides the apparent two international wars and the sagging economy, his biggest challenge will be getting a nation to trust him," said Maurice Gipson, a law student in Baton Rouge, La. "Being a relative novice on the political stage, Obama is going to have

to convince the Nation as a whole that he is up to the challenge of leading this country into a new direction."

Obama's upcoming administration is supported with hopeful outlooks from the African American community.

Gipson, a Jurist Doctorate candidate at Southern

University Law Center, like many African Americans said he feels that Obama will serve as a beacon of light for young African Americans who never thought it would be possible to see someone who resembles them.

The Obama campaign was not the first to connect with the importance of connecting with young voters. Beginning 2002, both Democratic and Republican political youth organizations developed new tactics to gain their attention.

Students from Dillard University, Louisiana State, Loyola, Tulane and Xavier came in large numbers to support Obama in one of the most crucial Presidential elec-

tions, in recent American history.

According to an analysis by political analyst and commentator James Carville, young voters were crucial to Obama's victory in toss-up states like Indiana, Ohio, Virginia and North Carolina. Carville, former chief strategist for Bill Clinton's 1992 campaign, said the exit polling indicates young voters increased their share of the electorate to 18 percent.

Michael Sanders, Xavier University alumnus 2008, said many of the issues being discussed by Obama are relevant to college students. Issues played a vital part in this year's election. Voters found themselves voting for issues and change from the past party in office.

"Many college students are now coming into health care and coming into social security [taxes] which made college students the target audience for this election," Sanders said.

For young African Americans, seeing someone who they can relate to played a major deciding factor in who they voted for. History has been made with Obama capturing the Presidential candidacy.

"With this being a historic election, this is the first time I have ever witnessed anything different from the classic white male running for President," Sanders added.

Obama's victory offers inspiration for all.

Election-Eve continued from previous page.

for a generation," he said. "States like Georgia where we're seeing lines going around the block, people waiting for four, five and eight hours."

Also citing historic get out to vote efforts in North Carolina and Virginia, Obama said, "Our campaign is alive and thriving in all of these states as well as Florida and Ohio. And mainly it's because of an energized African-American community. You have done this. Through your hard work, your commitment to this movement, you have forever changed the political landscape of this country and we have to keep working to

keep up the enthusiasm. We're seeing things like we've never seen before."

In a euphoric moment, Obama, running comfortably ahead of his Republican opponent Sen. John McCain in most polls, imagined how a Black family in the White House would change America beyond public policy.

"I'm convinced that not only are we going to change this country, but we're going to change this community," he said. "We're going to change our sons, our daughters, our grandchildren, how they look at themselves. We're going to transform barri-

ers in the world. We're going to change the hearts and minds of people around the world. That's a powerful thing. That's more powerful than any policy out there and any governmental program," he said.

He described his family in the White House.

"I can imagine Mahalia and Sasha running on the South Lawn and Michelle with her elegant self. And I say to myself that that's the kind of signal that will indicate that change really has come and that America has moved beyond the shadows," he said. "I hope all of you guys feel that same excite-

ment and that same soberness. And I hope that in the next 36 hours, we do everything in our power to make sure that we bring this reality about."

Recalling the civil rights movement, Obama says he owes the Black community.

"There's a lot of debts that are out there, a lot of obligation that I feel toward people who sacrificed far more than I did," he said. "A lot of people who preceded us, people who came before us and maybe didn't think they'd ever have an opportunity to vote much less see an African-American run for the presidency of the United

States."

Nearing conclusion he recalled how far his campaign has come over the past nearly two years.

"You know what they said last year. They said the country wasn't ready for this. They said we should wait a little longer, work a little harder. We didn't wait. We seized the moment. But, we did work harder. Now we're here at the precipice of one of the most extraordinary moments in our nation's history at a time when we need to rejuvenate our faith in our country and in ourselves."

President-Elect Obama Will Be Greeted by a Stack of Problems

Richard Prince
WASHINGTON (NNPA) - For president-elect Barack Obama, there will be no time for resting on his laurels now that he has defeated John McCain. Immediately after he is sworn in Jan. 21, Obama will begin one of the toughest four-year tests a president has ever faced in the nation's history.

"With the economic crisis and two wars being fought, this is not an easy time to be president," said Cordell Faulk of the University of Virginia's Center for Politics. "They're going to have to mold their administration to the times."

Allan Lichtman, a history professor at American University in Washington, D.C., said like great presidents of the past, however, Obama seems suited to the task of navigating the country through its current morass.

"He's very cool, very unruffled; he doesn't panic and he's retained his good humor, like Ronald Reagan, and that's going to be very critical," Lichtman explained. "Also, he's been very inspirational and that's an important quality because it helps bring people along with you and the only way to counter wealthy, special interests is the power of the people. That's how Teddy Roosevelt countered special interests in his administration."

Still, there are major drawbacks. As a relatively inexperienced executive, Obama will face acute pressure to produce results and to produce them quickly.

"He doesn't have four years to make all the changes that he wants," Faulk said. "He's got two years to ensure that the country is confident having a Democratic White House [and] a Democratic Congress. It's going to make him want to tack a little bit to the center."

Already, the policy priorities have been staked out for Obama and his vice president, Joe Biden. And, given the recent near-trillion-dollar rescue plan for failing Wall Street firms which has ratcheted up the national debt to historic proportions, funds to fulfill campaign promises may prove elusive.

