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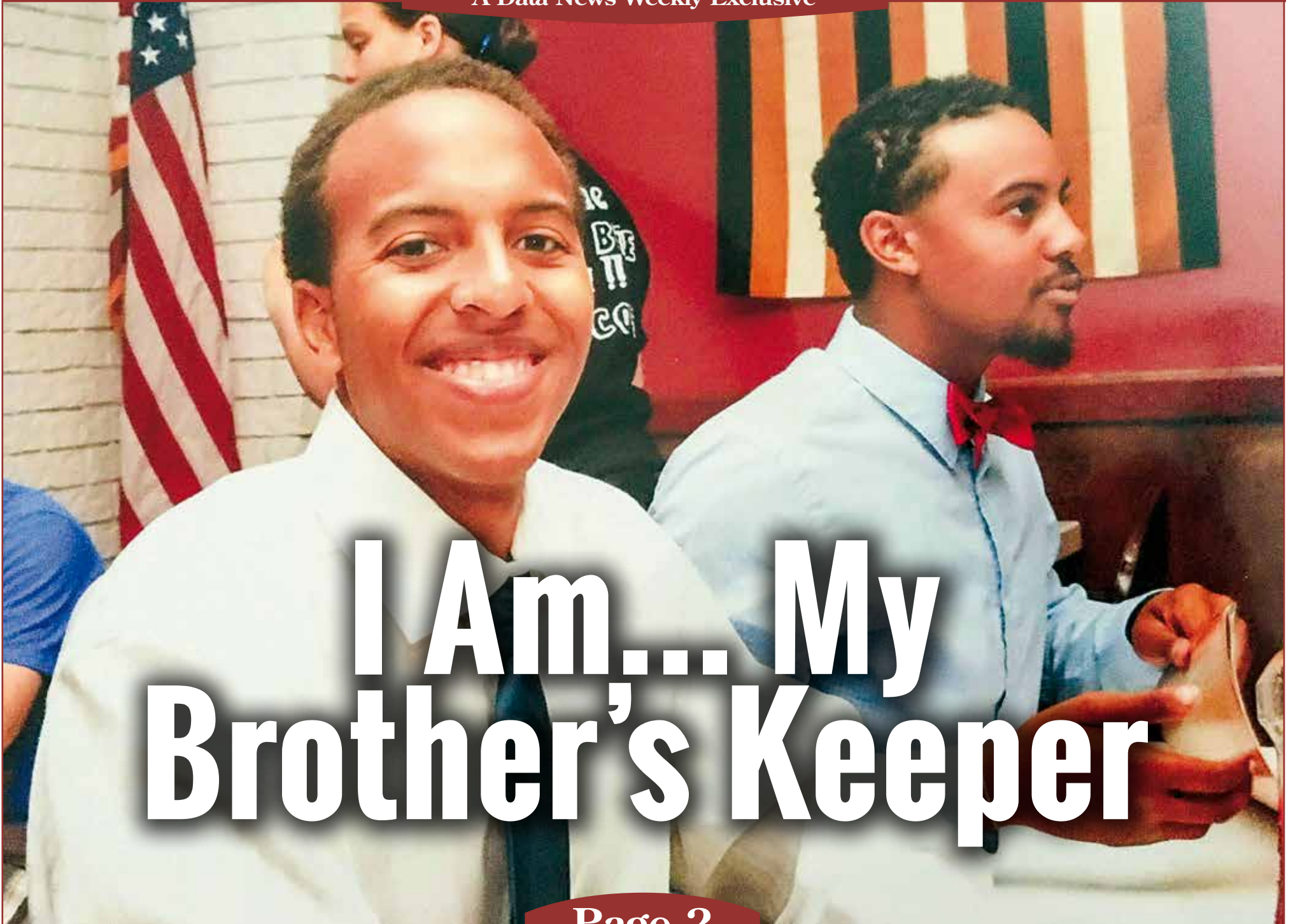
Essence Festival Highlights



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A Data News Weekly Exclusive



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My Brother's Keeper

Transplant Strengthens Bond Between Brothers



Alexander said that he and his brother Jordan have always been close. After the transplant the bond grew even stronger, Alexander said.

