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New Orleans

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STATE  
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UNION

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# President Obama Shows Conviction in his Third State of the Union Address



By Cheryl Mainor

President Barack Obama used Tuesday's State of the Union address to lay out a vision of America in which everybody gets a fair shot at

economic success and everybody – including “the wealthy” – plays by the same rules as the average citizen.

Obama's address, which comes in the midst of a rapidly escalating presidential campaign season, delivered a strong message about the

need for social and economic equality and put forward a handful of new policy ideas targeting tax reform, college affordability and clean energy. But by and large, Obama's third State of the Union was focused on proposals for boosting the economy and ensuring protections for the

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## DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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President Barack Obama addresses the joint session of Congress at the 2012 State of the Union Address.

middle class.

"Millions of Americans who work hard and play by the rules every day deserve a government and a financial system that do the same," Obama said. "It's time to apply the same rules from top to bottom. No bailouts, no handouts, and no copouts. An America built to last insists on responsibility from everybody."

Obama laid out some notable new policy proposals, including the creation of a new international minimum tax on U.S. companies making profits overseas; the launching of a new trade enforcement unit that would target unfair trade practices in countries around the world, including China; and a plan to shift federal aid away from colleges that don't keep down tuition costs. He also announced that the Defense Department will make history's largest renewable energy purchase – totaling 1 gigawatt. The President can use his executive power to make the last item happen.

Ahead of the address, senior administration officials who spoke only on background and wouldn't be quoted, said the underlying message of the speech is that Obama's economic policies have been working and should be con-

tinued. The country had already lost 4 million jobs to the recession before Obama came into office and lost another 4 million before his policies took effect, they said. By contrast, Obama's policies have created more than 3 million private sector jobs in the past two years.

Regarding President Obama's State of the Union Address, New Orleans Mayor Landrieu said; "Last week, when I met with President Obama, he committed to continuing to rebuild the American economy by focusing on American manufacturing, American energy, education and skills for American workers, and a renewal of American values like support for the middle class. Tonight, President Obama demonstrated that he understands the needs of the American people and specifically those of us in cities across our country."

"President Obama is a key partner in New Orleans' renewal, and I look forward to working with him as we rebuild our City and this nation's economy."

During his remarks, Obama reiterated his support for instituting the "Buffett rule," a concept that he and Congressional Democrats have been pushing for months as a way to pay for their legislative priorities. Named after billionaire

Warren Buffett, the rule would require people making more than \$1 million a year to pay a minimum effective rate of at least 30 percent.

Former Congressional Black Caucus Chair Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-Miramar) made the following statement in response to President Obama's address:

"In the past year, both the nation and the world have seen many changes. We have brought our troops home from Iraq, saw the dismantling of al Qaeda with the death of Osama bin Laden, and the whole world witnessed as many brutal dictators were unseated during the Arab Spring. Unfortunately, this same year brought a multitude of manufactured crises and inaction by House Republicans who failed to address the urgent need for job creation in America. The President is right; the American people can't wait any longer. Enough is enough! We must come together and put the American economy, American jobs, and most importantly, the American people first."

When addressing Congress regarding fixing the economy and strengthening the middle class, President Obama said, "We can either settle for a country where

a shrinking number of people do really well, while a growing number of Americans barely get by," Obama said. "Or we can restore an economy where everyone gets a fair shot, everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same set of rules. What's at stake are not Democratic values or Republican values, but American values. We have to reclaim them."

Notable attendees at the event included Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz.), who made the trip to Washington, D.C., two days before she plans to step down to focus on her recovery after being shot in the head in Tucson in Jan. 2011. Giffords' husband, former astronaut Mark Kelly, also attended as a guest of the First Lady.

The President isn't wasting any time when it comes to selling his economic vision to the country. On Wednesday, he kicked off a three-day tour of five states, Iowa, Arizona, Nevada, Colorado and Michigan, which are key battlegrounds in the upcoming presidential race. The move is a convenient way for Obama to connect his governing activities to his campaigning, which has already gotten off the ground but is not yet operating at full force.