"Their plans are very ambitious [but] honestly, they're going to have to cut back on everything... on tax cuts," Faulk continued. "It's hard to see how we can continue with the bailout of Wall Street and with foreign adventures in the

Middle East and cut taxes."

What Obama won't have to cut back on is Supreme Court appointments, getting one and possibly two during his first term. With affirmative holding on by a fragile 5-4 margin, Obama most likely will replace 88-year-old John Paul Stevens with another liberal.



President-Elect Barack Obama

The second oldest justice, Ruth Bader Ginsberg, 75, is also a liberal. Replacing either or both would maintain the present mix on the court. However, if McCain had won and replaced Stevens with a conservative, the right-wing would have obtained a clear five-vote majority.

Obama's approach to problem-solving—more "cerebral" compared to Bush's "from the gut" reaction, Faulk said—and his stance on taxes and other policies, analysts say, answers one demand that an overwhelming number of voters seem to share after the last eight years under President Bush—change.

"I think it's a return to a kind of liberalism that we have not seen since the 1960s, early 1970s," said Lichtman. "There's a much greater faith in government, a less militaristic approach to foreign policy and a much more multilateral approach compared to the Bush administration....there's less of an emphasis on supporting the wealthy."

But even though his policies reflect what Faulk calls a left-of-center point of view, Obama is trying to be pragmatic about it, seeking ways to inject revenue even as he spends, the University of Virginia political scientist said.

That approach is evident in the

Obama-Biden tax plan, which his Republican opponent, John McCain, condemned as a socialist attempt to redistribute wealth.

Roberton Williams, principal research associate with the non-partisan Tax Policy Center at the Urban Institute who analyzed the candidates' tax plans, said

Obama's plan basically extends Bush's tax cuts to low- and middle-income citizens and adds others and pays for the lost revenue by increasing taxes on the wealthy, defined as those making more than \$250,000 annually.

"Any time you are going to be fiscally balanced, you are going to end up with

that type of income distribution," Williams said. "You certainly can't tax low-income people to help themselves."

Several of Obama's key tax policies are refundable credits such as the Making Work Pay Credit of up to \$500 per worker; Universal Mortgage Credit, a 10 percent of mortgage interest for non-itemizers up to \$800; a revised Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit equal to 50 percent of child care expenses that do not exceed \$6,000; a saver's credit that provides a 50 percent match of the first \$1,000 of contributions and the American Opportunity Tax Credit—formerly the Hope Credit—a 100 percent refund of the first \$4,000 of college expenses.

While these plans could effectively address problems facing low- and moderate-income people, Williams said, it would boost debt by \$3.5 trillion by 2018. McCain's would increase the nation's liability by \$5 trillion.

"It's an expensive proposition," the researcher said. "It's very progressive, but it does create many fiscal problems."

And, it will do little to solve the current economic crisis if other ways of cutting spending or raising revenues aren't found, the report concluded.

Lichtman, the history profes-

sor, said Obama should look to the past for answers:

"Obama can take good lessons from Franklin Roosevelt, who came into office during a financial crisis, and that is bold, persistent determination and a willingness to try lots of different things. There is no one silver bullet for this economic problem."

So far, Lichtman has been impressed.

"He's shown tremendous willingness to experiment and change and try to do new things and not just walk down the line in Democratic orthodoxy," he said. By doing so, Obama, who has already demonstrated a conciliatory approach that welcomes ideas from all sides, may bump heads with his own party.

"The Democratic leadership in the House of Representatives may want him to move a little more to the left than he wants to," Faulk predicts. "But if Congress pushes the country too far left—and for the most part this is a center-right nation—Democrats will pay in 2012."

To boost the economy, Obama has suggested: taxing oil companies' windfall profits to provide \$1,000 tax reliefs to families; investing \$60 billion over 10 years on transportation infrastructure, which is projected to create 2 million new jobs and stimulate about \$35 billion per year in new economic activity; eliminating all capital gains taxes on start-up and small businesses; investing \$150 billion over 10 years in renewable energy technology, which is expected to create 5 million new jobs; increasing the minimum wage and tying it to inflation; revising lending, foreclosure and bankruptcy laws to ensure people can keep their homes and more.

More importantly, Obama would likely invest in research about the causes of the current economic breakdown and seek long-term solutions, said Dianne Pinderhughes, professor of Africana studies and political studies at the University of Notre Dame. "He's good at consulting researchers, scientists and academia and really listening to their ideas."

It's a quality seen in his approach to urban renewal as part of his long-term approach to healing the economy.

"What is clear is that because Obama understands that metropolitan areas and urban areas are tremendous engines of the

country, there is an urban agenda designed to address many of the issues that impact [these areas] because if you impact metropolitan areas you impact the country," said Obama supporter Mayor Michael Coleman of Columbus, Ohio, in a teleconference with the Black press.

It's an urban agenda that many look forward to.

"There are a number of good things in there," said Ronald Walters, a Black politics expert and professor at the University of Maryland. "He has already said he is setting up a White House Office on Urban Policy. If I were him, I'd get that staffed right away."

That office would oversee initiatives that include: a \$10 billion yearly investment in early childhood education, scholarships to woo and train teachers committed to working in underserved areas, a fully funded program to add 50,000 more police officers on the streets, creation of a prison-to-work incentive program to reduce recidivism, reforming HUD and support programs to increase affordable housing, a fully funded Community Development Block Grant, investment in public-private business incubators and research and development, and more.