Eric Craig
Multimedia Editor

The proverb blood is thicker than water describes the importance of family relationships. However, two brothers from Hahnville, LA take that bond to a new level.

22-year-old Jordan Hamilton put his life on hold to give his older brother, Alexander Hamilton, his kidney.

In the summer of 2015, Alexander discovered that he had an issue with his kidney after taking a mandatory physical required by his job.

When Alexander took his physical, the doctor noted an abnormally high blood pressure reading. Initially

the doctor thought it was temporary. However, Alexander was called back to the hospital for an emergency testing shortly after.

Alexander stayed three nights at the hospital to undergo additional testing. Each day Alexander's blood pressure continued to rise abnormally.

"The second night the doctor came in and told me

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The Hamilton family includes (L-R): Jimmie Hamilton, Jordan Hamilton, Giovanni Hamilton and Alexander Hamilton

Jordan Hamilton (left) and Alexander Hamilton (right).

that I had scarring of the kidneys in one kidney," Alexander said.

Alexander's scarred kidney prevented his organ from filtering harmful substances from the body's

blood stream. The doctors noted that Alexander carries genes that make this disease more likely.

"So I said, 'okay, Doc, What's next? Can I die from this? Is this

something that can be cured?'" Alexander said.

"And they really didn't know at the time and said that there might be a transplant down the line," he

added.

Alexander's family was saddened to hear the news about their son's declining health.

"I was trying to be calm before the storm. I knew when they started speaking about blood pressure for a young man, I knew it wasn't normal," said Alexander's father Jimmie.

"I was just looking and hoping that maybe it was his diet, or hereditary or something minor. Not for one moment I thought it was as severe as it was," he added.

Alexander's mother, Giovanni, was concerned at the options available for Alexander in the coming months.

"I was just praying and hoping for the best. But as the months passed his conditions got worse. I felt helpless because you couldn't do anything. The medicine wasn't helping. We just figured it was all in God's hands," Giovanni said.

Overtime Alexander's condition worsened. His visits to the doctor became more frequent while they monitored his body fluids and kidney status. Alexander's creatine level, which is the amount of a waste product the body produces and is filtered by kidney, was at 7 milligrams per deciliter. Average creatine levels are between 0.7 and 1.3 milligrams per deciliter according to the U.S. National Library of Medicine.

Alexander's creatine level continued to rise. By the end of December 2015, Alexander's creatine reached a level of 14 milligrams per deciliter. Doctors told Alexander that a kidney transplant was urgent.

"So I had to stay focus, I had to eat right and stay away from things

I like. A lot of salt and a lot of fried foods," Alexander said. "It was hard being from Louisiana. But when dealing with your life you had to put it to the side," he added.

Alexander was put on dialysis to help filter his blood until a kidney match could be made.

"Everybody who seen me didn't know what was going on. I had to stay strong for myself and my family, to know everything will be alright. It was a real battle."

Finding a Transplant

According to Kidneylink.org, the average wait time for a kidney transplant is three to five years. The Hamilton family did not waste any-time searching for a kidney. While several people offered to donate their kidney, none of the donors served as a match.

Until Jordan, Alexander's younger brother, volunteered.

"I started undergoing the test and the bloodwork to see if I would be a match to give him the kidney," Jordan said.

Jordan began thinking about donating his kidney in August once he recognized that his brother was diagnosed with the scarring tissue disease.

"When it became prominent that he needed to get a kidney transplant, it was clear that I was the only one to give him a kidney," Jordan said.

"It just came like second-nature. I just have to give him my Kidney," he added.

The younger brother said it put a lot of pressure on his parents. The kidney specialists were initially

Cover Story, Continued on page 5.

AWARD

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Baton Rouge Man Shot and Killed by Police

Data Staff News Edited Report

An impromptu protest filled the streets of Baton Rouge, LA., hours after a man was shot and killed by police.

37-year-old Alton Sterling was detained and shot by police officers on Tuesday, July 5, 2016 outside of the Triple S Food Mart. The two officers involved, Blane Salamoni and Howi Lake II, were put on administrative leave early Wednesday morning. The U.S. Justice Depart-

ment's Civil Rights Division is currently leading an investigation on the shooting.

