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St. Augustine Welcomes its New Principal

Don Boucree

The Soul of New Orleans

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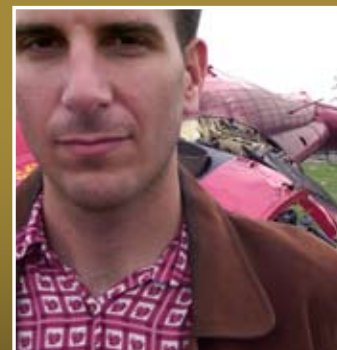
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Meet the New Man in Charge

St. Augustine welcomes its new Principal

By Gary Estwick
Data News Correspondent

Don Boucree sits behind his desk in the principal's office, his six-foot, three-inch frame slightly tilted back, his body positioned at an angle. Arms folded. He then raises them to strengthen his point during a Tuesday morning discussion about St. Augustine, his most challenging post yet as a New Orleans educator and administrator.

"I've got some big shoes to fill," said Boucree, a 1976 graduate. (His fingers are now interlocked). "There were a lot of principals before me that got us to this point. And so I'm humbled to be in that leadership role. But also know there's a good support staff that's going to help me move along the way."

This is Day 2 on the payroll.

He inherits a jewel of education in New Orleans, especially the African-American community for the last six decades – a school that has produced a Crescent City Mayor and a point guard on an NBA championship team. While academics are still the foundation of St. Aug's success, extracurricular activities from football to the Marching 100 increase its visibility in the community and state.

Boucree, 51, majored in Mechanical Engineering at Tulane before falling in love with teaching as a cross-enrolled student at Xavier. He graduated in Physics, and later reached an advanced degree in Counseling. He also reached an advanced degree from Our Lady of Holy Cross College. His oldest of four children – Devin, now 22, is a 2005 St. Aug graduate. Daniel, the youngest of two sons, will attend the 10th grade this fall.

His challenges will include restoring the predominately-Black, all-male Catholic school attendance rolls to pre-Katrina levels. Current enrollment is at about 650 students – he wants to add another 150.

"He'll be fine," said Athletic Director Clifford Barthe, a classmate of Boucree. "This is something he's always wanted. It's something that he's been trained for. He'll do very well."



St. Augustine Principal Don Boucree seated at this desk on Day Two on the Job.

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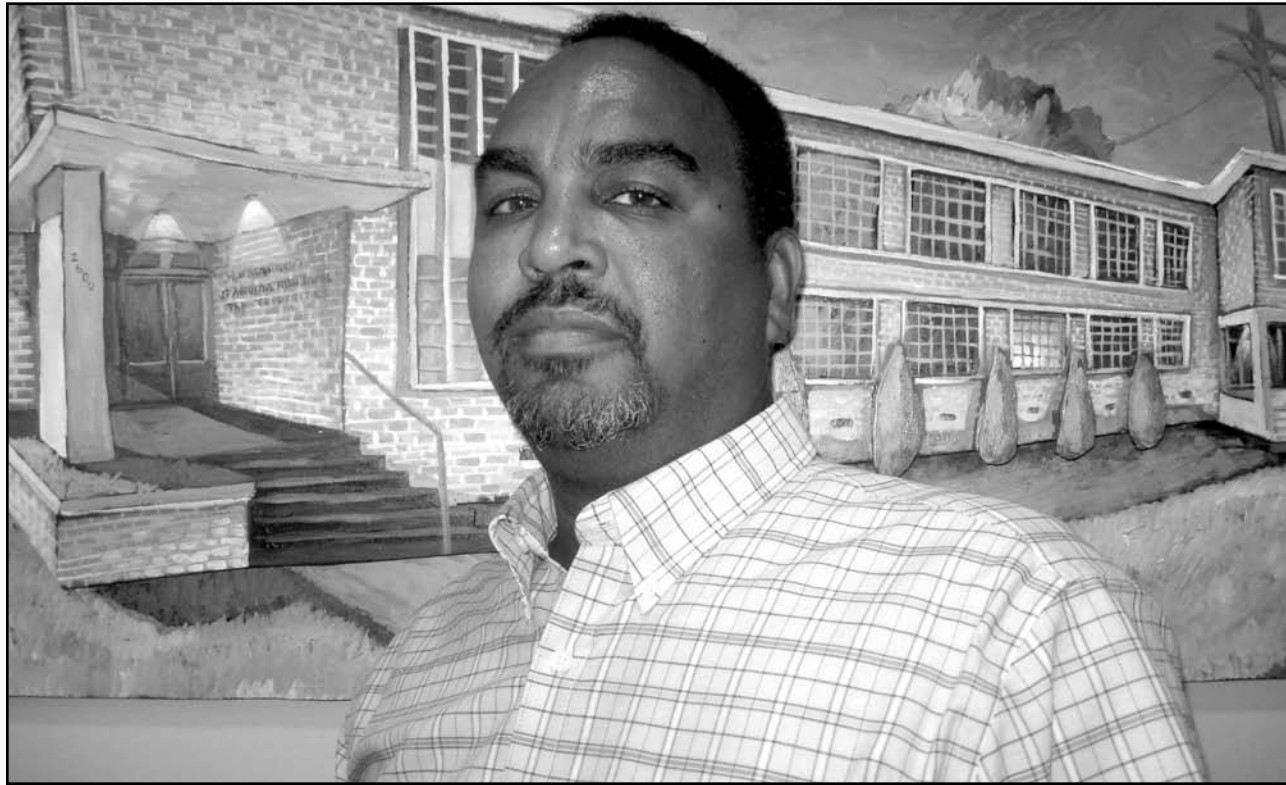
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Principal Boucree stands in front of a mural of St. Augustine High School

There is growing competition, though, from Brother Martin and other private schools. Yet Boucree believes his schools offers something the others lack when it comes to raising today's young Black men in New Orleans.