Walters said while most of the plans seem sound, he's troubled by the method.

"He's likely to take a broad, generic policy approach instead of a targeted approach. [But] if you look at Black and White communities, you have to look at the differential gaps and so this approach that one size fits all would not work," he said.

With any new president, there will be competition for President Obama's attention.

"He's going to have a number of things on his desk. So I am concerned that those issues that are important to poor Black and poor Brown populations will be shoved under the pile," Walters said.

A Black man sitting in the White House still will not be able to ignore the issue of race.

"Race is a sore spot," said Lichtman, the American University historian. "He'll have to tread softly but not back down, and he's shown his ability to do that. The best way to defuse the issue of race is for Obama to show he can be president of all people and to govern well, and governing well means solving problems."

Inauguration Tickets, the Hottest in Town

Zenitha Price
NNPA Columnist

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Washington, D.C., will be bursting at the seams come January.

With President-elect Barack Obama poised to become the first African-American president of the



U.S. Capitol

United States, and with continuing interest in the charismatic man and his family whose vision birthed a movement, people from around the world are clamoring for access to the never-to-be-seen-again inauguration on Jan. 20. For updates about the 2009 presidential inauguration events, visit the official site at <http://inaugural.senate.gov>. No tickets are available yet.

"All of us who voted have earned a right to see this take place so make sure that you have your analog cable and all the media you can find because one way or the other, in the front seat of the White House or the back seat of the airplane or bus, we will find a way to see and make history," wrote "Trisha" on a Nov. 8 blog about the swearing-in on www.aolblackvoices.com.

Only a few days after Obama trounced erstwhile rival Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., to win the 2008 presidential contest, demand for tickets have already exceeded supply. Though free, inauguration tickets are limited in number—240,000—and distributed through

members of Congress about a week before the event.

The day after the election, District Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton said she set up a special telephone line and e-mail address to take requests, but her office was inundated with so many calls that it stymied other urgent non-inauguration related calls and she had to stop taking names.

Norton said she is worried this forebodes even worse conditions to come.

"I share the excitement and enthusiasm of my constituents, but I am concerned that even the few who obtain tickets will not be able to get through

the crowds at the Mall," Norton said in a statement. "The only people sure to get a view of the parade and the swearing-in are the people who watch it on television in the comfort of their homes."

Officials say with people determined to participate—whether they have tickets or not—they expect the crowds to surpass the 1.2 million that attended President Lyndon Johnson's swearing-in in 1965. Norton, a member of the Homeland Security Committee, said she plans to meet next week with security officials to discuss the ramifications.

"An entirely new game plan will be needed to cope with an inauguration like none the country has ever seen," Norton said.

Already, officials have had to deal with fraudulent Web sites and others exploiting people's desperation by selling them "free" tickets.

"Any Web site or ticket broker claiming that they have inaugural tickets is simply not telling the truth," said Howard Gantman, staff director for the Joint Congressional Committee on Inau-

gural Ceremonies. "We urge the public to view any offers of tickets for sale with great skepticism... An entirely new game plan will be needed to cope with an inauguration like none the country has ever seen."

Most remain hopeful—even adamant—about participating in the days-long celebration. People have already booked airline and bus tickets, even before inauguration tickets became available. And hotel rooms are filling up quickly.

William Hanbury, president of Destination DC, the District's convention and tourism arm, told *The Washington Post*, the area's 95,000 hotel rooms are filling up faster than for previous inaugurations. "There are still a lot of rooms available, but people need to be doing transactions now if they are serious about coming," Hanbury said, adding that people may soon have to resort to "innovative accommodations."

"The church group from Atlanta, the high school from Chicago – they're all trying to find places to stay. You're going to have people sleeping in church basements and high school cafeterias," Hanbury predicted.

Already, people are hitting up long lost relatives and friends living in the District-Northern Virginia-Maryland metro area. And they are also appealing to strangers.

Sites like Craigslist are clogged with lodging commerce.

"Housing swap: you ski in Utah, we do Inauguration," read one ad, mirroring others offering home exchanges in Malibu, Sausalito and Manhattan.

Others bargained their home for higher-rated commodities.

"I will provide 3 days/2 nights in my home for free to anyone who can provide two tickets to the official inaugural ball and two tickets to the swearing in ceremony,"

read another from someone living in Maryland.

The unprecedented interest in the 56th inauguration is a testament to the man and his message but also the historic overtones.

Celebrated under the theme, "A New Birth of Freedom," Obama's inauguration commemorates the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. And for African-Americans, especially, the day is equally auspicious since it falls on the day after Dr. Martin Luther King Day.

The Rev. Al Sharpton, civil rights leader and president of the National Action Network, said he plans to move his annual King Day celebration from New York to Washington and to stick around to celebrate Obama.

"We're going to have tens of thousands of people there," Sharpton told the *New York Daily News*. "It's going to be a four-day civil rights weekend."



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PIPELINE TO THE PEOPLE

People from around the city—and the globe—tuned in on Nov. 4, 2008 to witness history in the making as Barack Obama was elected as the first African-American President of the United States. Data News Weekly was out and caught up with people who spanned generations. These individuals took a moment to weigh in on the exciting historical moment.



