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**New Orleans**

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**News Weekly**

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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

# State of the Union 2015

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# State of the Union 2015

*Local Citizens Respond to President Obama State of the Union Address*



Recently, President Barack Obama held his sixth State of the Union Address. In it he spoke about some of the administrations accomplishments including the unemployment rate being lower than it was since the financial crisis that met him upon taking office. In his time in office he spoke of the deficit being cut by two-thirds. He also noted that factories are opening up at its fastest pace in two decades and of course the crowning achievement of his administration the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare).

By Edwin Buggage

## Obama Spells out Agenda in State of the Union Address

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of the administrations accomplishments including the unemployment rate being lower than it was since the financial crisis that met him upon taking office. In his time in office he spoke of the deficit being cut by two-thirds. He also noted that factories are opening up at its fastest pace in two decades and of course the crowning achievement of his administration the Affordable

Care Act (Obamacare). During his speech he also talked about his recent initiatives such as ending the embargo against Cuba, in addition to working to make community colleges free across America, raising the minimum wage, guaranteed paid sick leave of at least 7 days for all employees and paid maternity leave.

As he laid out the administrations accomplishments

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Retired educator Almore Cato is a supporter of President Obama education agenda. "I am glad to see President Obama will be making an effort to help more people by attempting to make community colleges free. I think this would be helpful to so many because they're some kids that are not college ready, so for them to have an opportunity to go to college and get the type of training or transfer to a four year college is a great way to get them what they need to get them to the middle class."



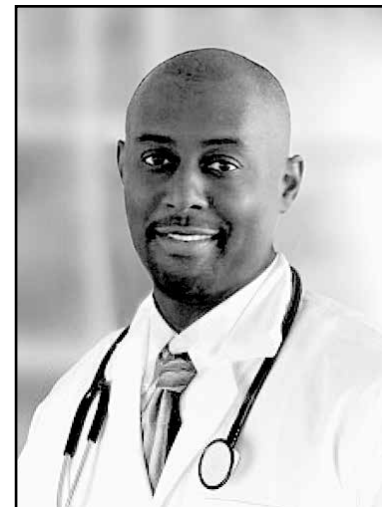
"I feel President Obama has addressed issues for women; childcare, healthcare and education. Race to the Top and other programs or the funds for students to go to school he has been an advocate for young people," says Counselor and author Ashaki Kaigler.



Retired Criminal District Court Judge Calvin Johnson feels that Barack Obama criminal justice agenda is having a positive impact, "I support and feel President Obama has done a great job in how he's worked to change drug laws, also moving away from mass incarceration and is doing a great job with Attorney General Eric Holder on criminal justice reform."



New Orleans native and international business consultant Erica Murray feels that it is important that the U.S. look at emerging markets and partner with them in addition to looking at the changing demographics of the workplace and look towards minorities and women as a source of untapped talent that needs to be developed if America is to stay competitive.



Health and Wellness Ambassador for New Orleans Eric Griggs M.D. feels in spite of bumpy start the Affordable Care Act has helped over 10 million people that were uninsured and has the potential to help many more. "Obamacare has us talking about and considering our collective health, and that is definitely a huge step in the right direction."

and his agenda moving forward Data News went out and asked a cross section of New Orleanians from the fields of business, medicine, education, the military, the Criminal Justice System and issues surrounding women about their take on the job the Obama Administration is doing. Also we asked them about the things they would suggest, things administration could do to better to serve the citizens of the U.S.

### Education for the Next Generation

In his speech President Obama spoke about the need for expanding education opportunities by making community colleges across the nation free. This is something retired Teacher Almore Cato feels is a good idea. "I am glad to see President Obama will be making an effort to help more people by attempting to make community colleges free. I think this would be helpful to so many because there are some kids that are not college ready, so for them to have an opportunity to go to college and get the type of training or transfer to a four-year college is a great way to get them what they need to get them to the middle class." While Cato is an advocate of this expansion of opportunity at the college level, he feels that it is important that kids get through the early grades and get the support they need. In his over three decades of teaching he says he's seen the demise of the profession and systemic problems

that's made it harder for students to achieve that is already underserved in so many other ways.

Speaking of the many at-risk youths he's taught over the years and some of the conditions they had to go to school under resembled less a school environment and more of a war zone he says, "There were kids who were brilliant, but had to go back into environments where much of what we taught is not reinforced. When I taught near a public housing development we had a code red, blue and yellow. If it was a code red kids would hit the floor. I remember one time guys were chasing someone with a gun through our yard while kids played outside. I also remembered a kindergarten class witnessed looking out the window on S. Dorgenois and Erato when someone getting shot in front of a store and that shouldn't be." Continuing he says if he had the opportunity to make a suggestion to President Obama he would say, "I would tell President Obama sit down and talk to some of the people who teach, especially those who teach in the inner city schools, that could assist David Johns whose been appointed as Executive Director of Educational Excellence for African-Americans to come up with solutions to the problems that plague our kids and schools, so they can reach their full potential."