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# Rebirth

## The Sound of New Orleans

By Edwin Buggage

The Second Line and Brass Bands are a synonymous part of New Orleans musical culture. These distinct dissonant sounds are one of many pieces of a soundtrack of a City that marches to the beat of its own drums. It is part of the sonic tapestry of a City filled with music where people flock from around the globe to experience the uniqueness of America's most international City. On this day I am talking to a man that for over a decade have redefined the brass band sound. Phil Frazier is the Founder of Rebirth Brass Band, a group who has become a staple if one is to come to New Orleans, where their regular gig at the Maple Leaf Bar on a Tuesday Night is a standing room only event where sweaty bodies of people of all races and classes "buckjump" to the infectious sounds of Rebirth.

Today Frazier's signature gold tooth smile is gleaming as he looks forward to heading to the Los Angeles for the Grammy's where Rebirth has been nominated in the category of Best Regional Roots Category. "It feels like a dream come true being nominated for a Grammy; it was one of my goals and now it's been accomplished," says Frazier. Talking about the group and their nearly three decades of performing and being critically acclaimed and blazing stages wherever they perform are now on the radar screen; and are nominated for the music industry's greatest award. "It took a lot of hard work. We have been at this for almost thirty-years and we've had our ups and downs; we've had some great musicians come through our group like Kermit Ruffins and Shamarr Allen; and now we have nine members who bring something special into the mix that is the music of Rebirth," he says excitedly of the group and its evolution.



On this day Frazier is delighted as he reminisces about the beginning of a band that started playing small gigs and are now world renowned. "When we started we were called the 'Group Brass Band' and we were doing a gig near the St. Thomas Housing Project, and there was a man there that told us we should call yourselves 'Rebirth' you'll be young and doing something different; and it's stuck with us since 1983," laughing as he recounts the band's beginnings.

Phil Frazier and his brother Keith Frazier who also is a member of Rebirth are the heartbeat that keeps the groove, and Phil says that music has always been an important part of their lives. "My mother is Barbra Frazier a Gospel Pianist who first got us interested in music," says Frazier

of the beginning of his lifelong love affair with music." Continuing he says, "We all started doing music together, Me, my brother Keith and my late brother Kerwin James; we started being involved in music when I was in fourth grade. Then I attended Joseph S. Clark playing in the band where I switched from trombone to tuba and then I attended Grambling State University and was in the marching band."

While there are many brass bands out there Rebirth has forged a niche with a sound and an appeal that is undeniable, and is evident on this night as I watch the audience, a colorful mosaic that is a taste of the different slices of life on one accord dancing to the music of Rebirth. "We try to be spontaneous and real and make music for the people and that is

what I feel is one of the reasons we have been able to connect to so many people on so many different levels," says Frazier.

Throughout the years Rebirth has performed on stages all over the world, "In all our travels I love all the places we go to expose people to the sound of our music, but some of my favorite cities to perform and visit are San Francisco, New York and Amsterdam." Continuing he says, "I love New Orleans and being able to spread our music and culture and being ambassadors showing the world what is great about our City."

As the City continues to recover Rebirth has become more than just the name of a band, but a theme for a City that is on the verge of a renaissance. As we near the end of our conversation

he reflects on the future of the music, culture and people of his City. "We did the first second line coming back to the City, and the feeling of the people was emotional; we were celebrating after being uncertain about our City's future," say Phil Frazier recounting the tumultuous times where the fate of the City stood in the balance."

Speaking with conviction in his voice of his connection and the passion he feels for his City he says, "I was moved during this second line. I think about the feeling I had during that time everyday thinking about how we made it home to a place where so many of our memories and life we've lived; and that we could continue to have a life here, but it saddens me that some of our people still have not been able to return home."