What did you learn from teaching at Christian Brothers School, a predominately White school? (Boucree said he was the first Black faculty member)

Some of the myths of students in terms of Black or White achievement... while there are differences, some of the differences are not racial. Most of it had to do with parental support, support from the teachers, and support from the school and its students. Some of the individual student's success, obviously, was because the parents were in a better financial position to give better help, and that you don't find in the poorer schools. But the other key was - which I knew before - good teachers make good students.

Why is there a need for single-sex schools?

Well, at that age for middle school and high school, you have students who are beginning to become aware of girls and boys. So when you eliminate that in a classroom and focus on their work, there's no need to show off in front of anyone. In some cases, especially as I've seen, if there are girls around, there's that old adage that if the Black male is smart, something is wrong with him. We've taken that away. You don't have that peer pressure to make an impression on the opposite sex, as opposed to a friend or yourself. Also, the way you address students. There's a big difference between me at St. Peter

Claver addressing a class; there were males and females and I had to be very sensitive compared to how I would be if I was speaking to a young man (at St. Aug). There's a difference. With a male, you can do that. You can also address sexuality issues without worrying about how it's taken, or if you're saying something inappropriate in front of a female (student).

What are some of your memories here as a student?

We had a very good graduating class, a very cohesive graduating class. I hear stories from a lot of guys - the old guys had tracks, they used to call them. (A to E track represented academic levels) But all of them were geared to get kids to college... I've heard stories in the past when the A track and the E track didn't know each other. In my senior year, it wasn't the case. I know guys from the A track to the E track. If you would see us in public, you would think we were all in the same home-room, were all in the same classes every day. It was also the year, the only year, St. Aug went undefeated and won a football championship. The basketball team was also very good. We were excellent in speech and debate. The band continued to play for presidents; that was the era where any president that came to New Orleans, St. Aug's band played for them.

Academically, I remember the teachers always pushing us so we would be the best. When I got to Tulane, I walked into the math class and people were struggling. And to me, it was a piece of cake. Now, I would have never thought that as a student because I was average. But

when I got out and had to compete against other students, I was above average because of the way St. Aug pushed me.

Why is St. Aug important to New Orleans?

There's still a need to address education with African-American males. There is a... a lot of people believe that since we have integration that a school like St. Aug doesn't need to exist. That kids can go anywhere they want. And that's true. It's all about the freedom of choice. But a lot of our students, their cultural and social issues are a part of the kids' makeup. A run-of-the-mill academic program can't address it. So a school like St. Aug can deal with it and relate to many of the issues these kids are facing that most schools cannot.

We must have a strong, solid academic program in order for these individuals to be able to compete, but also an environment that is going to be nurturing to the young man and develop him into a good Christian man. St. Aug has a unique perspective to be able to do that. We have many alums who work here so they understand the tradition; they understand how far we've come and where we still need to go. Even teachers that aren't St. Aug

graduates understand that mission and help us continue to grow.

Do you envision a time where there is not a need for an all-Black, all-male school that services African-American boys in New Orleans?

In a Utopian world, yes. I would truly like to believe that race doesn't matter, but unfortunately, in the real world, race, politics, cultural differences all get mixed in. There are people I know are not racist. Racists meaning they have a hatred for people of color. But they don't necessarily understand cultural differences, social differences. Until we, society, addresses that, there's going to be a need for schools to work with specific minorities.

What are the challenges facing you as you start this job?

The greatest challenge for schools like St. Aug is finding a balance between strong academics and strong extracurricular activity. A lot of attention, unfortunately, for young men and women today is on sports; when you see an athlete who only finished high school and doesn't have a college degree making \$10, 15 million a year. The pressure is more on the high schools to say, "Hey, you need to do well academically and go to college," when the media is putting up these individuals who haven't gone to college and are making a lot of money. And they're not focusing on the other ones. That is more preva-



Principal Boucree holds a conversation with Father John Raphael (Class of 85) and Mark Boucree (Class of 85)

lent today than in my time. During my time, it was about academics and activities to get a scholarship for college. Today the focus isn't even on a scholarship. It's on my son getting to the NBA or into the NFL. Two years of college and coming out.

Cover Story Continued page 11.

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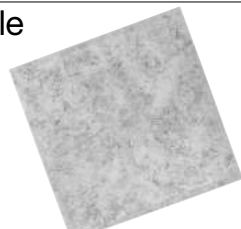
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trailblazer

Lynn Hobbs-Green

Woman of Vision

Edited by Edwin Buggage



Lynn Hobbs-Green

She is a woman who is a visionary and has dedicated her time, energy and resources to assist young people to literally see that there is a better tomorrow through the gift of sight that is creating a bridge to understanding and thriving in education and life. Lynn Hobbs-Green has been called a "vessel of change" by the Louisiana Public Health Institute recently because of her work to give better access of full eye health care to the lives of thousands of school age children Pre-K through 12th grades in New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Baker Louisiana.