Data News Weekly publisher Terry Jones and friends celebrated the Obama victory during a party at Prime Example.



Judge Herbert Cade: "To the average young black individual, this has shown I can be what ever I want to be if I work at it. To the world, it says America is the democracy it is supposed to be. His impact will not be limited to just New Orleans or the United States, it will be worldwide. It says something about him and it says something about this country and the people of this country because he was not just elected by black people, he was elected by good-thinking Americans."

Judge Michael Bagneris: "First of all, I don't know if it has really sunk in how momentous this happens to be. My mother, myself and my children all were talking about this and this spans several generations and none of us thought this would happen in our lifetimes. Just the thought that it actually occurred-- that we actually have an African-American at the helm of not just the United States, but the free world--you really appreciate the depth and importance that it represents. That has never happened not just in the history of this country, but in the world."



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Don Biagas: "I think it's great that he has appealed to all people in this campaign, and especially young people." **Penny Randolph Biagas:** "I think young people had an impact on the election and are realizing that they have the opportunity to take back the country for themselves and it's not the 'same old, same old,' and we need to look at what we are going to do as a country to make ourselves better. My daughter said to me, 'Mommy, do you know what it means to have two girls in the White House that look like our children?' That says a lot." **Willard Hill:** "I think what is happening today is a little bit different than what happened during the Kennedy years. Today you have young people who are becoming voting age who do not come with the same racial baggage as their parents. So this part of the electorate comes to it with a fresh outlook, and they are not going for all the tricks of fear to divide people. None of that works anymore and thank God we have moved past that and hopefully time will heal all of it completely and we can turn into one country."



Stephanie Rhodes: "I thought about both candidates and it was an easy choice based on the Vice-President selection of Sarah Palin by Sen. McCain. After that it was clear Obama had to be my choice." **Kathy Rhodes:** "I'm excited that we have a smart man as the leader of our country who is African-American. And the thought of waking up tomorrow morning and we have had such a shift in this country that we have voted for him not just because of his color, but because he is smart and will be great for this country!"



Toya Hayes: "I'm very happy that Barack Obama is the first Black President of the United States and I hope he can bring this country together and turn around the economics. It's a tall order, and I hope he does us proud. It's very emotional, I am thrilled. I thought I would never see it in my lifetime, not this soon, maybe as an old lady."



Ceeon Quiett and Kenya Smith enjoyed festivities during a party on election night.



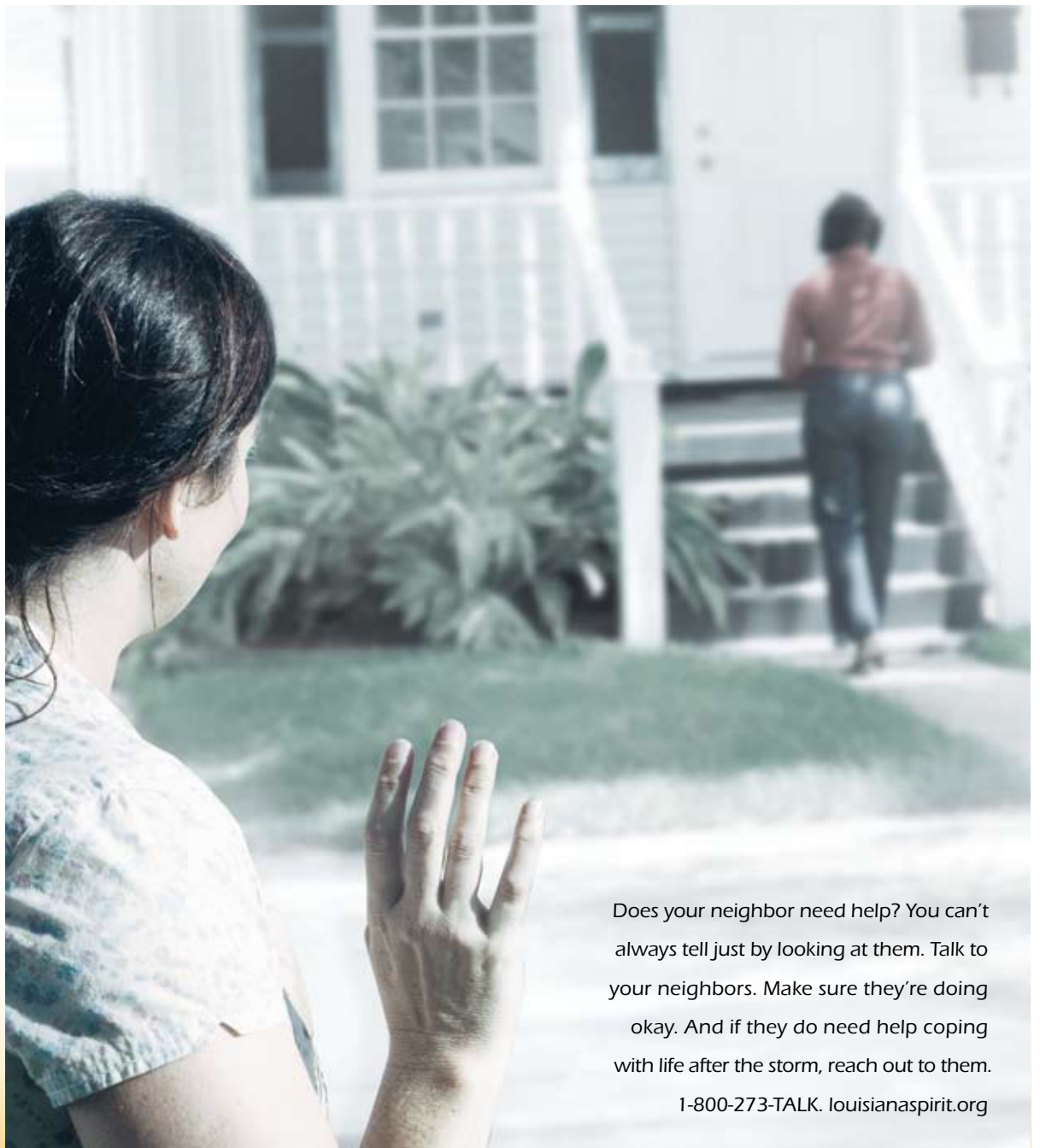
Glenn Jones: "I think it is a great time in our nation that we can actually overcome the thoughts and the premise of the powers that be [and show] that the people actually do have a voice. I hope that he is able to do the things that he has proposed prior to coming in. I hope he has the opportunity to actually get some things done without too many curve balls and things that hamper him from being successful in his administration."