In 2012 the City is experiencing a makeover where some do not understand the traditions of a City and its people. One that came to a head and touched Frazier in a personal way when his brother Kerwin James passed and an impromptu second line was held in Tremé and those new residents unfamiliar with the tradition called the authorities causing a melee between the people and the police. "Of the efforts of some to change the City he says it is important to retain elements of the City's culture that is what makes it the jewel it has become, "I don't want to even think about New Orleans without the culture, the people and the music. Music needs New Orleans and New Orleans needs music it goes hand in hand I can't even imagine it. Living in New Orleans is amazing, there is so much to experience, where people live to enjoy life, and we are all connected and live our lives together as a family and it is what continues to fuel my life and my music."



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# Gerod Stevens

## *Giving the People a Voice*

by: Edwin Buggage

On the airwaves of WBOK 1230AM in the early morning drive to work there is a man who opens up the lines to give the citizens of the City a voice. This man is one who is dedicated to serving his community and being a positive force for change. The Data News Trailblazer for the month of January is none other than WBOK's Program Director Gerod Stevens.

For over two decades he has called New Orleans home after moving from his native North Carolina. "It was a bit of culture shock at first, but I have come to love the City and its people, this is a City with a great sense of history and culture," says Stevens of his adopted home city.

In his time in the New Orleans he's worked in radio and says it is an important part of giving voice to the aspirations of a community, "Historically, the radio station was the place where people got information about what was going on in their community and was the driving force to get people involved in things that promoted community uplift," says Stevens of radio and its impact to organize a community.

Stevens has served in many capacities in the radio industry, today he is the Program Director of WBOK 1230AM, and is the host to the morning show that is a must listen for the citizens of the City, "I really love what I am doing right now as part of a station that's mission is about uplifting a community and giving the people a platform to discuss issues."

One of the issues that is close to the heart of Stevens is the plight of African-American males, he says sometimes he is asked why saving them



or caring for them is important, "I realize so many of our young people are faced with choices in life and sometimes they make bad decisions, but we must be able to find a way to restore hope in them and give them second chances and opportunities to be successful in society and secondly it could have easily been me," says Stevens.

Continuing he says very plainly as the father of a young daughter is one of the other reasons he promotes uplifting young Black men, "Someone told

me these are not your children why care, but one of those children will meet my daughter and I want her to have a chance to live a happy and prosperous life, because I will not be here forever," as he recounts of the many conversations he's had of why he is an advocate of educating and saving African-American boys.

When you listen to his show Gerod Stevens is about empowering a community whether it's economically, politically, educationally or any other way, he is on the frontlines sounding the alarm and opening up the lines so people can have a voice. "In the last elections people voting in single digits is alarming, some in our community need to place some of the same energy they put into other things that aren't as important and if they did that it will make our community better because we would have such a bigger voice and help shape the agenda and direction of the City."

Always an advocate of the people he says, "It is about getting involved and some in power don't want us to ask questions, but the job of the community is to ask questions." Gerod Stevens is a man people wake up to every morning, and in turn his show is a wake-up call to the community. He is a voice in the community that matters and he gives voice to those who do not sometimes have a voice, a forum where they can be heard by the world. No longer are their voices muted or relegated to the sidelines, Gerod Stevens has given more than information to a community, but is an inspiration. And for his contribution we award him our Trailblazer Award for the Month of January 2012.

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# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## NNPA in New Orleans

The National Newspaper Publishers Association held its Mid-Winter Conference last week in New Orleans. Members from all over the U.S. which make up the Black Press of America convened to discuss industry growth, and to share some of our great hospitality. And of course, being a member of NNPA, Data was there!



NNPA Chairman Cloves Campbell, with Honoree Lambert Boissiere and Past NNPA Chairman Danny Bakewell



Data News Weekly Publisher Terry Jones, Danny Bakewell and Cloves Campbell



NNPA Chairman Cloves Campbell, Representative Barbara Ballard and Djibril Diallo

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NNPA Chairman Cloves Campbell (center) and conference staff



Terry Jones with Honoree Calvin Mackie and Cloves Campbell



# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

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NNPA Chairman Cloves Campbell and Data News Weekly Publisher (far right) with NNPA sponsors from Nielsen, Wells Fargo, Ford, Toyota and General Motors



Big Chief David Montana and Drummer Eric B



Local New Orleans Publishers, Beverly McKenna, Terry Jones, NNPA Chairman Cloves Campbell and Dwight McKenna with Leah Chase, at Dooky Chase Restaurant

Photos by Kichea S. Burt

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# "Red Tails"

## Shoots Down Stereotypes



**Marc Morial**  
President and CEO  
National Urban League

### To Be Equal

"We hope what youngsters get out of the story is that under some dire circumstances we prevailed. We performed successfully and we opened doors that they don't have to fight to." Col. Charles McGee, "Red Tails" Technical Consultant and surviving member of the Tuskegee Airmen.