### Respect for our Veterans

During his address when speaking of the veterans of this coun-

try, legislators from both sides of the aisle applauded the service of America's veterans. It is the one thing that both parties can agree on is honoring those who serve our country. But the reality does not match the rhetoric as witnessed with the recent problems at the Veteran's Administration; in addition to 22 veterans committing suicide per day and the streets of anywhere America being strewn with homeless veterans who suffer many problems ranging from drugs, alcoholism and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Jamie Jones is a veteran that served 21 years in the Army National Guard and Reserve and for a time in active duty working in a support capacity with Operation Iraqi Freedom. He's also worked with veterans using art therapy to help them cope with some of the problems that arise after returning to civilian life. He suggests that mental health personnel could be helpful while soldiers are in the field to better assess these issue earlier and it can perhaps catch some of these problems in the earlier stages; and may prevent suicide or other problems for returning soldiers. "First when many of these soldiers are displaying erratic behavior on the battle field, these things need to be caught earlier. I feel there needs to be psychological evaluations in the combat zone."

He also feels that at this time in American history where reservists have been activated more than any time during the Gulf War and the War in Afghanistan; and because of

their increased role should receive benefits commiserate with their commitment of service to their country during wartime. "If I were to have the opportunity to speak to the president I would say, I would like to receive the same benefits as regular Army retirees, because we fought in many battles and supported active duty personnel. Right now as a reservist we cannot receive benefits until we are 65, if we did 20 years or more I feel we should get paid immediately upon retiring."

### Women, Children and Criminal Justice

Women's issues are all of our issues, but have in previous administrations taken a back seat. But during Obama's time in office he has championed many issues central to women. He's worked hard to fight for equal pay for women, in addition to advocating for easier access to affordable child care and continues to support a woman's right to choose. Ashaki Kaigler is a counselor and works with women on many of the issues they face. "I feel President Obama has addressed issues for women; childcare, healthcare and education. Race to the Top and other programs and the funds for students to go to school. He has been an advocate for young people." Continuing she says, "I think even in spite of much of the opposition he's faced he supports women's issues."

Since there is a direct connection between family, school and the criminal justice system the Obama Administration has taken a holistic

approach to dealing with the issues of crime and violence. Today, we see incarceration rates dropping and crime rates going down as well. Retired New Orleans Criminal District Court Judge Calvin Johnson says this approach from the President and Attorney General Eric Holder is a good sign and a step in the right direction. Similar to some of the methods he utilized as a tough yet compassionate judge while on the bench where he instituted alternatives to harsh sentencing; and looked at crime not simply as a criminal justice issue, but a social issue. "I support and feel President Obama has done a great job in how he's worked to change drug laws, also moving away from mass incarceration; and he is doing a great job with Attorney General Eric Holder on criminal justice reform."

### Business, the Economy and Obamacare

Erica Murray is a native of New Orleans and is an International Business Consultant working with businesses across the globe. She feels that it is important that the U.S. look at emerging markets and partner with them in addition to looking at the changing demographics of the workplace, and look towards minorities and women as a source of untapped talent that needs to be developed if America is to stay competitive. "To garner a more thriving business environment, as a nation, we must

Cover Story, Continued on page 4.



# Bo Dollis Passes Away at 71

All of New Orleans is deeply saddened that legendary Big Chief Theodore "Bo" Dollis of the Wild Magnolias passed away early on Tuesday, January 20, 2015.

Big Chief Bo Dollis was instrumental in sharing the culture, music, and costuming practices of the Mardi Gras Indians with the outside world through early performances and recordings. After partnering with Quint Davis in 1970 for the landmark recording of "Henda Wanda", he performed at the very first Jazz Fest. He went on to bring the rich musical traditions of the Indians to audiences around the world with his funk band, the Wild Magnolias. Dollis was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellowship.



Over 100 friends and family members gathered at the Sportsman's Corner at Second and Dryades streets Tuesday night to hold an impromptu memorial service celebrating his life. The New Orleans Musicians' Clinic & Assistance Foundation will host a St. Joseph's Night salute to Big Chief Bo Dollis of the Wild Magnolias on Wednesday, March 19 from 5-7pm at 1525 Louisiana Avenue. The tribute will be an opportunity for all in the community to pay respects to Big Chief Bo Dollis as they make their way to the St. Joseph's Night festivities. Funeral arrangements are pending at press time.

CoverStory, Continued from page 3.

unify and establish international relations with countries such as Vietnam, Bangkok, and other emerging markets. We must provide "Made in America" products around the globe. In addition, entrepreneurs and business owners must embrace the concept of internationalization and prepare their businesses to launch to the global marketplace. Additionally, we must recognize the strength of female entrepreneurs and create business opportunities for them to soar as representatives of our nation."

The Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) has been the crowning achievement of the Obama Administration. While it's been praised by many it has been criticized by others as a flawed way to get health coverage to those who need it. Dr. Eric Griggs is the Health and Wellness Ambassador for the City of

New Orleans and a Data News Contributor; he says the law although in some ways flawed is better than what existed previously. "The number of Americans with insurance is up since the Affordable Care Act became a law. It's estimated that at least 7.3 million people have bought insurance thus far. This is obviously a good sign. Experts have been quoted saying that somewhere between 10 and 11 million people are now insured that were not insured before," says Griggs.

In his work in the community he sees that many are still unclear on the healthcare law and feels more education is needed. "The need for more community education is important if this law is to impact people in a positive way. I feel this has been the lingering issue since its inception. Some of the steam from the public education engine appears to have waned, and that's

where the main problem lies. The same fervor and mass education that took place last year to ensure the law's viability needs to be reignited and maintained."