Kim Brown: "I think Obama's election has shown that anything is possible and that we should aspire to our highest goals and our highest inspirations and that if you work really hard and you're dedicated to a certain purpose, that all things are possible. And so I think it is not only a wonderful opportunity for young people, but for all people to know if you strive for something, don't limit yourself and you can end up in a place where you can help others."



Hiram Jones: "I feel it is extraordinary that we have waited so long for this. It started out with Jesse Jackson, although it didn't [end] the way we wanted it to. But this time, we really have a chance of winning and it's time for a change."



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Data News Weekly
Special Section

President-Elect Barack Obama has made history with his win in the 2008 Presidential election. His campaign journey of two years paid off as he and his family prepare for life in the White House.

David Katz/Obama for America



President-Elect Barack Obama shows emotion as he delivers his speech.



President-Elect Barack Obama



The Obamas.



President-Elect Obama enjoys a moment during his campaign.



President-Elect Obama along with his mother-in-law, and Vice-President-Elect Joe Biden with his mother.



President-Elect Obama watches election night results with wife Michelle and his mother-in-law.



President-Elect Obama and Michelle share a moment on the campaign trail.

U.S. Congressman William Jefferson Wins Democratic Runoff, Vying for 10th Term



Eric Connerly

A smiling U.S. Congressman William Jefferson made his acceptance speech surrounded by family after defeating opponent former WDSU News Anchor Helena Moreno by a margin of 57 percent to 43 percent in the Democratic Party runoff for the 2nd Congressional District, a seat Jefferson has held for nine terms.

Jefferson, the first African-American representing the state of Louisiana in the U.S. Congress since Reconstruction is trying to hold onto his seat and has overcome a formidable field of candidates in the primaries. In less than a month he will face four lesser-known candidates in the general election that is to be held on Dec. 6, 2008. His opponents include the Republican challenger Anh "Joseph" Cao, Green Party candidate Malik Rahim, Gregory Kahn of the Libertarian Party, and Independent Jerry Jacobs.

District Attorney-Elect Leon Cannizzaro names chairs of Transition Team



Civil Clerk of Court Dale Atkins and Bank President Gary Solomon will chair the transition team of District Attorney-elect Leon Cannizzaro.

The members of the team will be announced next week. The transition team will operate out of the Cannizzaro campaign headquarters at 3535 Canal St.

"My top priority is preparing to shape the existing DA's Office during this interim period into a stronger crime-fighting office," said Judge Cannizzaro. "These two individuals know and understand my vision."

Atkins is an attorney who graduated from Southern Methodist University School of Law. She has served as Clerk of Civil District Court for Orleans Parish for 18 years and ran for District Attorney in 2002. She worked in the District Attorney's Office under former DA Harry Connick.

Solomon is the President of Crescent Bank & Trust, and a member of the Greater New Orleans Foundation, the New Orleans Business Council, the Louisiana Children's Museum (Chair), and the University of New Orleans Foundation (Board Chair).

Former Resident Returns as Artist

R. Sidney, a colored pencil artist, will participate in the Covington Three Rivers Art Festival 2008, November 15-16, 2008. This is a juried show. It is free and will be held in Historic Downtown Covington, LA along Columbia Street.

R. Sidney (Ronald S. Henderson) is a graduate of Dillard University. He is a former Executive Director of Dryades Street YMCA. He was Track and Field Coach at Southern University, New Orleans, LA. And, he taught and coached track and field at L. B. Landry Senior High School.

The drawings of R. Sidney are vibrant and ex-

pressionistic. He uses colored pencils to offer refreshing contemporary artistic presentations with bold colors framed in creative geometric separations.

The studio of R. Sidney is located in the southern rural setting of Stockbridge, Georgia. It is in this setting that R. Sidney is given the opportunity to explore the abundance of culturally relevant subject matter that is the focus of his award-winning creations. He may be contacted by email at rsidneyartworks@bellsouth.net. His web address is: <http://web.mac.com/rsidneyartworks>.



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21
MEANS 21

Charles Dickerson

Each One Teach One

by: Edwin Buggage

This month's Trailblazer is one who has dedicated his life to helping young people. Charles Dickerson has been a teacher and mentor for over a decade in both New Orleans and Houston, Texas.