Last week, I attended the New

York premiere of a new George Lucas Film about the heroic exploits of the all-Black Fighter Pilot Squadron that helped America defeat the Nazi's in World War II. I am not in the business of promoting new movies. But, there are several reasons that compel me to highlight the release of "Red Tails," the story of the pioneering Tuskegee Airmen. First, the movie has a virtually all-Black cast with Black male heroes – a rare depiction by Hollywood. Cuba Gooding, Jr., Terrence Howard, Nate Parker, David Oyelowo, and NE-YO all play key roles. Lucas has said that the Black theme and Black cast were major reasons Hollywood repeatedly declined to back the film. He struggled 23 years to get major studio financing. "I showed it to all of them," he said, "and they said no, we don't

know how to market a movie like this." He wound up pouring \$58 million of his own money into the project.

The second reason I am excited about this film is that recent comments by political candidates denigrating the African-American community and reviving outdated stereotypes, make it more important than ever to spotlight the historic contributions and public service of Black Americans.

In just the last few weeks, two presidential candidates, Rick Santorum and Newt Gingrich, have perpetuated false and destructive racial stereotypes in desperate attempts to score political points. In a discussion of social assistance programs, Santorum said he doesn't want to "make Black people's lives better by giving them someone else's money." Santo-

rum's appalling comment implied that people of color are a drain on resources mainly provided by Whites, even though about 70 percent of food stamp recipients are White.

Santorum's statement was followed a few days later by a comment from Newt Gingrich that "African-Americans should demand pay checks not food stamps." Gingrich has called Barack Obama "The best food stamp President in American History." We are outraged by the comments of both candidates and denounced them in separate statements. The fact is social safety net programs serve families in dire circumstances from all walks of life. Many of those who now find themselves in need, whatever their ethnic background are the very people who have paid into these programs and

made sacrifices to support their families and our nation throughout their working lives. Which brings me back to the Tuskegee Airmen.

In the 1940s, before our Armed Forces were integrated, the Tuskegee Airmen became the first Black Aviators in the United States Military. They were trained at Tuskegee Institute, now Tuskegee University in Alabama. Despite discrimination, during World War II, these brilliant airmen fought fascism abroad and returned to fight racism back home.

Lucas teamed with Black Co-Executive Producer, Charles Floyd Johnson, and Black Director, Anthony Hemingway to create

**Red Tails, Continued**

on page 11.

# Who Gets Food Stamps?



**Julianne Malveaux**  
NNPA Columnist

Newt Gingrich is playing racial politics and he is playing to win. First, he says that Black children should get jobs as janitors (why not suggest they get the same consulting contract he did at Freddie Mac – I'm with Mitt Romney here, what did Gingrich tell Freddie Mac that was worth more than a million dollars). Then he says that he wants to tell the NAACP that we should demand jobs, not food stamps. He so bristles at Fox Commentator Juan Williams that he gets a standing O in South Carolina. And he has

repeatedly described President Barack Obama as a "food stamp" President. It's race baiting, pure and simple, and few have called him on it.

The true food stamp story goes something like this. In 2006 just 26.5 million Americans received food stamps. By 2011 the number had spiked to more than 45 million people. This has been the result of the Great Recession that has left at least 13 million people officially unemployed for an average of 40 weeks. Those are the official numbers, but they may be twice as high when we consider the people who have part-time work and want full-time work and those who have dropped out of the labor market because it costs too much to look for work. President Obama is not a food stamps President; he is a President who inherited an economic crisis. Newt is being extremely disingenuous and extraordinarily racist in his food stamps rap.