She is the CEO and Founder of THE EYES HAVE IT!, INC. a non-profit diversified health care link and teaching resource, that has for nearly eight years serviced children in New Orleans, East Baton Rouge and Baker Louisiana Public Schools, totaling over 45,000 children serviced since October of 2002. A social worker by training she's created her ministry of change to smooth the process for thousands of children receiving things

such as free and/or discount eye exams, free and/or discount eye glasses as well as education to children and their families on the importance of a continuum of good total body health care, all done on site. "It has sometimes been a struggle, but it is worth it when I see all the good work that we've done in helping young people see their way to better vision and that is one of the keys

to help them get there, both in helping them with sight, as well as giving them the confidence to be better students," says Hobbs-Green.

Because of her work with young people she has been the recipient of numerous awards ranging from the Urban League of Greater New Orleans, Ebony Magazine, and City Business and recognized nationally for her efforts through Prevent Blindness of America. She serves as a board mem-

ber of United Non-Profits of Greater New Orleans; a post she feels helps her to be able to understand the needs in the City of New Orleans in a broader spectrum as well as learning how to continually work toward being an effective worker of change.

Her journey into giving began growing up in the Lower 9th Ward where she began working at the age of 12 in her grandparents' home seafood business cleaning and delivering fresh seafood to people throughout the community. This is where the seeds of responsibility and work ethic and spirit of perseverance were planted in her life. Family is a very important part of her life, and her spirit to keep going. As many have struggled to rebuild their lives after Katrina, as have many she has had to endure considerable losses including her son Jonathan

to a tragic auto accident, her mother Marie Lewis and more recently her grandmother Alberta Santiago. She says it is their memories that keep her going. She remembers her mother helping her with her business during its infancy and giving her the will to go on. Also she recounts her son Jonathan and the words she imparted

on him, then him later echoing those same words to her while building her business, "Hobbs Don't Quit." She has taken this as her philosophy that she takes to inspire herself and young people.

She remembers the experience of having her parents and her grandmother often volunteering in the community and in the schools she attended. "Watching my family work hard and my mother, always helping those in need, following the advice of my now deceased grandmother, Alberta Santiago use the lessons learned to guide me through with daily lectures;



also reminding me of my role as a leader and to be mindful of the direction I lead people; and that in order to know where you're going you must know, remember and be grateful for where you came from," says Hobbs Green. "I wanted to give what I've

Trailblazer, Continued on p11.

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Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Rev. Skip Alexander's Birthday party

Rev. Dr. Skip Alexander celebrates his 80th birthday with friends, family, songs, dance & praise at Capt. Charles Cafe on the Avenue.



Photos by Glenn Summers



Dionne Character, Author
Entertainment Editor & Columnist

I felt like I was in a scene from Zora Neale Hurston's "Their Eyes Were Watching God" when Halle Berry twirled her hips to the rhythm of the music, listening to Funk n' Blues great, Ernie Vincent perform at the D.B.A., New Orleans.

Folks were hand-dancing, swinging-out, and for those who stood front and center of the stage, we tapped our feet on the hard wood floors.

Considered to be a funk music pioneer to many, Ernie Vincent grew up playing the guitar in the bayous of Southern Louisiana, after being taught by his family at a young age to play.

In the early 1970's Ernie formed the Top Notes. Soon after the band gained local notoriety playing clubs all over New Orleans including the Mason Strip and backing many of the top Rhythm & Blues acts of the era including Solomon Burke, Joe Tex, and Joe Simon. Since it exploded in 1972, the funk anthem "Dap Walk" has been shaking butts all over the world. Most recently featured on HBO's hit series

Ernie Vincent

Funk n'Blues Legend

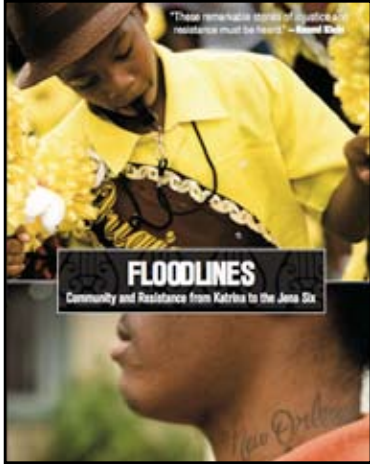
"Sex and the City", Dap Walk has become a cult classic from Sweden to Tokyo and DJ's worldwide are scrambling to find the few remaining copies of the original 45.

Ernie Vincent is a legend performer who can make the moss on oak trees sway to the rhythm of his blues. His cool meek personality takes you to a forgotten era of fish fry's, guitars and live music on back porches. Check out this legend for yourself at www.ernievincent.com

Dionne Character can be reached at www.dionnecharacter.com



Local Author Jordan Flaherty Speaks Truth to Power in Floodlines



Floodlines: Stories of Community and Resistance from Katrina to the Jena Six

By Jordan Flaherty
(Haymarket Books)

Available at www.haymarket-books.org, Community Bookstore and throughout New Orleans



Flaherty's tenacity and intuition was the impetus for the Jena Six story capturing the attention of the nation. He was the first to write about the incidents taking place there.