Many people saw Sterling as the "CD man," who regularly sold music and DVDs outside of the Triple S convenience store, including his family lawyer, Edmond Jordan.

Jordan is an attorney and Louisiana state legislator representing Sterling's family after the shooting.

"Alton was a respected man. He was beloved in the community. He did not deserve the treatment and this excessive force that was ex-



Alton Sterling

erted on him by the police department," Jordan, his attorney, told CNN.

Earlier that morning, an anonymous individual called to make a complaint that a man outside of a convenience store was carrying a gun. The caller also reported that the armed man was making threats nearby. Nearby store owner, Abdullah Muflahi told NY Daily News that he did not see Sterling with a weapon or witness Sterling being involved in any confrontation before the police arrived.

According to the viral video that shows Sterling being apprehended and shot by the police, the candid videographer captures the officers confronting Sterling in front of the Triple S Food Mart. One of the two officers pulls Sterling over a hood of a car and then pins Sterling to the ground. The second officer begins to assist restraining Sterling. In the video, an unidentifiable person yells "he's got a gun." Afterwards there is unintelligible yelling and an offi-

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Cover Story, Continued from page 4.

skeptical about making Jordan a donor because they did not know if he was also at risk to develop a similar scarred tissue disease or experience high blood pressure.

Giovanni was concerned about putting both of her sons at risk.

"It was still a difficult decision to say 'am I sacrificing one son for another? Jordan is giving his kidney and hopefully he doesn't come down with the same disease,'" Giovanni said.

After several test, doctors determined Jordan does have the gene responsible for the disease, but it would be improbable that he would develop it. In the spring of 2016, the doctors cleared Jordan as a donor.

"There is no luck in nothing. It's already written," Alexander's father said.

"Jordan confessed to me that 'I'm not doing this for any other reason, but for this reason: because I love my brother,'" he added.

Jordan decided to put his education on hold to undergo the surgery to help his brother. Jordan was enrolled at Xavier University of Louisiana.

The transplant took place on Monday, April 4, 2016. Jordan, the donor, was released the day after the surgery. Alexander was released a day later.

"I just have to thank my brother. Without him I would still be looking for kidney right now," Alexander said.

New Outlook on Life

After the surgery, the two brothers saw life differently.

"It makes me feel like I have a

different outlook at life. I don't get wound up about things like I used to," Jordan said.

Alexander appreciate a new opportunity at life, and believes this is a sign to do more.

"Thinking about it, it was hard. But God wasn't ready for me. He blesses you and is telling you to do something more. Don't even think about what could of happen, but look forward," Alexander said.

Alexander's mother still finds everything that happened hard to believe.

"I don't even think I had time to look back and say 'wow look at what Alexander has went through, look what Jordan has gone through.' It was just so fast, everything was fast. But thank God it worked out the way it did so far" Giovanni said.

Alexander has been off of work between April and July. He is cleared to go back to work in mid-July.

Jordan plans to go back to Xavier in the Fall of 2016.

The father of the two men, Jimmie, was overwhelmed with respect and admiration for his son, Jordan. He said his action tells him what type of man he will be because of his willingness to give an organ to his older brother.

"I know from this day I don't have to worry about my sons. They are men; By faith, by love, and by strength. I'm a pretty proud father, more than any man could imagine," Jimmie said.

"This shows that brothers are truly their brother's keepers. My son is an example and I'm so proud of him," he added.



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Essence Fest 2016

Harvey Brown Photographer

Essence 2016 celebrates its 22nd Annual Festival in the City of New Orleans. The festivities kicked off independence weekend on July 1, 2016 and ended on July 3, 2016. During the day there were several free panels from entertainment to financial empowerment. Attendees were able to listen to several speakers, including Charlie Wilson, Oprah Winfrey, Anthony Anderson and many more. Festival goers were also able to participate in several activities, including singing, dancing and social media posting. Many ticket holders attended performances by Maxwell, Kendrick Lamar and Ciara. Despite the intensive heat during the summer, the festival remained a staple for the 2016 year.