"My passion for service and helping children began with my parents. My mother owned a shuttle service [to] pick up kids from school, and my father is a minister who was always out in the community talking to people especially the youth," said Dickerson.

Dickerson received degrees from Dillard University and a Master's in Counseling Education from Summit University. He has been a classroom teacher, in addition to running mental health clinics and after school programs. In that time, Dickerson has worked with children of various racial and social backgrounds.

"From inner cities to suburbs, children are all the same," said Dickerson regarding his experiences working with children. "They all need love, care and someone to believe in them and that's what I've tried to do—provide them with the hope that they could fulfill whatever goals they pursue."

As a member of Kappa Alpha Psi, Dickerson has participated in projects to feed the homeless during the holidays and volunteered to mentor kids and talk about the importance of education.

"It is very important that we reach out to our young and let them know—especially our males—that education is the key to success in life. If you look at our jails across this country you see [that the] one thing

they [prisoners] all have in common is that most of those incarcerated lack a formal education. So, I feel education is key to saving our young men," said Dickerson.

Dickerson said he has been blessed with the life he has lived, and he wants to give back, so he is laying the groundwork to develop an educational foundation that will give deserving students attending colleges in New Orleans scholarships.

"It's not like I have millions of dollars, but I remember being a college student, and every little bit counts and this is something I am going to do to give back to young people and to my city." Continuing he said, "I feel like this is an investment we have to make, so I encourage people to do the same by investing in the future leaders of our nation. And it's not solely about giving money...just spending time with them can make a huge impact and alter the course of their lives," said Dickerson.

Being raised the son of a minister, spirituality has always been an important part of his life. "We all have our ups and downs in life, and I use my life as a testimony of the power of prayer and the power of God's love and redemption," said Dickerson.

With passion ringing from his voice he said "For even at my worst I am at my best because I know I am blessed, and I try to pass that on to people I come in contact with to let my light shine and be positive wherever I go and hopefully reflect some of that on them where they can see their lives differently and make the changes to live a better life."



"Mr. Dickerson,"

Mr. Dickerson, as his students and colleagues call him, is a respected educator who says regardless of where he is, New Orleans will always be his home.

"Although the city has its fair share of problems, there is no place like it and it will always have a special place in my heart," he said. "It is the place that made me who I am, it shaped and molded me, it is where my culture is rooted, it is

where my family and many of my friends are, it is my heritage from the food to the music, to the way we talk and our way of life it will always be a part of me."

He is a father, husband, and educator, Charles Dickerson is a man who has dedicated his life to shaping the young minds of the future and because of his contribution, he is New Orleans Data News Weekly's November 2008 Trailblazer.

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Opinion

Thank You, Louisiana



Sen. Mary Landrieu

Two years ago they said we had no chance. But together, we did it.

The pundits and the Washington partisans underestimated us again. They doubted our fight. They doubted our tenacity. They doubted our ability to win.

Worse, they doubted you. But they got it wrong.

Together, we did it.

This was a long, hard-fought campaign. There were plenty of ups and downs. In the end, Louisiana voters decided that we need strong, effective, consistent leadership that can deliver in the Senate – that we should march forward from a position of strength, not from scratch.

You decided that we need somebody who will fight until they get the job done for our communities. Somebody who will win for Louisiana families.

Thank you for trusting me to be that person.

Thank you for giving me a chance to keep fighting for you in the U.S. Senate.

Together, we showed the world that Louisiana is a state that puts progress before partisanship; results before rhetoric and solutions before soundbites.

I want to thank everybody who has supported me as I've fought to represent you for six more years in the Senate. As I traveled throughout Louisiana many times during this long campaign, I found new inspiration at every stop.

Every bumper sticker, every yard sign and every smile from a Louisianian who came out to show his or her support kept my spirits high when the other side's goal was to keep them down.

Thank you to all the supporters and volunteers who called more than a million voters and knocked on thousands of doors to get out the vote. You have made this campaign yours, and together we will keep fighting for Louisiana.

The message Louisianians sent yesterday is that we have far too many challenges ahead of us, far too many battles left to fight and far too much work left to do to change course when we are on the path to progress.

We run for office as Democrats and Republicans, but we serve as Louisianians. I look forward to returning to Washington and fighting alongside our Governor, our Lieutenant Governor and the Louisiana Congressional Delegation.

It's time to pass a comprehensive energy plan that will finally allow America to kick our addiction to foreign oil. It's time to pass a healthcare plan that makes care accessible and affordable for all Americans. It is time to fund our schools and pay our teachers and make Louisiana's schools work for our students. Together, we have many battles ahead of us.

Thank you for trusting me to lead Louisiana through them.

God bless you, and God bless Louisiana.

In The Spirit

President-Elect Obama: "A Builder of New Relationships"



Dr. Aaron E. Harold
Data Columnist

Hi folks, hi America. What an exciting time it is for you, me, and all Americans in the United States. American families should feel proud and blessed to be living in this country we call the United States. We finally came together with one voice as one nation under God, and said with an attitude; yes we can! We stood up against race, prejudice, and sometimes cruelty and said men or women should not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. We have put away our differences and united as the one great nation that we are, and elected the first African American President of this country.