By Gary Estwick

The voice on the phone erupts in laughter when asked to choose between a bullhorn and a pen. It's a nearly impossible proposition for Jordan Flaherty, a New

Orleans transplant who has balanced community activism and journalism since the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Flaherty sports a bullhorn when he helps organize a rally

or protest. Other times, his pen, and later his laptop, chronicles injustice for a variety of national, international and local publications. It's also common for him to balance both tasks.

The problem is, he can't pick just one. Not right now. Not when he believes few reporters are telling the stories that matter.

"I think journalists make the mistake when they think what they do is enough," said Flaherty, who has spent the last decade in New Orleans. "I want to always challenge myself to find more ways to be accountable. I want to be useful."

His latest challenge is Floodlines: Stories of Community and Resistance from Katrina to the Jena Six, his way of telling stories that he believes are passed over by media outlets. The book is a plethora of stories from many of the state's biggest racial controversies, from Jena Six – a story he helped to deliver to the national forefront – to the New Orleans

Police Department's brutality against citizens before and after the storm which ravished the Gulf South.

Even the present-day narrative of New Orleans is fabricated, he said. Some people are tricked to believe New Orleans is rebuilt, Flaherty said. Others believe that things aren't together because the people are lazy – another fallacy. He wants readers to remember that 80 percent of the city was flooded, to learn that federal funds still haven't reached many destinations in the community, to be enraged that money that did come in was taken by contractors that exploited families and busi-

nesses. This has been his life since 2005, the unorthodox road he took to become a journalist.

The Miami native worked as a union and community organizer in the Northeast before moving here a decade ago. Once here, his community contacts asked him to write about certain issues since few understood them as well as he did. He tried it, and liked it.

Then Katrina reached the city, and he watched National Guardsmen aim guns at citizens as they were transported at the I-10 and Causeway on-ramp. Flaherty later listened to network television as reporter portrayed his friends,



Author & Activist Jordan Flaherty

nesses.

"A lot of people recognize that there's injustices in the world, but a lot of people feel like it's hopeless, there's nothing that they can do," he said. "I want people to learn from this. There is something you can do. There is hope."

The book also explains the importance of grass roots organizers that work behind movements – not just the figureheads.

"Beyond his obvious writing skills, what I admire most about Jordan is his dedication to truth-telling, to bringing the real and whole America to the American people," political activist and author Kevin Powell said of Flaherty. "At a time in our nation when there is so much distortion of current events and history, Jordan Flaherty represents the core of who we truly are. And what we are capable of being as citizens of this ever-changing world."

Flaherty talks on the phone about his firsthand account of New Orleans before and after Katrina while he waits for a flight to Phoenix, Ariz., the site of an immi-

gration protest later in the week. This has been his life since 2005, the unorthodox road he took to become a journalist.

So Flaherty, a White man in his 30s, started writing, his way of telling the real story, in his opinion. What needed to be told? He forwarded his work to friends, who then forwarded it to their friends. Not long after, his work was redistributed in several languages.

"I've watched him grow not only as an activist in our community but an author," said Sandra Berry, an Arts Consultant and Owner of The Neighborhood Gallery. "I'm proud of the concerns he brings forth. He's a man who has a vision and is really focused on improving this country."

Nowadays, Flaherty's bylines have appeared everywhere from national outlets like Huffington Post and the New York Times. He has appeared on network television with Anderson Cooper 360 and Headline News. Locally, he is a contributor to Data New Weekly and the Louisiana Weekly.

"People I respected asked me to do it," he said, "so I've been doing it the best I can."



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Sean Kennedy Santos

Reflections of a “Storm Trouper”

By Wesley T. Bishop
Guest Columnist

After five years of clawing, fighting and working to rebuild our lives, much work still needs to be done to bring back the city that I call home. I wish that I could say that

life in the Big Easy is getting easier, but for many of us, it isn't.

I have spent the last 30 years living in a section of the city called New Orleans East. My parents moved here from the now world-renowned Lower Ninth Ward.

At that time, my siblings and I thought we had died and gone to heaven. Here we found new homes, quality schools, vibrant shopping venues and a future that was full of possibilities.

True enough, many things needed to be improved even before August 29, 2005. But never in my wildest imagination did I believe it would take this long to get back up to our knees, let alone our feet.

What a Difference a Storm Makes

Many institutions were severely damaged by the storm. No better example exists than my alma mater, Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO).

SUNO is a Historically Black College/University (HBCU) that is home to nearly 4,000 students who yearn to achieve upward mobility and are pursuing the American dream. As both a graduate and an administrator on the campus, I know firsthand of the destruction. The campus was flooded by 8 feet of water, which closed the institution for an entire semester. Many in the state of Louisiana believed that Hurricane Katrina would be the end of SUNO. However, they underestimated the resolve of my Alma Mater.

In January 2006, SUNO returned home and registered nearly 2,000 students in the dining hall of a local church pastored by a SUNO alum. Classes were held at a middle school, while FEMA constructed a temporary trailer campus for our institution.

(For stories of other residents struggling to rebuild in New Orleans, visit the “Tavis Smiley Reports” web site.)