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Four Lessons Americans Should Learn from the Brexit Vote



Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

The day after 52 percent of United Kingdom citizens voted to leave the European Union, Google was deluged with questions. The most common – what is the European Union? That suggests that the people who voted to leave the European Union didn't even know what it was. They didn't know that financial institutions, headquartered in London, might shut down their offices because they would lose the advantage they had by considering London a European banking center. They didn't know that thousands of jobs now based in London might migrate to Paris or Brussels, be-

cause international banks wanted European centers of commerce, not simply British centers. They didn't expect that the value of the pound would plummet. They didn't know.

Instead, they responded emotionally to those who encouraged them to vote to leave the EU. They responded to the notion that immigration was their enemy, and that immigrants were "taking their jobs." They responded to an ugly divisiveness, and they voted, they thought, to protect themselves. They didn't know that their protectionism might leave them more vulnerable than ever. Now they know. The European Union has asked the U.K. to speed up the inevitable separation, even as more than 2 million Brits are, by petition, asking for a "do over," a second referendum. Few have patience for the remorseful second-guessing after the unnecessary "Brexit" vote. Prime Minister Cameron, after all, chose to sell a bunch of wolf tickets when he called for the referendum. His egotism has had an ugly outcome, and

an unnecessary one. The vote need not have taken place.

Brexit has implication in the United States. The callous excoriation of immigrants made it possible for too many Brits to vote against their own self-interest. Now, we see too many in the U.S. leaning toward Donald Trump, because he says he will "Make America Great Again." Great for whom? Great how? In going back to the past is Mr. Trump harking to the "Leave it to Beaver"-1950s days when independent women were invisible, and people of color hardly showed up. I'd love someone to remind me of any episode where Leave it to Beaver had a Black actor. Ha! When we go back to our nation's "old greatness," we go back to times when women and people of color were, at best, invisible.

Thanks to Brexit, the world will experience more financial instability than it has experienced in the last decade or so. The stock market will fluctuate, and then settle, and some folks will find their 401k accounts dropping, and then recovering in a

month or so. Interest rates will fall, but that really only matters in the short run, and with those who are managing stock markets. While it is impossible to predict the outcomes of the Brexit vote, it is surely possible to speak to the financial instability that is a byproduct of the Brexit vote. The short-term implications don't specifically affect United States shareholders (although those invested in the U.K. will see more immediate losses). In the longer run, the fracturing of the EU collective has financial implications for all world stakeholders.

There is a parallel between that which has happened in the U.K. and that which has happened in the U.S. Voters in the U.K. were goaded into voting "leave" even though too many knew that staying was the better choice. In the U.S., we have a demagogue who is exhorting people to "leave" our diversity reality by embracing his cause and conveying his vote. The mainstream media has been an unindicted co-conspirator on

this Trump crusade, because he has garnered far more visibility than he deserves. But his message resonates, even as the "leave" message resonated in the U.K.

People aren't asking the critical questions. Why has Trump refused to release his tax returns? Why does he promise charitable contributions that he does not honor? Why are the Trump products manufactured in China, even as he decries outsourcing?

Will we, in these United States, start Googling Trump after he is nominated? Will we wait until it is too late to ask about the Trump peccadilloes? Will asking too late provide us with the same buyer's remorse that those in the U.K. are now experiencing? Will our protest vote express our angst and also place an ill-equipped man in the White House? Will we ask the most important questions when it is way too late?

Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist based in Washington, D.C. Her latest offering "Are We Better Off? Race, Obama and Public Policy" is available via juliannemalveaux.com or Amazon.com

Blackonomics

The Difference Between Jesse Williams' BET Speech and What Comes Next



By James Clingman
NNPA News Wire
Columnist

More than a couple of million folks have responded to the words spoken by Jesse Williams, which points out the fact that many Black people are mesmerized by words that excite us and stimulate our emotions. Rather than initiating practical and appropriate actions as a result of words that make us feel good, we usually end up celebrating, espousing, regurgitating, and discussing, ad nauseam, those words instead of implementing strategies that make us "do good."