With both houses of the U.S. Congress now a Republican majority, President Obama is in an uphill battle for the remainder of his presidency. Knowing that their main focus is to thwart his agenda with their main focus repealing or altering Obamacare. Griggs feels the law enactment was a positive move and continues to support Obamacare. "Whether or not the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act will be a sustained success that benefits us all or is a failed experiment with the best of intentions is a question. That only time will answer. What is clear however, Obamacare has us talking about and considering our collective health, and that is definitely a huge step in the right direction."

## Seasoned Finance Professional Janelle Alexander Joins PowerMoves

*NOLA to Fast-track High-Growth Minority Firms*

**New Entrepreneur-in-Residence adds to national potential of minority business programs.**

Janelle R. Alexander has joined PowerMoves.NOLA, underscoring the one-year old initiative's determination to grow its presence as the nation's leading initiative for high-growth minority entrepreneurs. Prior to joining PowerMoves.NOLA, Ms. Alexander spent the majority of her career on Wall Street—as a Vice President in Investment Banking at Goldman Sachs, and then co-founding Alprion Capital Management LP, a municipal bond-focused hedge fund investment vehicle.

PowerMoves.NOLA is a national initiative focused on providing access to capital, connections and guidance to increase the number of America's minority founded venture-backed businesses. The organization is headquartered in New Orleans.

"A seasoned entrepreneur of color, Janelle understands firsthand the challenges of launching and growing startups," said Earl Robinson, President of PowerMoves.NOLA. "The experience, strategic thinking and capital markets expertise she brings are a perfect fit with our goal of developing capacity for minority entrepreneurs."

Ms. Alexander will be relocating from New York to New Orleans in her role as PowerMoves.NOLA's second Entrepreneur-in-Residence. Ms. Alexander will focus on sourcing, vetting and coaching PowerMoves.NOLA Fellows, as well as directing the pitch competition during PMN's annual conference. Ad-



Janelle Alexander

ditionally, Janelle will be a national ambassador of PMN, as New Orleans positions itself as the minority entrepreneurship hub of the nation.

Ms. Alexander's 15 years of experience in finance, sales, marketing and business development began at global firms such as Citi, Ogilvy & Mather and Goldman Sachs. Over the last 5 years, she has focused her expertise as an active investor and strategic advisor to early-stage companies, and as a serial entrepreneur.

Ms. Alexander says of joining the PowerMoves.NOLA team, "I have the privilege of working with an immensely talented, innovative team that shares my passion for fostering entrepreneurship—I am thrilled. New Orleans is embracing its entrepreneurial activity in a way that will set it apart from other emerging startup hubs. There is a compelling energy and community here, and I feel fortunate to call New Orleans home."

Founder of PowerMoves.NOLA Leslie Jacobs adds, "We are very excited to have Janelle on board. Her appointment is a testament that New Orleans is becoming an increasingly attractive destination for talented professionals."

"Depression doesn't have to keep us down.  
The healing is in me, and the healing  
can be extended to others."  
- Thabiti Boone

mental HEALTH  SHARE OURSELVES... HEALING starts WITH US



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# First NBC Bank Announces Florida Acquisition

**First NBC Bank, the banking subsidiary of First NBC Bank Holding Company ("First NBC") (NASDAQ: FNBC), announced this week that it has entered into an agreement with the**

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("FDIC") to purchase certain assets and assume certain liabilities of First National Bank of Crestview, a national full-service commercial bank headquartered in Crestview, Florida, which was closed and placed into receivership on January 16th. First NBC Bank will not acquire any of the other

real estate owned of First National Bank of Crestview. The transaction is effective immediately and does not include a loss-share agreement with the FDIC.

As of September 30, 2014, First National Bank of Crestview reported approximately \$79.7

million in total assets and \$78.6 million in total deposits. In addition to assuming all of the deposits of First National Bank of Crestview,

First NBC Bank agreed to purchase approximately \$62.0 million of the failed bank's assets, consisting of its performing loans, substantially all of its investment securities portfolio and its three banking

facilities, with the FDIC retaining the remaining assets.

The three banking locations operated by First National Bank of Crestview will reopen as branches of First NBC Bank and will be fully

operational during normal banking hours on Tuesday, January 20, 2015.

"We welcome the customers and employees of First National Bank of Crestview into the

First NBC family," stated Ashton J. Ryan, Jr., Chief Executive Officer and President of First NBC. "We look forward to bringing the high level of customer service for which we are known, as well as our broad range of products and services, to a

market that our Board of Directors has long viewed as attractive. We currently provide financial services

to numerous banking customers who reside or do business in the Florida Panhandle, and the

acquisition enables us to better serve the needs of those customers, as well as the many others within the market looking for a more customer-centric financial services alternative."