Faculty and students shared living space at the Marriott Hotel and subsequently moved to 400 temporary housing trailers adjacent to the temporary campus. The students, faculty and staff of SUNO stand as a testament of what it means to be a trouper.

er. While, five years later, the temporary classrooms remain, so too does the fighting spirit of SUNO. The snail's pace of the recovery of our institution mirrors the condition of many of our residential neighborhoods.

The Tale of Two Cities

Six months ago, my wife and I gave birth to a bouncing baby boy. While this was one of the happiest days of my life, it was bittersweet. Why? Because we drove 30 minutes to get to a hospital when there used to be one 3 minutes away. Moreover, my mother spent 30 years at that hospital as a ward clerk. It now sits dormant as a relic of a time gone by.

As I drove from my home in New Orleans East to the hospital near the Central Business District (CBD), I realized that my city is actually two cities, and I had gone from one to the other – Online New Orleans to Offline New Orleans. While Online New Orleans is fully functional with all of the basic amenities of any modern city, Offline New Orleans is still struggling to get back to normal. Those of us who live in Offline New Orleans have to travel completely outside of Orleans Parish to purchase basic goods and services.

While much of the CBD is bustling with talk of new growth, hotels and restaurants returning to provide the hospitality that this city is known for, much of the city seems to be on an island. As a resident of eastern New Orleans, every day I watch hospitals lie dormant and healthcare needs continue to go unmet. I see parents and kids unsure of where their kids will be educated in the fall because there are too many students and not enough schools.

The Spirit of a Champion

We have survived the storm. What remains to be overcome is the paralysis of analysis that anyone, anywhere near this place realizes must be abandoned. What must be eliminated is this stagnated recovery, or lack thereof, that has a whole section of the city without meaningful access to basic services.

What we need, more than anything else, is for national outlets to invest in our city, particularly New Orleans East. While neighboring Chalmette was equally devastated, it now has all of the amenities that its neighbor to the east longs for. If New Orleans East were a city, it would be the fifth largest city in Louisiana. Surely we merit the presence of national retail outlets, quality schools and adequate health care facilities. Right about now, we would almost take national anything.

Like most New Orleanians, I am a die-hard Saints fan. In fact, they first took the field at Tulane Stadium two months before

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Storm Trouper, Continued on p9.

100 days in, BP taps new CEO, seeks fresh start

By HARRY R. WEBER,
Associated Press

One hundred days after the rig explosion that set off the worst offshore oil spill in U.S. history, the oil giant behind it is hoping to move beyond the losses, the gaffes and the live video that ran for weeks of the busted well coughing up massive amounts of crude every second.

BP is replacing CEO Tony Hayward with Managing Director Robert Dudley, selling \$30 billion in assets and setting aside \$32.2 billion to cover the long-term cost of the spill. It's also claiming a \$9.88 billion tax credit in the second quarter based on the \$32.2 billion charge.

BP executives were asked in a conference call Tuesday whether they had discussed the tax credit with U.S. authorities.

"We have followed the IRS



Robert Dudley BP CEO

regulations as they are currently written," Hayward said.

Hayward, who has been repeatedly criticized for other verbal miscues, will step down as CEO Oct. 1 with benefits valued at more than \$18 million. BP is recommending him for a non-executive board position at its Russian joint venture, TNK-BP.

Hayward told reporters he had been "demonized and vilified" but had no major regrets about his leadership.

"Life isn't fair," he said, but he conceded that wasn't the point. "BP cannot move on in the U.S. with me as its leader."

The White House was not impressed with Hayward's comments.

"What's not fair is what's happened on the Gulf," press secretary Robert Gibbs said Tuesday. "What's not fair is the actions of some have caused the greatest environmental disaster that our country has ever seen."

Dudley pledged that his company will remain committed to the Gulf region even after the busted well is sealed for good — something that may happen soon. A temporary cap has held back the oil for nearly two weeks, a "static kill" effort to plug the well from above is to begin Monday and a relief well could begin sealing the well from the bottom for good with mud and cement days after that.

Meanwhile, crews were trying to cap a smaller and unrelated

gusher Wednesday in a lake just north of Barataria Bay, which has already been fouled by oil from the massive BP spill.

On Tuesday a barge slammed into an abandoned well in a coastal inlet, sending a shower of water, natural gas and oil spewing about 100 feet into the air. No one was hurt.

Officials said the breach created a mile-long slick but that it was small compared with the gusher in the Gulf. Emergency officials said about 6,000 feet of containment boom was in place around the site.

AP Business Writers Jane Wardell in London and Chris Kahn in New York and Associated Press Writer Brian Skoloff in Myrtle Grove, LA., contributed to this report.

Louisiana Launches New iPhone App for Louisiana's African American Heritage Trail



The Louisiana Office of Tourism recently launched a new iPhone app for Louisiana's African-American Heritage Trail at the ESSENCE Music Festival in New Orleans. This is the first app of its kind for tourism in Louisiana, and visitors attending the festival were the first to experience its features.

"The festival was a perfect backdrop to launch the app, and the feedback from visitors was very positive," said Pam Breaux, Secretary of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. "We developed this app to help guide visitors to trail sites as they travel throughout the state."