While about 14 percent of all of us – one in seven – gets food

stamps, in some states the number is as high as one in five. In South Carolina, for example, poverty is greater than it is in the nation and 18.2 percent of South Carolinians get food stamps. The number in Maine is 18.6 percent, in Louisiana 19.2 percent, in Michigan 19.7 percent, in Oregon 20.1 percent, and in Mississippi 20.7 percent. Given the racial dynamics in South Carolina, did Newt decide to show out in a state where there is more poverty than elsewhere, and when the racial resentments (remember I said Confederate flag waving) don't need much fuel to turn to fire. He got a standing O by pandering to racial stereotypes. And that pandering may well have propelled him into victory.

Newt has managed to paint food stamps as a Black program, partly by describing our President as a "food stamps" President, and partly by putting food stamps in context with the NAACP. But Mr. Gingrich, often touted for his intelligence, must be bright enough to know that most food stamp recipi-

ents are not African-American. Indeed, according to the Associated Press, 49 percent of food stamp recipients are White, 26 percent are African-American, and 20 percent are Hispanic. Indeed, some of the folks who gave Newt a standing O are food stamp recipients, but they chose to bond with Newt's racially coded messages instead of their own economic reality.

Poverty has a different face than it has ever had before. People who used to have big jobs and fancy cars are now struggling to make ends meet. People who always struggled are now strangling. More than 2 million families have doubled up in the past year because they needed a family lifeline to save their lives and their worlds. More than 40 percent of African-American children live in poverty. Newt Gingrich would blame the poor for their situation, but the economy that President Obama inherited is an economy that has thrust people into despair. Food stamps are a lifeline for many. How dare can-

didate Gringrich attack President Obama for providing relief to 45 million Americans!

Most food stamp recipients are people who used to work, and they would, frankly, rather be working than receiving assistance. But they have downsized their lifestyles, their dreams, and their expectations. They are waiting for the job market to roar back. Half of the 45 million are White, and some of them stood to applaud Gingrich. Do they really think that a man who disdains the poor will provide them with a lifeline? Do they really believe that a man who is selling wolf tickets to the NAACP is really concerned with the well-being of the least and the left out. The poverty that too many Americans experience is repugnant. The extent to which politicians trivialize such poverty is character revealing. Who will put American back to work? Who will alleviate poverty?

Julianne Malveaux is President of Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina





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# African-American Women: From Prematurity to Early Infant Care

## *What You Need to Know*

By Phyllis A. Dennerly, MD

Every mother hopes to have a complication-free pregnancy and to give birth to a healthy baby after a full 40 weeks. Unfortunately, premature births – that is, any births before 37 completed weeks of gestation – are too common within the African-American community. While prematurity is a problem for American women of all ethnicities, African-Americans have the highest chance of delivering a baby prematurely. About 100,000 Black babies are born too early each year, representing nearly 20% of all preterm births in the U.S.

**Why Are African-American Babies More Likely to be Premature?**

Unfortunately, science has yet to explain all of the reasons for preterm labor, or why prematurity is more prevalent among African-Americans. Even if a woman takes every possible precaution, she can still have a premature baby. There are, however, some known risk factors for premature

birth, some of which are common among African-American women.

High blood pressure and diabetes – both risk factors for prematurity – are significant health problems among African-American women. These are often brought on by being overweight and having high cholesterol levels. In addition, studies show that smoking during pregnancy often leads to premature labor. Approximately 25% of Black women in the U.S. do not receive early prenatal care within the first trimester of pregnancy. This may contribute to increased prematurity rates among African-American women.

**What Challenges Does a Premature Baby Face?**

Being born early disrupts normal organ development. For example, the lungs of the premature baby are not as capable of absorbing oxygen and they collapse more because they do not have enough of a type of cell that makes important substances that allow for the lung to stay open. This puts premature babies at

increased risk for respiratory complications. Preemies are also born without all the virus-fighting antibodies they need and get from their mother while in the womb. This means they have an immature immune system and are more prone to infections such as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), a widespread seasonal virus that is very common during the fall and winter months.