**First  
NBC**  
Member FDIC



*First NBC Bank  
Vice Chairman  
Dr. Charles C. Teamer*

**First NBC Bank recognizes that a community based financial institution grows when it has professional and caring employees. We strive every day to supply the best banking services to each of our customers.**

**Majority local ownership allows us to cut through red tape and make decisions quickly when responding to our customers' financial needs. The Bank's flexible organizational structure affords our clients access to highly skilled and empowered bankers who are valued as trusted financial partners. And because we believe in open communication with customers, we will always encourage you to discuss your financial objectives and look for ways to implement them. First NBC Bank never stopped lending even during days of market instability. We're recognized as one of the top lending and service related banks throughout the Crescent City and the Metropolitan Area. So, if you want to work with a bank that makes client services its primary concern, you know who you can turn to-First NBC Bank.**

[www.firstnbcbank.com](http://www.firstnbcbank.com)

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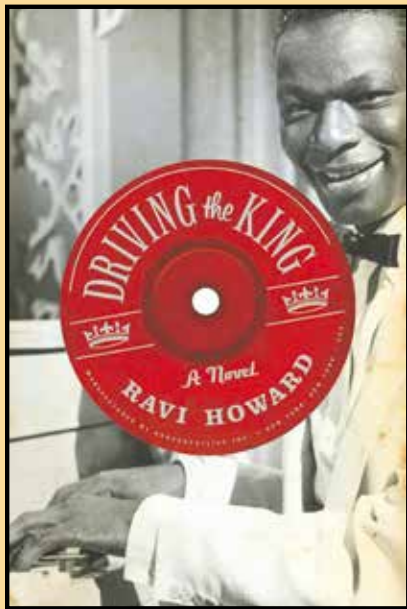


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# Driving the King



**"Driving the King"**  
by Ravi Howard  
c.2015, HarperCollins  
\$25.99 / \$31.99 Canada  
336 pages

By The Bookworm Sez

## Everybody has that one friend...

She's the person you call in the middle of the night because you don't know what else to do. He's your wingman, Saturday afternoon mechanic, and fellow prankster. She gives you courage. He gives you advice.

That one friend is your go-to person, your rock, your personal booster. And in "Driving the King" by Ravi Howard, that kind of friendship works both ways.

Nathaniel Weary hated airports.

The planes coming in low and loud always reminded him of Kilby, the state prison in Montgomery, where he spent ten long years. He and his fellow inmates would be out in the Alabama cold, cutting kudzu from a fence, and those circling planes teased him with what he was missing.

He was a young man then, just home from fighting overseas, with a ring in his pocket, intent on asking his girl to marry him. His friend, Nat "King" Cole was going to help but when someone threatened Cole's life and Weary jumped onto the stage to prevent danger, the plan fell apart. Instead of asking his girl for marriage, he went to prison for assaulting a white man, and he asked her not to visit him anymore.

Nearly ten years later, Cole's bodyguard came to Kilby with an offer: Nat "King" Cole needed a driver. He wanted that driver to be Nathaniel Weary.

In Montgomery, as around the country, much had changed while Weary was in jail.

Television was a novelty when he went in; when he came out, it was in everybody's living room. Folks back in Montgomery were boycotting city buses and another King – this one, a preacher – was standing up for civil rights, Weary's mother had died while he was in Kilby, and

his father didn't want him talking about that place once he got out. Los Angeles offered a fresh start. He took the job.

But even a year in LA didn't dampen the tug of home for Nathaniel Weary. He didn't miss the trouble there; it had, in fact, followed him to California – but he missed his people something fierce.

He had to find a way to say goodbye.

I really wasn't sure I was going to be able to finish "Driving the King." The books' first pages had me pretty well completely lost, so don't be surprised if that happens when you try reading it – but don't be deterred, either.

With the early Civil Rights movement as backdrop, author Ravi Howard brings together history, pop-culture, and mid-century music to craft an overall-satisfying story. The trouble comes with a back-and-forth storyline that takes some getting used to, but it's softened by the ease with which its two main characters move and the friendship they share. In the end, the back-and-forth is what makes it work.

There's a certain cinematic feel to this book that's really appealing and will captivate readers, once they get more into the story. If you're looking for a well-done reel-life drama, then "Driving the King" could be that one book.



Visit [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com) for more photos from these events

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# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## Data News Copy Editor Visits China

Data News Weekly Copy Editor Melanie Mainor, who is a graduate student at Tulane University took an educational trip to Shanghai, China earlier this month. The trip was part of the Masters of Management and Administration program within the AB Freeman Business School at Tulane. Mainor and her classmates visited both

Shanghai and Xiamen to present their project to the senior management team at Geno Industry. The students spent 10 days learning international trade and making presentations on social media strategies. What an experience, and because Melanie was there, Data was there! Congratulations Melanie, we are proud of you.



# Data News Weekly is Hiring

Data News Weekly Newspaper, The People's Paper, is hiring for two positions in our New Orleans Office.

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#### About the Job

Journalists — tired of reading of layoffs, closings, the dire straights of the profession? Recent college graduates — think your job prospects are bleak? Not with us!

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### Sales Manager/Retail Ad Manager

#### About the Job

Data News Weekly Newspaper is the leading African American media company in New Orleans, publishing a weekly newspaper. Additionally, its website under [ladatanews.com](http://ladatanews.com) is the most read Black website in the region.

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- Recruit talent

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If you are interested in a rewarding career, email a cover letter and resume to: [terrybjones@bellsouth.net](mailto:terrybjones@bellsouth.net) or mail to: Data News Weekly, c/o Terry Jones, Publisher, 3501 Napoleon Avenue, New Orleans LA 70125



# Common and John Legend are Glorious in 'Selma'



**Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.**  
NNPA Columnist

One day, when the glory comes  
It will be ours, it will be ours  
Oh, one day, when the war is won  
We will be sure, we will be here sure  
Oh, glory, glory  
Oh, glory, glory

Music, songs, videos and lyrics that emanate from the Black experience continues to awaken the consciousness of millions of people around the world. The recent collaboration between iconic artists Common and John Legend on theme song for the movie "Selma" is a prime example.