The speech by Williams was important and relevant, especially to Black people. I appreciate his words and his willingness to make his statements on such a widely viewed stage. He used his fame and the very popu-

lar BET Awards Show to put forth a message that has been spoken and written by others before him, but also one that we need to hear over and over. Seems to me that when someone famous says the same things other non-famous folks have said, it takes hold quicker and our light bulbs come on faster. Questions: "How long will the message last, and will we act upon it?"

Jesse Williams' background, political affiliations and motivations notwithstanding, his message was more important than the messenger. But since we are so attuned with what our celebrities say, he had instant credibility with many young and older folks alike. This is not to suggest that we discriminate against a message because of its messenger. A moron can bring a valid message. Suppose Clarence Thomas had said the same thing Williams said. Would we reject that message?

My point is that Black folks should be able to discern a positive message that comes from any messenger, so that we can know "why" the message is being promulgated and be able to respond appropriately to

that message. Emotional catchwords and phrases are fleeting and seldom cause any improvement in our well-being. Remember: "I have a dream!" "Down with dope – Up with hope!" "No justice, no peace!" "Yes we can!" and all the other words we have heard and chanted millions of times?

I'd rather we follow words from Richard Allen, "To Seek for Ourselves," Marcus Garvey, "One God, One Aim, One Destiny!" and Elijah Muhammad, "Do for Self." I chose to hear some of those words in Williams' speech, and I give him credit for speaking on the subject. It's on Mr. Williams now to show us what he meant by putting his words into action; and it's up to the rest of us to develop strategies and initiatives that will move our people forward.

Jesse Williams spoke on issues that I have written articles about as far back as 1994, more specifically, one titled, "The Young and the Relentless," in which I described how many young Blacks were becoming entrepreneurs. Rather than falling for the okey-doke of buying and wearing someone else's brand, they were developing, marketing, and selling their

own brands. Unfortunately, as the article also cited, many of our young entertainers had succumbed to the lure of "OPS" (Other People's Stuff) e.g. Adidas, Nike, Tommy Hilfiger, etc. rather than "OPM" (Other People's Money).

It is ironic that, in April 1997, Forbes Magazine featured a front-page article titled, "Badass Sells," by Joshua Levine, which aptly illustrated much of the tremendous economic potential within the younger segment of Black America. It also described how the hip-hop culture had been co-opted by designers such as Hilfiger and manufacturing giants like Nike. Now in 2016, Alicia Keys is featured in a commercial for Levis jeans, in which she says, all women are "Badass," so I guess it still sells.

But I digress. Will Jesse Williams' comments simply become last month's shining moment for Black folks, or will his message finally be transformed into real economic progress for our people? Will his two minutes of enlightenment and in-your-face rejoinder to our plight make their way into the pantheon of speeches by our learned elders, or will they drift

off into oblivion never having gained traction or made a significant difference in our lives?

Will Jesse Williams' one shining moment become activated within us to the degree that we begin to coalesce and collaborate to build an economic foundation from which we can truly have an impact on public policy? Fiery rhetoric, overwhelming applause, and two million "hits" and "tweets" are not enough to get the job done. We must have action. We must have a critical mass of Black people who are willing and able to work to make our economic and political empowerment a reality.

Yes, we had yet another shining moment when Williams took the stage to accept his award. Will its sheen fade to black, or will that moment turn into momentum for Black progress? Remember: A moment is not a movement, but a moment can start a movement.

James Clingman is the nation's most prolific writer on economic empowerment for Black people. His latest book, *Black Dollars Matter!* Teach your dollars how to make more sense, is available on his website, Blackonomics.com.

Spiritually Speaking...

Real Christian. Real Times. Real Life.



James A. Washington
NNPA News Wire
Columnist

Some days just trying to be a Christian can accelerate that feeling of just treading water. I get it. Add to that whatever situation you're in or circumstances that you're going through and the overwhelming feeling can be summed up with "what's the point?" One of my habitual sayings, which you've heard

before is Mr. Temptation meet Ms. Test. Being a Christian, as we all know, does not guarantee a life void of trial and tribulation. The small but important point I'm making is a factoid that I believe and brings more inner peace to me than I can explain; God is always in your life. No matter the situation, He will never abandon you regardless of how lonely life gets or appears to be. I liken it to pushing a huge rock uphill. On many a day that rock becomes a boulder and that hill transforms into a very steep and treacherous mountain.