Even babies born just a few weeks early are at increased risk for health problems. In fact, the majority of preemies are born between 32 and 35 weeks gestation. Parents of larger premature babies need to remember that while their baby may look healthy, he or she might still face complications.

**What is RSV and Why Are African-American Infants at Risk?**

RSV is a very common virus. It's so common that virtually 100% of all children contract it by the age of 2. In most healthy children, the symptoms are similar to the common cold and parents may

never know that their child has it. But for preemies and babies with certain heart and lung conditions, RSV can lead to a very serious infection requiring medical attention. In fact, RSV infection is the leading cause of infant hospitalization in the U.S., representing 1 in 13 pediatrician's visits and 1 in 38 trips to the Emergency Department.

According to some studies, infants from multicultural communities—particularly African-American babies—are at increased risk of developing severe RSV, resulting in hospitalization and even death. In fact, one study of almost 20 years of data showed that twice as many Black infants die from RSV each year, compared to White children. While we don't know the exact reason for the increased risk of RSV among African-American babies, the fact that more premature babies are born in this community than any other may be a contributing factor.

Other known risk factors that may increase the chances of get-

ting RSV include school aged siblings, maternal tobacco use, day care attendance, exposure to environmental smoke/air pollutants, and crowded living conditions.

**How Can Parents Protect Their Babies from RSV?**

There is no treatment for RSV, so prevention is key. RSV is highly contagious, so washing hands and/or using a hand sanitizer gel, cleaning toys and bedding frequently and avoiding bringing your baby around people who are sick or in large crowds, where they may be exposed to the virus, can help. Babies at high-risk for RSV infection may qualify for a preventive therapy. Parents should speak to their child's health care provider about preventing RSV. To learn more about the virus, visit [www.RSVprotection.com](http://www.RSVprotection.com).

Phyllis A. Dennerly, MD is the Chief, Division of Neonatology, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

Professor of Pediatrics, University of Pennsylvania.

## A Call for Equity, Transparency & Consistency in the BESE Charter Application Process

By The Coalition for  
Community Leadership

It takes a Community to raise a child and we, the Coalition for Community Leadership in Education, are the Community! We represent a growing number of concerned residents of New Orleans desiring greater community ownership of our public schools. We share a common commitment to the academic, physical and emotional well-being of our children! We hail from all corners of our City and collectively reflect the diversity of our community to ensure there are high-quality academic options that can meet the needs of ALL children. We have responded to the very urgency of this moment by developing diverse school options to meet the

critical needs of our children. We have been unfairly denied and told that the community from whence our children hail is inadequate to effectively educate them. Today we stand as a community demanding a fair and equitable process for chartering schools that allows local groups to fairly compete in the opportunity to educate our children.

We want a level playing field and reliable process in which to compete. The current tone of the education reform movement in New Orleans is that of corporate reform and community disenfranchisement. This is evidenced by minimal local leadership of local charter schools, the diminishing role of locally elected officials with decision-making power on

public education issues, and community groups' inability to successfully gain charters to local public schools. In the last round of charter school applications filed with the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, no charters were granted to any of the nine new community groups that applied. Several of us have tried unsuccessfully a number of times to secure charters. We are concerned that being community-led and driven organizations is a scarlet letter for groups navigating the BESE/NACSA Charter Application Process.

Too many students are underserved by the existing school models. Data from the 2010-2011 school year indicate that in the Recovery School District, four of

every ten students did not graduate from high school and countless others dropped out of the system prior to high school entry. We are proposing innovative and evidenced-based approaches to address these unmet needs that have been proven to increase student achievement and graduation rates. Many of our Boards are already working with the schools and students we aim to serve, and we have data proving our collaboration with the schools increased student attendance, improved teacher retention, and increased student performance by two grade levels.

We are demanding that our hard work and due diligence to build a successful application be met with transparency, consistency and reliability that is incumbent upon any public process.