As the two Chicago natives demonstrated, our culture is rich with historical and contemporary accomplishments of artists who have been able to emotionally connect art with the long struggle for Black freedom, justice and equality.

Of course, the Selma-to-Montgomery, Ala. March was part of that struggle. In a few weeks, we will witness the 50th anniversary of that march, which was led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It was the dramatic event that led to passage

of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. The release of the docudrama film "Selma" could not have been scheduled at a better time.

"Selma" was directed by the talented and gifted Ava DuVernay and produced by Oprah Winfrey, Christian Colson, Dede Gardner and Jeremy Kleiner. Oprah Winfrey she be applauded for using her considerable financial resources to support such an important undertaking.

Hands to the Heavens, no man, no weapon  
Formed against, yes glory is destined  
Every day women and men become legends  
Sins that go against our skin become blessings  
The movement is a rhythm to us  
Freedom is like religion to us  
Justice is juxtaposition in us  
Justice for all just ain't specific enough  
One son died, his spirit is revisitin' us  
True and living living in us, resistance is us  
That's why Rosa sat on the bus  
That's why we walked through Ferguson with our hands up  
When it go down we woman and man up  
They say, "Stay down" and we stand up  
Shots, we on the ground, the camera panned up  
King pointed to the mountain top and we ran up

Although the movie was nominated for the Golden Globe Award for Best Motion Picture, it actually won the Golden Globe Award for Best Original Song, "Glory," produced by Common and John Legend. They stood together on the stage at the Golden Globe Awards



to receive that much-deserved tribute. It's another example of Hip-hop and pop culture combining to make a real difference on the global stage.

"Glory" is appropriately named. There was a certain transcendent glory that occurred in the final aftermath of March 3, 1965, known as "Bloody Sunday," atop the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Thanks to television, the entire world witnessed Hosea Williams, John Lewis and other peaceful marchers being merci-

lessly beaten by law enforcement officials for exercising their constitutional rights.

Both the movie and theme song capture that bravery of that era.

"Glory" just won the Critic's Choice Award for Best Original Song. In his acceptance remarks, Common said, "Thank you Ava DuVernay, for making the first feature film about Dr. King so beautifully.... We knew the spirit and intention of 'Selma,' and of what Dr. King is about. That's love, that's justice,

that's freedom. For all people. We created 'Glory' in that spirit."

Now the war is not over  
Victory isn't won  
And we'll fight on to the finish  
Then when it's all done  
We'll cry glory, oh glory  
We'll cry glory, oh glory  
Selma is now for every man, woman and child  
Even Jesus got his crown in front of a crowd  
They marched with the torch, we gon' run with it now  
Never look back, we done gone hundreds of miles  
From dark roads he rose, to become a hero  
Facin' the league of justice, his power was the people  
Enemy is lethal, a king became regal  
Saw the face of Jim Crow under a bald eagle  
The biggest weapon is to stay peaceful  
We sing, our music is the cuts that we bleed through  
Somewhere in the dream we had an epiphany  
Now we right the wrongs in history  
No one can win the war individually  
It takes the wisdom of the elders and young people's energy  
Welcome to the story we call victory  
The coming of the Lord, my eyes have seen the glory  
When the war is done, when it's all said and done  
We'll cry glory, oh glory

Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. is the President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and can be reached for national advertisement sales and partnership proposals at: [dr.bchavis@nnpa.org](mailto:dr.bchavis@nnpa.org); and for lectures and other professional consultations at: <http://drbenjaminfchavisjr.wix.com/drbcfc>

## World is Indifferent to Missing Nigerian Girls



**Julianne Malveaux**  
NNPA Columnist

One could not help but be impressed by the millions that turned out in Paris to stand against the Islamist terrorists who killed work-

ers at the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo and four others at a kosher grocery store. Two law enforcement officers were also killed, bringing the total to 17.

About 40 heads of state and more than a million others crowded into Republique Square; even more rallied around France. In total, it is estimated that 3.7 rallied for freedom. They wore shirts and carried signs that said, "I am Charlie." Some said, "I am Muslim and Charlie" or "I am Jewish and Charlie." Those crowds transcended race, religious and political lines.

President Obama got mixed reaction to his not attending the solidarity rally. Ambassador to France Jane Hartley, someone with much less status, represented the United States. Critics said the president could at least have sent Vice President Joe Biden; Attorney General Eric H. Holder was in Paris and could have attended. The president may be doing something much more substantive by convening a summit on world terrorism at the White House in February.

I wonder if these gatherings will address terror in Nigeria, where

the Islamic terrorist group Boko Haram abducted 276 girls, and still holds 219. A hashtag campaign, #BringBackOurGirls was joined by First Lady Michelle Obama, former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, British Prime Minister David Cameron and others. Few of the 40 who rallied in Paris have ever mentioned the abducted girls and those terrorists who took them. Indeed, the abducted girls have all but disappeared from the headlines and from the public consciousness.

The girls were abducted on April 14, 2014. Since then, our attention

has been riveted by other news from the African continent, as the Ebola virus killed thousands (we in the U.S. were mostly focused on our handful of casualties), and as ISIS has escalated its activity around the globe. While some have forgotten about the Nigerian girls, many have not. Obiageli Ezekwesili, a former Nigerian government official who is now vice president of the World Bank's Africa Division, has been among those continuing to focus attention on the girls.