At these times, one must recognize that were it not for God's presence in your life, that rock would trample you and the hill would turn to quicksand. It's all in your atti-

tude. I admit it's easy to get down even though you are a believer. But because you're a believer, it should also be impossible to stay down. I went to two different churches recently where members were allowed to give testimony and request prayer. One was very large and high tech and those who spoke, spoke of their real life journeys to Christ by concluding that "Jesus is more than a story." Each testimony of Christ's reality in changing a life forced me to rethink my own situation and conclude, I have no right to be down. Heaven, I'm blessed. In the other much smaller and more intimate church, member after member told stories of specific trials and tests and the need for prayer; from family situations

in which a six month old died prematurely and a seven year old from cancer, to a person so allergic to life that the smell of perfume would cause excruciating pain and a life of seclusion. I have no right to be down. Heaven I'm blessed. I pass these stories along because in all instances the people involved found a way to cope, to live, to survive. Remember every testimony was relayed in church as an acknowledgement of the power and love of the Lord through whom all blessings flow. Every story was an entreaty for prayer and a profession of faith.

Real Christians...real life...the real world. I just thought I'd take this opportunity to again let you know that my real world, no matter how messed up it can be and

has been, is never as bad as it could be without the love of the Lord in my heart, the faith of Jesus Christ in spirit and the invitation to the Holy Spirit to ride shotgun with me wherever I go. I don't have room to insert Psalm 23 here but read it today. Look around your valley of death and fear no evil. Bathe in the grace of God. As the kids say, 'you better recognize.' Recognize and be blessed. This I ask for you in Jesus' name.

May God bless and keep you always.

James

James A. Washington is the Publisher of Dallas Weekly Newspaper. He can be reached by email at jaws@dallasweekly.com

Newsmaker, Continued from page 5.

cer restraining Sterling pulls out a gun and shoots him several times.

During a press conference, the mother of one of Sterling's children, Quinyetta McMillian spoke about the shooting. She and Sterling had a 15-year-old son.

"As a mother, I have now been forced to raise a son who is going to remember what happened to his father," McMillian said.

Her son was also present on the stage. The 15-year-old began to cry, wailing "Daddy," during the conference. The mother continued to speak about the injustice she saw in that video.

The preliminary autopsy found that Sterling died of "multiple gunshot wounds to the chest and back," the East Baton Rouge Parish Coroner told CNN. A complete autopsy will be conducted in the next 60 to 90 days, according to the coroner.

Louisiana U.S. Congressman Cedric Richmond (LA-02) was one of the first elected leaders calling for the United States Department

of Justice to look into the shooting. Richmond sent a letter to President Barack Obama requesting assistance from the DOJ.

"I am glad to see the U.S. Department of Justice taking the lead role in this investigation, working alongside the Louisiana State Police and the District Attorney's Office of Baton Rouge to ensure there will be a thorough and transparent investigation of this incident," Richmond told Data News Weekly.

At a press conference, the president of the NAACP's Baton Rouge branch is searching for support in asking for both the city's police chief and mayor to resign.

According to CNN, Michael McClanahan, Baton Rouge NAACP President, plans to challenge the attitude of Baton Rouge Police.

"What we're going to do is root out the 1% of bad police officers that go around being the judge, the jury and executioner of innocent people, period, but more specifically, innocent black lives," McClanahan said.

State & Local News

Lawsuit Challenging Ascension Parish Court Spurs Legislative Reform

Data News Staff Edited Report

In response to passage of Act 612 by the Legislature and its signing into law by Governor Edwards in June, the MacArthur Justice Center on Tuesday filed a request in Federal Court to dismiss its Class-Action Lawsuit Challenging an Unconstitutional Conflict of Interest in the Funding Scheme of the Ascension Parish Court.