The app, titled LikeNoOther, has a number of features that visitors can enjoy, including directions to trail sites, GPS, maps, photos, and more. It also includes an original song and video from Grammy Award-Winning Musician Chris Thomas King and audio vignettes narrated by Academy Award-Winning Actor Louis Gossett, Jr.

"It is great that we are able to utilize new technology to bring Louisiana history to life," said Jim Hutchinson, Assistant Secretary of the Louisiana Office of Tourism.

Visitors can download the app for free to their iPhone, iPad or iPod a number of ways, including from the App Store, iTunes or at the trail's website, AStoryLikeNoOther.com/iphone.

Storm Troupers, Continued from page 8.

I was born. For the next 40 years, they have been mired in the muck of mediocrity, until last season. With the help of Sean Payton, Drew Brees, Reggie Bush, Jonathan Vilma and Darren Sharper, our city was taken on a ride to the NFL's Promised Land.

While the boys in Black and Gold have made us peacock proud by bringing a world title to the Crescent City, I — and most WhoDats in New Orleans East — would trade in the Super Bowl trophy in a heartbeat for a Super Wal-Mart, a first-class hospital and quality family entertainment and restaurants. That's the least that the troupers of New Orleans East deserve. We need both industry titans and ordinary folks to partner with our community to make this great city great again.

As I recently watched a group of gospel superstars come together to deliver a stirring anthem for

the devastated people of Haiti, they asked the question, "Is there anybody out there listening?" I don't think that Kirk Franklin and Yolanda Adams would mind if I borrowed their hook for just a minute.

To all who are listening, please hear this. Take a chance on New Orleans East and invest in the most unique city in America. We chose to come back home and we're here to stay. New Orleans needs New Orleans East to come back bigger and stronger than ever before.

As I reflect on the past five years, I have come to the realization that the spirit of New Orleans is one grounded in a resolve that will not die. We are storm troupers. Not to be confused with the storm troopers that were specialized German soldiers during World War I, a storm trouper is someone who perseveres in the

face of difficulty or hardship; someone who keeps going when logic would suggest that they should throw in the towel.

We recognize the hardships we face, yet we have chosen to rise above it. We represent the best that this city has to offer and are focused on the promise of today and not the problems of yesterday. While we understand how far we still have to go, we appreciate how far we have come. We are troupers in every sense of the word. Always have been...always will be.

Attorney Wesley T. Bishop is an Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Southern University at New Orleans. He is a motivational speaker and author of the upcoming book entitled *Come Out Swinging: A Blueprint to Becoming Your Best*.



New help available for unemployed homeowners

Starting in August, a new federal program provides help for homeowners who have become unemployed so they can temporarily reduce or suspend their mortgage payments while they seek employment, according to Gloria Nye, LSU AgCenter Extension Family Economist.

Through the National Making Home Affordable Program, local mortgage servicers can temporarily suspend payments in full or reduce payments to no more than 31 percent of the homeowner's gross monthly income, even if that income is solely from unem-

ployment.

"There is no cost to apply for this program," Nye said. "Check with your mortgage servicer to see if you qualify."

Here are some of the criteria homeowners must meet to qualify for this program:

- The house must be your primary residence.
- You are not more than three months behind in your payments.
- You are unemployed and can document that you are receiving unemployment benefits.
- The first mortgage was origi-

nated on or before Jan. 1, 2009.

- The unpaid mortgage balance must be equal to or less than \$729,750 for a one-unit property.
- The homeowner was ineligible for a Home Affordable Modification.

"Mortgage servicers may not initiate foreclosure proceedings or conduct a foreclosure sale while a homeowner is being evaluated for this unemployment program," Nye said.

If you need assistance in applying for this program, call toll-free 888-995-HOPE (4673) to speak to

a HUD-approved housing counselor.

"Be aware that there are some unscrupulous mortgage servicers who may try to scare you into sending them a payment by telling you they are giving your account to collections immediately, that you will incur late fees or fines, that you will lose your house to foreclosure or ruin your credit, that you should sell something, use your savings or contact relatives or friends to bail you out.

"If this mortgage servicer heavy-handedness happens to you, get the individual's name and

number, then call a HUD-approved counselor at 888-995-HOPE to get help working with your mortgage company," Nye said.

There is also a new Second Lien Modification Program available to lower payments on a homeowner's second mortgage, Nye said.

For more specific information and eligibility criteria for these two new mortgage modification programs for unemployed homeowners, go to www.making-homeaffordable.gov and click on "Help for Unemployed Homeowners."

James Carter On Trial Team That Settles Important Katrina Wrongful Death Case

Methodist Hospital case could have a major impact on how hospitals plan for future disasters

NEW ORLEANS, LA, July 26, 2010 - Plaintiff's attorney and former New Orleans Councilman James Carter recently announced the settlement of an important Katrina wrongful death lawsuit that involved the death of a patient at Methodist Hospital during Hurricane Katrina.

Lamar Edwards sued Methodist Hospital and its owner, United Health Services, Inc., on behalf of his deceased mother, Lorraine Edwards, who died when the hospital's emergency fuel pump flooded and the hospital lost power.

Mr. Carter began this very important trial on the final day of his administration of the New Orleans City Council.

Mr. Carter was able to shed some light on the negligence that Methodist Hospital demonstrated due to lack of emergency preparedness plans. The case could have a major impact on how hospitals plan for future disasters.