**Malveaux, Continued**  
on page 10.



# All-Day Habits for a Better Night's Sleep



## NNPA Newswire

Think that your before-bed habits are the only thing affecting your quality of sleep? Guess again. Your habits all day long can have major implications on how you feel when you hit the hay. Read up to get the best shut-eye possible!

### Morning

**Keep your wake-up time consistent:** Different wake-up times every day of the week can mess with your sleep-wake cycle. When you start waking up at the same time — and skip the weekend sleep-ins — you'll find yourself waking up sans alarm with more energy at the same time.

**Let the light in:** Natural sunlight keeps your internal clock on a healthy cycle. As soon as you wake up, open your windows or turn on the light. Get out for a few moments of sunshine if possible!

**Breathe deep:** When you start your day on a centered note, the benefits of a relaxed, focused mind will support your entire day and night. Begin a meditation practice or simply show some gratitude with a positive affirmation when you rise. Although bedtime is hours and hours away, a calm mind can help you achieve quality shut-eye later.

### Afternoon

**Drink green tea:** You might be tempted to reach for that second cup of coffee in the afternoon, but opt for green tea instead. It will give your body a boost — with a ton of extra benefits — and is less likely to affect your sleep later that night.

**Eat omega-3s at lunch:** New research shows that regularly eating omega-3 fatty acids can help reduce sleep issues. Load up foods like salmon, flaxseed, and avocado at lunch to support a better night's sleep.

**Fit in a workout:** It doesn't matter whether it's morning, noon, or night — make time to exercise! You'll drift to sleep more naturally after you've pushed your body. Just be sure not to go for intense cardio right before bed. Yoga is a great option to help your mind cool down if you need to work out later in the evening.

### Evening

**Take time to chill:** To promote quality sleep and be able to drift off easily, it's important to take time to calm your mind and body. Whether it's a hot bath, a few chapters of a book or you spend some time journaling, make yourself a priority, and wind down naturally.

**Skip the nightcap:** After a long day, a few glasses of wine or a nice cocktail might seem like the perfect way to let loose, but alcohol can disrupt your natural sleep cycle and leave you feeling exhausted the following morning. If you're serious about getting a good night's sleep, it's best to just say no to alcohol before bed.

**Turn off electronics:** If you keep your electronics on all night, it is affecting your sleep patterns. Before bed, skip the tube or your laptop, and wind down with an article or book instead. This change seems small but makes an enormous difference in how you sleep through the night.

# Sagging Pants of Today Could Hurry Hip Replacements of Tomorrow



## By Sandra Jordan

Some of the same activities and behaviors that can cause disease can cause health problems in your bones, joints and your neuromuscular system.

"For every one pound of weight that you gain, you put three pounds of pressure on your knees; so the opposite of that is, for every pound that you lose, you take three pounds of pressure off your knees."

Spine expert Chiropractor Michael Gerdine of West End Chiropractic said when it comes to wellness, the approach should be proactive rather than reactive.

"There are many stresses in life that contribute to illness, whether it be stresses from work, family, job, poor diets, lack of exercise, not getting enough rest" Gerdine said. "All of those things lead to problems with the nervous system, due to what we call in chiropractic care 'subluxations.'"

Subluxations occur when the body's infrastructure gets out of alignment.

"Its bones out of place irritating the nerves," Gerdine said. "Subluxations are caused by — I call them the three T's: Trauma — which could be an accident, sports injury, repetitive motion on the job, weekend warrior stuff; Thoughts —

Which would be stress-related; and Toxins — bad food, poor diet; medications can be toxic to the human body; bad air, recreational drugs, cigarette smoke, all of those things are toxic."

The Missouri Chiropractors Association describes subluxations as a response to stress, causing the muscles to spasm, spinal bones to lock up and choking or chaffing nerves. Nerve impulses commu-

nicate messages to the brain and throughout the body through your spine. If there's a hitch somewhere in the nervous system, it will manifest as some type of health problem.

"Most of us have subluxations and don't even know we have them," Gerdine said.

He said that occasional "crook in the neck" or stiff back when you wake up in the morning — subluxations.

"It could be because you slept wrong or it could be because you hold the telephone at work with your shoulder cocked up on the phone ... and one of the contributing factors to subluxations, a big one — is posture," he said. "Most human beings have bad posture and people who are sedentary have even worse posture."

Think of this balancing act; poorly postured humans with bowling balls sitting on top of the smallest area of the spinal column.

"Most people don't realize that our heads weigh about the same as a bowling ball — between 10 and 15 pounds," Gerdine explained. "The cervical spine — the neck, those are the smallest bones in the vertebral column and now you have this head that is leaning forward and that's putting a lot of pressure on those bones and it can cause problems over time."

Gerdine said the boom in tech gadgetry that has people looking down at their cellphones, tablets and other personal devices will wind up being a major pain in the neck.

"You can rest assured that there is going to be an epidemic of neck problems with headaches, tension in the shoulders, pain between the shoulder blades, pain radiating into the arms," Gerdine said, "and a lot

of it is going to be due to this repetitive motion that we have developed to exist in the world today."

Although not so high tech, a low-hanging fashion statement of the millennials, hip-hoppers and the "OGs" who try to dress like them may come back to bite when where the sun didn't use to shine.