"We are pleased that the Louisiana Legislature has amended the law to remove control of the Ascension Parish Court's Judicial Expense Fund from the Judge of Ascension Parish Court," said Eric Foley, Staff Attorney at the New Orleans office of the Roderick and Solange MacArthur Justice Center.

In April, the non-profit, public interest law firm filed the class-action lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana on behalf of all those appearing before the Ascension Parish Court as criminal defendants.

In Ascension Parish Court, people convicted of misdemeanor crimes—including traffic and municipal ordinance violations—are charged a fee of \$15. This "conviction fee" is deposited into the Court's Judicial Expense Fund and used to pay part of the Judge's salary, retirement, and benefits. The Judicial Expense Fund also pays the salaries of most of the Parish Court's staff and other operating expenses. This is part of a broader pattern in Louisiana in which courts are

not fully funded but forced to rely on a hodgepodge of fines and fees levied against the citizens who appear before them.

Prior to the MacArthur Justice Center's Lawsuit and consequent change in the statute, the judge had exclusive control of the Judicial Expense Fund, creating a conflict of interest that violated the Constitution's Due Process Clause. Act 612 puts the fund directly under the control of the Ascension Parish Government and its Chief Financial Officer. The amended law also obligates the Parish to fully fund the court's operations through either the Parish's General Fund or the Judicial Expense Fund.

"While we see this as a step in the right direction toward ensuring a fair and impartial judiciary for Louisiana, we are going to be watching the situation on the ground very closely to make sure the statute in fact makes the court's funding independent of the money it collects through convictions," Foley said. "Judges should never be placed in a position to consider their court's finances or their own salaries when determining someone's guilt or innocence."

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Lionman Foundation Partners with Navy for STEM Program



Blue Lion Karate Academy students wait in line to test fly a drone.



Eric O'Neal cuts the ribbon, celebrating his new partnership with the U.S. Navy.



Grandmaster Eric O'Neal discusses how the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math will lead to many opportunities for the students.



Blue Lion Karate Academy partnered with the U.S. Navy to introduce more STEM activities to New Orleans youth. CDR Thomas DeLarge congratulates the students and parents for their dedication to STEM.



William Senor, Computer Engineer; Nikki Stovall, Computer Scientist/Game Developer; CDR Thomas DeLarge; Eric O'Neal; Marcus Hall, Senior Engineer; Jared Anderson, IT Specialist

**Eric Craig
Multimedia Editor**

GrandMaster Eric O'Neal, Sr., Founder of Lionman Foundation, Inc., U.S. Navy Commander Thomas DeLarge, Officer-In-Charge at Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center Atlantic (SSC LANT) New Orleans Detachment (NOLA DET), and Mr. Marcus Hall, Engineering Competency Lead at SSC LANT NOLA are excited to announce Lionman Foundation's STEM and Robotics Club coming in August.

Lionman Foundation's mission is to transcend socio-economic boundaries and ensure the success of young people by providing programs focused on the development of D.E.F. – Discipline, Education and Fitness. GrandMaster O'Neal has been inspired by STEM Programs in New Orleans and around the Country to expand Lionman Foundation's educational support to include a

STEM and Robotics Club.

SSC LANT also known as SPAWAR LANT is the U.S. Navy's Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command. The Goal of the SPAWAR LANT Outreach Program is to collaborate with academia, other government organizations, local businesses, and professional organizations to increase Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics literacy in our communities; and to provide an adequate pipeline of STEM talent that will be required for the future.

LIONMAN Foundation and SPAWAR have partnered together to achieve their shared objective of preparing today's youth to meet tomorrow's challenges and to ensure that kids are being exposed to Math, Science, Engineering and Technology at a young age. Students in grades 3 thru 6 are invited to join LIONMAN Foundation's STEM and Robotics Club for some hands-on educational fun.



Grandmaster Eric O'Neal is met with Darrin L. Harris, CEO of Ekhaya Youth Project. The two talk about the importance of fostering technology in today's youth.

Participants will create a variety of projects ranging from simple tools to remote control drones using applied Sciences, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

STEM and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) are paramount to school curriculum today. Many students are learning theories and methodologies with few opportunities to apply that knowledge within the learning environment. The Lionman Foundation's is for students to have a holistic educational experience with interactive learning. Mr. Hall and his team will advise the Lionman Foundation's STEM and Robotics Club.