Truly this is a historical time for the nation. I believe without a shadow of a doubt, that President-Elect Barack Obama represents true change for this country at this day and time. President-Elect Obama is a true family man, who loves his family and stands on family values. He has a great parenting relationship with his two daughters, Sasha and Malia. He is a man of faith in God. He is also a man who has built a relationship as a trained lawyer from Harvard a community organizer, and a State as well as U.S. Senator and now President-Elect.

President-Elect Obama has proven that good, sound relationships are important to one's future. Also, hard work and commitment are two main work ethics that one must possess as well. A good relationship builder does not start from the top, but he or she starts from the bottom with a solid foundation. Eventually, it can lead to the

top. Building relationships were very important in electing President-Elect Obama. However, with more than 50 percent of the popular votes consisting of numbers somewhere between 57 million for President-Elect Obama and 52 million for Senator McCain, Obama managed to take the electoral votes by storm.

Obama and his campaign had to reach out with a message for change and they did. They had to build a successful and an effective coalition with African Americans who strongly supported him, along with younger Whites, Hispanics, and other ethnic groups that embraced and welcomed the message of change. He is a man who has proven that he can and will continue to bring people together from all walks of life. We need a leader like President-Elect Obama who is not afraid to sit down with everyone and discuss and help change the negative issues and problems of this country. I believe that we have a leader that can sit down with our enemies both foreign and domestic to bring about change in this country and even around the world.

I believe that this historical event has been ordained by our Creator to have a new revolution of relationships amongst the people of America. Family, we should all put away our foolish differences that have been keeping us as Americans from going forward as a nation. Let's face reality, we all need each other. The Democrats need the Republicans and the Republicans need the Democrats. It doesn't matter; we are all in this thing together. Our President-Elect is going to need the help of every American, no matter what race you are or political party you belong to.

Folks, we have much work to be done, and many problems need to be solved. Let's get going. Don't keep looking back in the past. We need to stop playing the blame game and let's do our part to secure the future for better days to come. Folks, President-Elect Obama is a true role model for this country. Nevertheless, everyone that came together for this past election made history by saying "yes to change." God Bless You.

The Black Vote in 2008



Ron Walters
Data Columnist

Pardon me if I begin this with a little crowing, since I attracted considerable heat, months ago, by declaring that Barack Obama would win this election in a landslide and that the Black vote would reach unprecedented levels.

Both of these materialized. So, I will go on to describe briefly the performance of the Black vote in this election, knowing that it is always dangerous to talk statistics this soon after the election is over, with votes still being counted. But, I will try to give some estimates nevertheless.

First, the impression that the Black community turned out to vote in big numbers was confirmed by the fact that it reached 25

percent of the total Democratic vote, given that the total vote was more than about 125 million and Barack Obama won by more than 52 percent.

This was also based on the estimate that the black vote turned at a rate of 95 percent of those registered and 60 percent of those eligible. Nevertheless, we are not able to claim, as before, that the Black vote was the decisive difference in the election, because the increase in voting was elevated by all groups.

When one looks back in this history of Black turnout, the highest level was in 1964, at 58.6 percent, a year before the Voting Rights Act was passed.

This was because of the tremendous enthusiasm toward Lyndon Johnson who had provided the leadership to pass the 1964 Civil Rights Act. So, a turnout of 60% of all eligible voters would be historic.

In any case, this performance means that no one group can claim to have been the decisive vote in this landslide because Obama won nearly all of the demographic groups, those under 18-35 and 35-65, those under \$50,000 and those over, and both genders. But about 52 percent of whites and about the same number of the elderly voted for John McCain.

Therefore, one must add to the 48 percent of Whites who voted for Barack Obama, the Black vote and the fact that 65

percent of Hispanics, 77 percent of Jews and 55 percent of Asians put him over the top.

The performance of these groups was magnified by the fact that so many of the white voters in the conservative rural areas were not motivated to vote.

Where the high turnout of the Black vote obviously made a difference was in North Carolina and Virginia. Both of these states were firmly in the Republican "red state" column traditionally, but the high turnout of Black voters, together with a coalition of Whites and the youth vote, surprisingly pushed them into Obama's camp. One could say the same thing about three Northern states of Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

Black churches all over the country were once again, hotbeds of activism, as their buses rolled both for registration drives and for get-out-the-vote activities on election day. The day before the election however, Barack Obama had a conference call with Black leaders, many of whom were ministers, to stimulate them to participate strongly in turnout activities.

Near the end of the call, they heard Rev. Joseph Lowery's moving call for them to saddle up, once again, and help to fulfill Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream.

In the spirit of this call, after the election, in North Carolina Grammy winning Pastor,

Shirley Caesar-Williams said that, "God has vindicated the Black folks."

About 40 percent of the new voters were Black and it was amazing that so many Blacks who had never voted before came literally out of the woodwork to vote for Obama, spurred on by the fact that now, perhaps a Black person had arrived who, could truly win the White House if they supported him.

About one-third of all early voters were Black and this group, together with those who exercise the absentee ballots were wise, because they cut down the long wait in lines at polling stations and as such, cut down the voter disfranchisement tactics that were prepared for them by Republican operatives.

For example, if you voted early, or by absentee, for example, it was often impossible for someone to check your ID at the polling station, as is allowed in many states. So this practice should be continued.

Could Obama have won without the Black vote? Not really. More than the voting was in this.