"These young men who are walking around with their pants sagging — you can rest assured there's going to be an epidemic of hip replacements because the way they have to alter their gait and swing those legs to keep those pants up — they are wearing the hip joints out," Gerdine said.

Sagging pants get blamed for a number of health issues, from urological and sexual dysfunction to severe posture and bone growth deformities.

Gerdine said seeing a chiropractor is the conservative approach to wellness.

"We are going to look at the bony structures, the musculoskeletal system to try to prevent people from going to surgery and using all the different drugs with the major side effects they may have," Gerdine said. "We are interested in people doing functional health. My goal is to get people doing the things they are supposed to do, that they want to do, the right way."

The American Chiropractic Association says chiropractic services are included in most health insurance plans and is also available to active-duty members of the armed forces at more than 60 military bases and is available to veterans at 36 major veterans medical facilities.

**For more information about the work of chiropractors, visit <http://www.missourichiropractors.org>.**



# Wal-Mart Launches Cash Pickup Option For Tax Refunds

(AP Newswire) Wal-Mart is launching a service allowing customers to pick up their tax refunds in cash at about 3,000 stores nationwide.

It's the discounter's latest move offer more financial services, which is seen as a path to bringing more shoppers to its stores.

The world's largest retailer, based in Bentonville, Arkansas, says the process will take the same time as if customers were to file their returns electronically and then get direct deposit, which could take just a week, says Daniel Eckert, senior vice president of services for Wal-Mart's U.S. division.

The service could help people without bank accounts get their refunds more quickly and avoid high check-cashing fees. Wal-Mart also says it could prove convenient for others.

"We know tax refunds can be one of the largest financial payouts of the year for many of our customers and the last thing they want is to wait for a refund check to arrive and then spend money on unnecessary fees," Eckert said.



Eckert also acknowledged Wal-Mart's business could get a boost by providing an extra "jingle" to their wallets at a time of sluggish sales and customer traffic declines.

The offering marks the latest example of how Wal-Mart is expanding its financial services. Last April Wal-Mart introduced a new money transfer service that it says will cut fees for its low-income customers by up to 40 percent compared with

similar services elsewhere.

Last fall, Wal-Mart teamed up with Green Dot Corp., a company known for reloadable prepaid cards, to bring mobile checking accounts to its shoppers. Also, last fall, Wal-Mart teamed up with an online health insurance comparison site and agency that lets shoppers compare the cost of health care coverage options at its stores.

As part of this new cash refund

service, Wal-Mart is aligning with a Green Dot Co. business called Tax Products Group, and Republic Bank & Trust company, two providers of tax-related financial products. These companies have more than 25,000 tax-preparation locations, both in Wal-Mart stores and elsewhere, for the service.

Wal-Mart already offered tax-preparation services at its stores and shoppers could cash refund

checks at the stores.

Wal-Mart doesn't charge a fee for the cash pickup. Tax preparers can charge a maximum of \$7 for the service at the time of filing. Wal-Mart stores charges a flat \$3 to cash paper checks under \$1,000 and \$6 up to \$7,500, but the new service is faster than waiting for a paper check from the IRS.

The service is not available for people who electronically file their own taxes.

It works like this: When customers use any one of these tax preparation locations, they can choose the option called "Walmart Direct-2Cash."

They will then receive a confirmation code for their federal and or states tax returns through an email from TPG or Republic Bank as soon as their refund is ready to be picked up.

Customers will then go to the Walmart MoneyCenter or customer service desk at their local stores show their confirmation code, confirm their identity and then receive their refund. Cash refunds up to \$7,500 are eligible for this program.

## Treasury and Lakeside Shopping Center To Host Unclaimed Property Event

*More Than \$150 Million Can Be Claimed In New Orleans Area*

More than \$150 million in Unclaimed Property belonging to New Orleans area residents is sitting in the State Treasury, and they can get help searching for it at an Unclaimed Property Awareness Day on Saturday, January 24, at Lakeside Shopping Center in Metairie.

"We will help you search our database," State Treasurer John Kennedy said. "We'll even help you fill out the forms to claim any money you find. We have more than \$600 million in Unclaimed Property statewide, and we want to return it to the people."

Employees from the Treasury's Unclaimed Property Division will be stationed in the Center Court at the Lakeside Shopping Center, located at 3301 Veterans Memorial Blvd. in Metairie, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Treasury employees will help citizens file Unclaimed Property claims.

Individuals attending Saturday's event are asked to bring a valid photo ID and Social Security Card to speed up the processing of their claims. Checks for all approved claims will be issued and mailed as quickly as possible after the event.

The average claim is \$900 and usually includes old savings and checking accounts, payroll checks, CDs, stocks and dividends, insurance proceeds, oil and gas royalty payments, utility deposits and similar funds. Since 1972, the Unclaimed Property Program has returned more than \$338 million to nearly 570,000 Louisiana citizens.

Treasurer Kennedy encourages Louisiana residents who cannot attend Saturday's Unclaimed Property Awareness Day to search for missing money online at [www.LATreasury.com](http://www.LATreasury.com) or call the Treasury's toll-free hotline at 1-888-925-4127 (Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.).

Malveaux, Continued from page 8.