Judge Paulette Irons presided over the case that was settled in Orleans Parish Civil District Court in just two weeks.

Veteran plaintiff's attorney Val Exnicios stated, "James Carter's direct examination in this trial was the best I have seen in my 21 years of practicing law."

Greg Di Leo served as the lead plaintiff's attorney, along with Former Councilman and Attorney James Carter. Val Exnicios and Jennifer Eagan served as co-counsel.

Additional details about this case can be found at the following webpage: <http://www.legalnewsline.com/news/227339-methodist-hospital-wrongful-death-case-settles>

Delgado Receives \$258,000 Learn and Serve America Higher Education Grant to Create Community Care Initiative

Delgado Community College is one of only six community colleges, and one of 28 higher education institutions, throughout the country to receive a 2010 fiscal year grant from Learn and Serve America and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Delgado will receive approximately \$258,000 over three years to create the Community Care Initiative (CCI) to strengthen the capacity of the college's Allied Health programs to meet the needs of the community by integrating service learning into the structure of clinical rotations. The students enrolled in those programs, which span Delgado's City Park and West Bank Campuses and Northshore sites, will assist community clinics and agencies in providing health services to low income and uninsured populations.

The grant will provide funding of approximately \$86,000 each year for the next three years, which will be matched dollar-for-dollar and almost entirely in kind by Delgado.

Competition for Learn and Serve America grants overall was quite challenging this year, with fewer than 10 percent of applications awarded. Delgado's winning proposal was submitted by its Service Learning Initiative, headed by Directors Warren Punecky Jr., Linda Kieffer and Lynn Robertson with the assistance of VISTA members Dane Emmerling and Sarah Hailey.

Dr. C.S. Gordon, Jr. Elected President Of Louisiana Missionary Baptist State Convention

First Pastor from New Orleans to lead the LMBSC in 137 Years

In an historic election, Dr. C.S. Gordon, Jr., was elected President of the Louisiana Missionary Baptist State Convention. Pastor Gordon previously served as the General Secretary for 18 years, Recording Secretary from 1990 – 1993 and as a member of the Finance Committee. Gordon is also the first Pastor from New Orleans elected to serve as President since its inception 137 years ago. He succeeds Dr. Harry

Blake who served as President of the Louisiana Missionary Baptist State Convention for 15 years.

"I am humbled by the vote of confidence from my fellow brethren in Christ," said Dr. C.S. Gordon, Jr. "I will help lead our organization with the power of the Holy Spirit and I am optimistic about the future of our Convention." "I pledge to work with the Board of Directors, Pastors, and members

of our great convention in compliance with the Constitutional guidelines."

Dr. C.S. Gordon, Jr. has been the Pastor of New Zion Baptist Church in Central City for the past 23 years. He holds an Honorary Doctorate and Master of Divinity from Union Baptist College and Theological Seminary; he earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from Southern University at New Orleans. Pastor Gordon

understands his calling and the importance of service to others and their communities; presently he is the President of the United Baptist Association, Inc. and Moderator of the Baptist Pastors of Greater New Orleans and Vicinity. He is also a board member of the Louisiana Advisory Council of the United Negro College Fund, Inc. and Southern University at New Orleans Campus Ministry.

In 100th Anniversary Speech Morial Promises NUL is Here to Stay

By Hazel Trice Edney
NNPA Editor-in-Chief

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – The National Urban League, known for its hundreds of affiliates tucked in mostly inner city neighborhoods across the nation, is confronting the human faces of unemployment, home loss and economic blight every day.

That is the reason that a hundred years since its founding, NUL President Marc Morial is challenging people – from the Congress to the grassroots – to see and be sensitized to the economic pain that his affiliate staff members must deal with daily.

“Look around, and they will see what we see: 15 million Americans out of work. A national unemployment rate of nearly 10 percent, with African-American unemployment much worse at nearly 16 percent,” he listed in prepared remarks for his anniversary speech Wednesday at the National Urban League kick off, held at the First Baptist Church Glenarden in Landover, MD.

He continued, “Nearly half of African-American teens can’t find work. Look around, and they will see what we see: a million young people dropping out of school each year. Look around, and they



Marc Morial

will see what we see: African-Americans and Latinos are two to four times more likely to lack health insurance. Look around,

and they will see what we see: an epidemic of housing foreclosures; tax cuts being promoted by some for only the wealthiest; jobs being shipped overseas; a trillion dollars misspent on the war in Iraq.”

And even with the clarity of those social and economic ills, some still have the audacity to ask “whether the National Urban League is still relevant,” Morial said.

“Perhaps they suffer from a form of beltway Blindness, or they are living in a gated community, or in a fancy office that is detached from reality.”

The NUL, moving into its second century, once again finds itself shepherding the nation through a crisis, Morial said. It is those who are in positions to avert the disasters that disappoint him most.

“In the face of all of this, as opposed to a coalition of the willing, we have a cabal of obstructionists in the United States Senate, who’ve used the filibuster time and time again to block action on things like summer jobs for our teens,” he said. “How can anyone stand in the way of providing real work opportunities to the young people who represent our future leaders? How can anyone stand in the way of providing an opportu-

nity for young people to learn the value of real work and the work ethic that summer job opportunities can provide?”