Dr. Ron Walters is the Distinguished Leadership Scholar, Director of the African American Leadership Center and Professor of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland College Park. His latest book is: *The Price of Racial Reconciliation*, (Rowman and Littlefield).

Preparing for the Big Switch Over: Black Church Group Distributes 3.5 Million Digital TV Converter Box Applications

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI), a coalition of 16,000 African-American and Latino member churches, has announced the distribution of about 3.5 million applications for the federal government's converter box coupon program to African-American congregants nationwide. The government is offering coupons to all U.S. households to offset the cost of preparing for the transition to digital television (DTV) on Feb. 17, 2009.

In partnership with the National Association of Broadcasters, NBCI disseminated literature containing information about the upcoming transition and an application form for the government's converter box coupon. The \$40 coupon allows residents to purchase a converter box, a low-cost option for consumers to continue receiving television signals if they are not connected to cable. NBCI has also conducted more than 20,000 educational sessions in faith-based communities all

across the country.

NBCI, led by the Reverend Anthony Evans, is a partner in NAB's national multiplatform campaign to educate the transition's most disproportionately affected populations, including persons with disabilities, seniors, rural communities and racial minorities, about the DTV transition.

"This is a huge victory for NBCI, and I congratulate our member churches, our 35,000-vol-

unteer force, dedicated ministers and NAB. NAB has played a pivotal role in helping us get out the word about the big digital switch and should be commended for its leadership," said Evans, president of NBCI.

Debra Coley-Bagley, chair of NBCI's board of directors added, "We are so very proud of the leadership NBCI has demonstrated on this national DTV education campaign. This clearly mirrors

the broad depth and capacity that the Black church is able to bring to bear concerning any national public education campaign or health preventative initiatives. There is still much work to be done, but thus far this has been an enormously successful venture. We look forward to completing the task."

Rev. Mark McCleary, who is working closely with NBCI, in organizing the churches and volun-

teers behind the DTV campaign, said, "We have worked very hard on this project and our volunteers have given one hundred and twenty percent on helping to get out the word on DTV. Rev. Evans' leadership is clear and decisive. He is well-organized, and our volunteers in churches around the country cannot be more pleased of how he is handling this campaign."



Jackson and Sharpton Say Their Activist Roles Will Not Change

Hazel Trice Edney

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – The Revs. Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, viewed as perhaps the highest profiled civil rights leaders in the nation, both say their roles will not change as America beholds its first Black president.

"The issues haven't gone away," says Sharpton. "Barack Obama said this is the beginning of change. This is not change itself. It's almost insulting to act like Blacks should now shut up just because we have a Black president."

In an interview, Sharpton was responding to widely held perceptions and debates by pundits and TV personalities that President-Elect Barack Obama will now become America's new Black Leader.

Both Jackson and Sharpton, having been presidential candidates themselves, said in interviews that while they are celebrating the historic election, it is ridiculous to think that a sitting



Rev. Jesse Jackson

president could single-handedly eliminate the voluminous problems in the Black community.

Illustrating, Jackson compared the anticipation of the Obama to another big day in Black history.

"It's the biggest day since Dec. 31, 1862," when slaves awaited the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation.

"After 246 years of slavery, we hoped for an Emancipation Proclamation. Lincoln signed the order the next day, but still they had



Rev. Al Sharpton

to wait until the 13th amendment in 1865 to get free."

Jackson explains, "This is the beginning of a struggle. What we want now is we want the playing field even. We want civil rights laws enforced and funded for all Americans. Just to even the playing field would be a massive step toward a more perfect union."

Still pride in and affinity for the nation's first Black president and the magnanimous stride that he represents will cause traditional

rights leaders to reserve judgment and not act hastily toward him.

"Sure we will be patient with and sensitive to President Barack because he is our candidate and we are utterly fascinated with him," Jackson said. "There's no question about that. But, we must continue our quest to address the issues of pain and crisis."

Jackson says Obama will make their jobs much easier.

"When you have a good president who is positive, you tend to get remedy," he says. "When you have a guy like Bush, who is hostile, you tend to get rejection."

Widely seen on national television with tears streaking his face at the Chicago victory celebration, Jackson told what he was thinking at that moment:

"I looked at Barack standing there in all of the majesty...I saw children in Kenya and Haiti and Europe all riding on his every word. It was a joy. But, then the journey to get us there was what really broke me down," he said.

He reflected on civil rights leaders and activists who were killed, beaten and bitten by dogs.

"After all these struggles, here was this guy standing there in all of his majesty giving leadership to the world," he said. "It was overwhelming to me and I just wished Medgar Evers or Dr. King could have been there just for a minute to see the results of their work. They were redeemed that night. The marchers and the martyrs and the murdered - they were redeemed that night."

Among those who were there among the civil rights protesters of the 60s was the Rev. Joseph Lowery, who co-founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference alongside Dr. King. An avid Obama supporter throughout the entire campaign, Lowery said after the election that civil rights leaders must now stay the course:

"We must continue to speak truth to power no matter what color power is."

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Tickets can be purchased by calling Ticketmaster at 800-448-5252 or online by visiting www.ticketmaster.com. Tickets are also available at the Southern University and Grambling State University Box Offices. For more information, current updates and hotel information please visit the website at www.statefarmbayouclassic.com or contact The Bickerstaff Group at 202-363-2375.

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A. 6' Folding Table #124784 \$42⁷²
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