People fear that Boko Haram may have sold the schoolgirls into slavery, forced some into marriage, or killed others. Given the fact that Amnesty International, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the UN Security Council have decried the Islamist militant terrorist group, it is alarming that the world community has been so indifferent to the plight of the abducted young girls. Some of the indifference does not start with the world, but in Nigeria. Will Goodluck Jonathan, the Nigerian president who is running for reelection, mention the girls at all before February, when voting takes place? Or, has the fate of 219 kidnapped girls been forgotten?

Demonstrations have taken place daily in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, despite the fact that the police have ordered these demonstrations to stop. Meanwhile, Boko Haram continues its terrorist plundering in Nigeria, destroying villages and towns in the northeast part of the country and killing thousands. It is estimated that they have destroyed more than 3,700 structures – homes, churches, and public spaces. Tens of thousands of Nigerians have fled to bordering Chad because they fear for their lives.

I don't know if it would be effective for world leaders to rally in Abuja to pressure Boko Haram to return the girls. I don't know if T-shirts or signs saying, "We Are the Nigerian Girls" would do much more than direct attention back to these young students whose hopes and dreams have been stomped on by irrational terrorists. I don't know if it would make a difference if Nigerians all over the world came together to demand return of the girls. I don't know the efforts of feminists around the world would make a difference.

I do know that about 219 Nigerian girls are gone, and a terrorist group is responsible for taking them. I know that they are reputed to be affiliated with Al-Qaeda and with ISIS. I know that while the world has rallied to show solidarity in the fight against terrorism in France, there has been no such gathering to show solidarity in the fight against terrorism in Nigeria. I don't know (and I might be misinformed) if offers to help contain or eliminate Boko Haram have been made by the world community.

The war against terrorism has been embraced in Paris, with millions there, and thousands in the rest of the world, taking it to the streets to express their outrage. Where is the outrage for the more than 200 Nigerian girls? Nine months after they have been snatched from their school, who remembers? Who cares?

Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist in Washington, DC



# GM Highlights Diversity at Detroit Auto Show

DETROIT (NNPA) – During the media week leading up to the 2015 North American International Auto Show, General Motors (GM) not only revealed new models and concept cars like other automakers, they also showcased the importance of diversity in the company's ranks.

At "Design by Detroit," an event hosted by GM that featured local artists, industry insiders and a custom-painted Stingray, three young, minority designers shared their experiences working for the embattled, century-old auto company.

Crystal Windham, the first African American female design director at GM, currently leads the Chevrolet Passenger Car & Small Crossover Interiors department. Windham's work was featured in the 2014 Chevrolet Impala and the all-new electric hybrid Chevrolet Volt.

"As designers, we've been empowered," said Windham in her official press bio. "There is an exciting renaissance at GM and I am thrilled to be a part of it."

Martin Davis, the design manager for the Exterior lighting and North American exterior Design, said that Windham has already left her mark on the interior design of Chevrolet passenger cars and that consumers will see even more of her influence on that segment very shortly as new products are rolled out.

Davis, who led the team that re-designed the exterior lighting for the new Cadillac Escalade said that working on the iconic sports utility vehicle was humbling and surreal.

"But you quickly get past that and embrace the challenge," said Davis, who started his career with GM when he was 22 years old. "Working with new technologies



Ed Welburn, vice president of Global Design for General Motors, talks about the Avenir, Buick's concept sedan at the Buick Global Reveal Event in Detroit, Mich. (Freddie Allen/NNPA)

like [light emitting diodes] enables us to do a number of things we haven't done before."

Ed Welburn, vice president of Global Design and General Motors, said that he still loves the look on a designer's face when their concept is selected for a new project.

"I don't care if they're right out of school or if they've been with the company 40 years," Welburn smiled. "They have that look on their face like they're 8 years old."

Welburn, who studied sculpture and design at Howard University and joined the automaker when President Richard Nixon was still in the White House, is the first executive to lead all of the company's

Global Design Centers in the United States, Germany, Korea, China, Australia, Brazil and India. The GM veteran said that he enjoyed knitting together a global team of studios, where everyone really knows and supports one another.

"It helps us understand our customers a whole lot better. Everyone brings some creative thought to the process that may be a bit unique in one way or another," said Welburn. "I think we really benefit from that."

Like cultural diversity overseas, Welburn said gender and ethnic diversity in the United States is extremely important to GM and considers his involvement in the evolving diversity

mission at GM a part of his legacy. He admitted that there are not nearly as many Blacks and other minorities in the company as he would like.

Welburn met with the president of the College for Creative Studies in Detroit, Mich., and learned that the school was also having a tough time enrolling African American students.

Recruiting Blacks for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) careers isn't just a GM problem, it's an American one.

Anita Burke, the chief engineer of the GMC Canyon, a mid-sized truck, said that when she was younger, women didn't go into design or engineering. That was considered men's work. Burke thought about going into nursing or teaching, because that is what people expected her to do.

"One of the things I've taken most from my career at General Motors is my best experiences have come when I stepped out of my comfort zone," said Burke.

Burke took on two international assignments during her tenure at GM. She spent about three years in Toluca, Mexico and three and half years in Sao Paulo Brazil managing engineering groups and directing aftersales engineering.

Burke said, "If I didn't step out of my comfort zone, I wouldn't be chief engineer of this truck and it's been my dream job."

Welburn added: "You can have a wonderful very fulfilling career in design, but the most important thing for me – I think it's true for every young person – you need to go into a field that you're passionate about whether its design or music or journalism. If you're not passionate about it, don't do it."

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