The public is invited to visit the Lionman Foundation New Orleans Office at 9954 Lake Forest Blvd. where parents will be able to register their child/children for the Lionman Foundation's STEM and Robotics Club which will meet once a month on Thursdays from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm.

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Oprah Winfrey at Essence Fest

By Edwin Buggage
Data News Weekly
Contributor

The Essence Music Festival has again concluded in New Orleans and was an amazing success. One of the highlights of the festival was an unexpected appearance by Media Mogul and Humanitarian Oprah Winfrey, who spoke to a capacity crowd and many others watching on screens located in the Ernest Morial Convention Center.

She walked out on stage greeting her audience looking chic, svelte and sophisticated in a red dress showing off her new slimmer figure. Her speech was inspirational and where Ms. Winfrey channeled her inner T.D. Jakes, Maya Angelou and Iyanla Vanzant throughout her moving address.

“Speaking to this crowd feels like family, I hope today that you take home from my speech words that will empower and embolden you,” said Winfrey. Continuing she spoke of the key in her rise is a testament to the power of the collective. “I



come as one, but I stand as 10,000, it is not who I am but whose I am.”

She urged the audience to dream big and be authentic to what that

means to them. Striking a chord, she asked the questions, “What is a dream for you and what is it you believe is God dream for you?”

Speaking of her own life and dream she spoke of driving through White neighborhoods in her native Mississippi and her image of being rich as having trees in her backyard. She recalled going to a friend’s house and seeing six trees. Speaking of God’s plans for bigger dreams for her life she said, “6 trees I could dream but today I have 3687 trees outside my house. At the time I could only dream six but God saw beyond six.”

In her presentation she spoke of her career and her latest projects on her Network OWN and her collaborations with Tyler Perry and Filmmaker Ava DuVernay. She is one who’s overcome many challenges and is an amazing example for people to follow. Throughout her career she has been atop her field with uplifting and enlightening entertainment. Winfrey has embodied the words of the William Ernest Henley poem, Invictus, that she quoted during her speech which its last lines states, “I am the master of my faith: I am the captain of my soul.”

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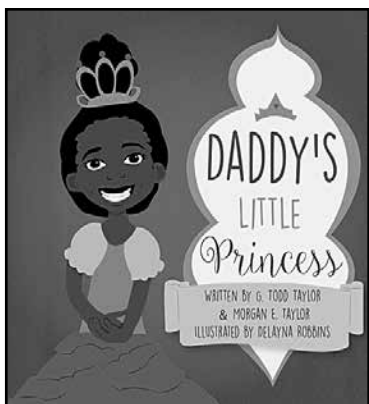
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Seven-Year-Old Author Debuts at Essence



Singer Keri Hilson read’s Morgan’s book at the Essence Festival.



Morgan’s co-authored book “Daddy’s Little Princess” was released on October 1, 2015.

Morgan Elizabeth Taylor is a second grader at Eastern Elementary School in Greenville, NC. Signed to Taylor Made Publishing, Morgan co-wrote the book “Daddy’s Little Princess” with her father G. Todd Taylor. When writing the book, she said she wanted other girls to be able to believe that they can be a princess regardless of their race.

The elementary level book is about real princesses of color from different parts of the world. It was written to be educational and em-

powering, while featuring real historical features.

Morgan had the opportunity to meet with several celebrities at the Essence Festival.

“It makes me feel really special. I met amazing people and I loved the beignets. There were a lot of celebrities, and I’m glad that I got to meet them,” the seven-year-old author said.

Morgan also had the opportunity to meet with essence performers.

“One exciting moment was singing with Keri Hilson at Essence. She asked for my autograph. She also liked my book,” Morgan said.

Morgan will continue to showcase her book around the country through Taylor Made Publishing, teaching other girls they can be a princess too.

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Data News Staff Edited Report

A seven-year-old author makes a debut at the 2016 Essence Festival in New Orleans, showcasing her first published book.

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