Instead commitments to build Technical Assistance Programs have not been honored, rules have changed mid-stream, and most egregiously there is clear evidence that the same standard is not consistently applied in evaluating each application. As a Coalition, we have identified specific actions that can remedy problems in the Charter School Application Process:

1. The current Charter School Application Process is flawed and highly subjective. RESOLUTION: Publish the rubric upon which charter applications

BESE, Continued on page 11.



# City of New Orleans Receives Honors at US Mayor's Conference

The United States Conference of Mayors presented the City of New Orleans with two awards during their winter meeting in Washington, D.C.

The City's wastewater partnership with Veolia Water North America was recognized for excellence in public/private partnerships. The partnership was formed in 1992 to help the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board meet the challenges of operating and managing the City's wastewater facilities. Since then, the project has made some outstanding achievements, including maintaining consistent environmental compliance with State and EPA regulations, leveraging environmental expertise on a new environmental project, generating \$26 million in overall savings, and managing environmental operations during Hurricane Katrina.

"This award highlights the importance of public/private partnerships within government," said Mayor Mitch Landrieu. "This partnership has continuously saved taxpayers money and delivered high environmental compliance."

Mayor Landrieu also accepted a \$4,000 DollarWiSe Summer Youth



L to R, the Honorees and Presenters: Bob Lynch (President, Americans for the Arts), Anna Deavere Smith, Tom Cochran (CEO-USCM), Mayor Elizabeth Kautz (Burnsville, MN), Mayor James Brainard (Carmel, IN), Herbie Hancock, Rocco Landesman (Chairman, NEA), Mayor Michael Nutter (Philadelphia, PA), Mayor Mitch Landrieu (New Orleans, LA)

Grant on behalf of the City of New Orleans. Each year, in conjunction with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the DollarWiSe Summer Youth Campaign provides grants to five cities with innovative strategies to incorporate financial edu-

cation into their summer youth employment programs.

The City plans to use the grant funds to boost existing financial literacy programs and financial education activities, which were designed by Junior Achievement

of Greater New Orleans, Inc. In addition to financial literacy workshops provided in previous years, incentives will be available for each program promoting principles of saving, investing and money management.

BESE/ Continued from page 10.

will be evaluated including the weight assigned to each component of the application. Like most competitive processes, including the Federal Government's Race to the Top program and i3, applicants are afforded a clear understanding of the standards to which the applications will be held and the respective weight assigned to each section. We demand the same standards be applied to the state's Charter Application Process.

2. There is an uneven playing field. The Charter Application Process, disadvantages community groups because it requires significant human and financial resources to navigate that are more accessible to large, Corporate Charter Management Organizations and those currently in existence. Most successful applicants were provided with

technical assistance and financial support to develop a high quality applicant. Local groups have not been afforded access to these resources. RESOLUTION: We are calling on the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools, New Schools for New Orleans and Louisiana Department of Education to leverage the significant philanthropic investments that have been made in building charter schools in our City to build a viable Technical Assistance Program to support local groups who are committed to excellence and who will ultimately bear the tax burden of sustaining what is built in this City.

3. The current effort lacks due process. RESOLUTION: All decisions concerning the 2011 Charter Application Process, are halted. We demand an appeals process be implemented to give

applicants the opportunity to respond to concerns identified in their applications simultaneously while the application cycle is still active as opposed to waiting until after the application cycle has ended. We are recommending that the entire process be formally reviewed.

Make no mistake – we are resilient and committed to the education of our children! We are demanding a fair process that empowers communities to lead changes to improve public education in New Orleans. We expect resources allocated for community engagement in the school transformation process be directed towards supporting community groups participating in the Charter Application Process. We insist on community-led, sustainable reform of public education in New Orleans.

Red Tails / Continued  
from page 8.

a film they all hope will inspire a new generation of African-American youth. The message of the movie...the lesson of the Tuskegee Airmen is clear: We have the power to overcome any barrier to serve our nation and achieve our dreams. One movie won't solve the problem, but we think it's an important step in the right direction.

Marc H. Morial is the President and CEO of the National Urban League



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