Morial says the summer jobs failure is an indication that America has lost a significant part of its conscience.

“There is something inconsistent and wrong when a nation will commit a trillion dollars to bail out financial institutions and a trillion dollars to undertake wars and a trillion dollars in tax loopholes filtered through the federal budget that would equivocate when it comes to something so basic, simple and wholesome as summer jobs for our teens.”

He promised that the NUL will not flinch, but will stay around into the next century as a friend to the poor and disadvantaged:

“As long as there are people out of work, as long as there are people in need of better schools, as long as there’s a need for safe, decent and wholesome after-school programs, as long as there are people who long to become homeowners and are looking for somewhere to turn, this National Urban League and Urban League Movement is not only relevant, but we are here to stay.”

Trailblazer, Continued from p5.

had the opportunity to learn throughout my life and fulfilling my purpose, as God planned, is where the vision to “Change The World One Child At A Time” began to form.” “As advised by a dear friend I began in 2002 writing the vision for a child in need to have better access to full eye health care.”

Working for many years as a Mental Health Case Manager has allowed for years of experience as an educator, and advocate but most of all, it led her to research a means of change in the way vision and dental healthcare is accessed and most importantly enabled her to gain experience educating and empowering parents. She says, “It is impossible to service a child and not touch the family and I realize that every time I touch a child I touch tomorrow”.

In addition to her work with THE EYES HAVE IT!, she sings gospel music with the Power House Church of God Praise Ministry as well as having traveled around the world as a proud member of Lyle Henderson & Emanuel. “I understand that my role in the business sector is rooted and grounded in my creator and singing his songs keeps me filled and equipped, and for the most part it affords me yet another chance to serve.”

Lynn Hobbs-Green is a woman on a mission to help young people see their way to a better life. She is a ‘woman of vision’ and Data News Weekly is honored to present her with the Trailblazer Award for the month of July.

Cover Story, Continued from p3.

Will St. Aug revamp to service the growing Hispanic population in the city?

Actually I’ve thought about that. It’s something that has peaked my interest. I think they’re underserved, partially since there’s been an increase. My only concern is the language barrier. Some of the ones that have come are first generation Americans, so their primary language is Spanish. And so we’re not equipped to deal with multi languages. But that is something that could be addressed.

When I envision St. Aug, I think first of the band, then the football team, then oak paddles. What are your thoughts on discipline at the school?

(Paddling) is a policy of the school. Obviously, I don’t have any major objection to it. My sons have come through here. I wouldn’t have taken the job if I disagreed with it totally. I think it has some misconceptions and myths that have over the years gotten exaggerated. It is not the first form of discipline that the school uses, but maybe the ultimate or the last resort. I do know coming in that a study has been done by an external group that talked to parents,

students, former students, all of who have recommended it, so to speak. It’s here (laughing), it’s not going to go anywhere anytime soon. And the school constantly reviews it to make sure there is no abuse. There hasn’t been. We’ve been using it for 60 years and there hasn’t been any abuse of it.

And it has changed over time in terms of how it’s used, when it’s used. As a student, I only got paddled twice in the four years I was here.

What happened?

First time, I was a freshman. It was because somebody did something stupid in class; turned a radio on or something and boys being boys, nobody wanted to rat on him. So we all got in trouble. The second time was my senior year. The person in front of me was aggravating me and we got caught doing something – I’m not exactly sure what we did, but that was it. That was the only two times I was hit, and I’ve lived to tell about it! (laughing)



I grew up on the Gulf Coast. I know these waters. And I'm doing everything I can to clean them up. - Fred Lemond, BP Cleanup Operations

Making This Right

Beaches
Claims
Cleanup
Economic Investment
Environmental Restoration
Health and Safety
Wildlife

BP has taken full responsibility for the cleanup in the Gulf. And that includes keeping you informed.

Searching For And Cleaning Up The Oil

Every morning, over 50 spotter planes and helicopters search for oil off the coast, heading to areas previously mapped with satellite imagery and infrared photography. Once oil is found, they radio down to the 6,000 ships and boats of all sizes that are supporting the cleanup effort and working to collect the oil. These are thousands of local shrimping and fishing boats organized into task forces and strike teams, plus specialized skimmers mobilized from as far as the Netherlands.

We have recovered more than 27 million gallons of oil-water mixture from the Gulf. Other methods have also helped remove millions of additional gallons of oil from the water. We've deployed more than 8 million feet of boom to protect beaches and sensitive wildlife areas.

Hurricane Preparedness

In the event of a hurricane, our first priority is keeping people safe. In coordination with the Coast Guard and local officials, we may suspend operations temporarily but have organized to resume them as soon as possible.

Our Responsibility

We have already spent more than \$3.2 billion responding to the spill and on the cleanup, and none of this will be paid by taxpayers. We will work in the Gulf as long as it takes to get this done. We may not always be perfect but we will do everything we can to make this right.

For information visit: bp.com/restorethegulf.gov
facebook.com/bpamerica
twitter.com/bp_america
youtube.com/bp

For assistance, please call:
To report oil on the shoreline: (866) 448-5816
To report impacted wildlife: (866) 557-1401
To make spill-related claims: (800) 440-0858
www.louisianagulfresponse.com

