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New Orleans**

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July 16 - July 22, 2016 51st Year Volume 12 www.ladatanews.com

A Data News Weekly Exclusive

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Following Sterling Death, Baton Rouge Men ask ‘Am I Next?’



Male protesters gather at the State Capitol in rally against police brutality and show solidarity in wake of Alton Sterling killing. Photo by Ted James.

Leslie D. Rose
Jozef Syndicate Reporter

BATON ROUGE—It has been more than a week since the viral video re-

vealing the shooting death of Alton Sterling by Baton Rouge police officers flooded social media timelines. The footage ignited widespread fear of local law enforcement and proved that

the nation’s woes were no longer just on television but right in residents’ yards, literally.

Now with the home front being a national headline, three Baton Rouge men

tell their stories of what it is to be the prototype victim for police brutality - as they leave their homes every day with the notion that they could be “next” just because they are large, Black men.

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DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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Please call 504-309-9913 for subscription information or to obtain a back issue of the paper ONLY.
Dated material two weeks in advance. Not responsible for publishing or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photos.

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Tony King

Dominique

Meet Dominique Ricks, a 24-year-old educator from Baton Rouge whose first negative encounter with police occurred when he was 13-years-old.

Officers approached Ricks and a friend who were opposite descriptions of the suspects for whom they were looking. Ricks recalled that his mother came on the scene and told the officers that the two were good kids. Officers responded that they didn't know if Ricks was a good kid, and they didn't know if they were talking to an honor student or Saddam Hussein.

"I've always feared interaction with the police," Ricks said.

"Ever since then, I've had a certain understanding: they don't know who I am (and) a lot of times, they don't care who I am, so it's best for me to stay in my lane and avoid them."

Now at 6-foot-1, 291 pounds, his fears have only heightened as his hometown has become a hashtag.

"I'm afraid that my son might end up growing up without a father, and it's not because I'm not going to be a part of his life, but because I might get taken away," Ricks said.

But he continued that the Sterling incident did not shock him. He is only happy that it was caught on camera. He said he hopes justice will be served.

Tony

Meet radio and television personality, Tony King, a 36-year-old Houston native who is 6-foot-2, 271 pounds and admittedly has a negative history in the Criminal Justice System. He said he accepts responsibility for his previous actions and has since turned his life around.

"That one mistake doesn't define who and what I am, and it does not take away the value of my life," King said.

"There's a level of humanity that is being missed, and when you have people in the community who refuse to see the humanity in everybody—not just people who look like

As what is referred to as an underground emcee, Black, who is 6-foot-3, 350 pounds, said many times he has sold CDs in front of establishments. "I could have been Alton Sterling," Black said. "I wear cargo shorts a lot, I wear red t-

could have been me."

Aside from seeing a mirror image of himself in Sterling, Black also said he believes there is a lack of concern for North Baton Rouge that contributes to residents feeling undervalued and creating a

culture of unsafe interactions with law enforcement officials.

"The city created these conditions in North Baton Rouge," Black said. "North Baton Rouge is under-funded: no hospitals, no healthcare, no jobs, no access to mental health, no healthy food, and then they

Black is a facilitator of a conversation group called Black Men Talk. The group meets monthly or as needed to discuss issues relating to Black men, mostly in regards to current events. But it's just conversation. Black said action must be taken to prevent further unrest.

"We got work to do. Our lives are different now. Our lives will never, ever be the same," Black said. "Let's talk prison reform, let's talk police reform. We got work to do. Lord willing, we stay mobilized and organized, so we can keep doing this. I want to encourage everybody: this is our fight from here on out."

Work to be done is a sentiment that Black shares with National NAACP President Cornell William Brooks. Brooks warns that all work headed towards success in justice must be planned and well-thought-out.

"We cannot be called upon as a community to serially grieve," Brooks said. "We have to prevent these horrific videos and hashtags



Cornell Williams Brooks

shirts a lot. We are about the same skin tone, about the same size. That

want to police it, and you wonder why there is unrest."



Marcel Black

them—then to me, that's a problem."

King, much like Ricks, hasn't experienced heightened fear of interactions with police. Instead, he said, he's always been afraid. "My fear looks the same as it has always been," King said. "Every time an officer pulls up behind me, my chest tightens."

Marcel

Meet Marcel P. Black, a 32-year-old youth development worker and local emcee from Ardmore, Okla. Black, who considers himself an activist, has lived in Baton Rouge since attending Southern University and A&M College, and has started his family in the city.

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More than a Tail Light

New Audio Recording in Castile Murder

Eric Craig
Multimedia Editor

After a week of distress, authorities struggle to understand what happened to Philando Castile on July 6, 2016. According to the Washington Post, The Hennepin County Medical Examiner announced that Castile's death was ruled a homicide on July 11, 2016. In a statement released by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the organization plans on leading an investigation. In the meantime, the officers will be placed on administrative leave indefinitely.

The two officers have been identified as Jeronimo Yanez and Joseph Kauser.

Radio Recording

New sources suggest that the officers did not pull over Castile for a

broken taillight. Instead, according to an audio recording, the officers mistook Castile as a robbery suspect.

Television broadcasting station KARE-11, which services St. Paul, MN, received a recording from a viewer that has captured audio from a police scanner before the incident took place.

"The driver looks more like one of our suspects, just 'cause of the wide-set nose," one officer said in the audio recording.

According to a BCA press release, a gas station robbery happened two miles away from the traffic stop officers confronted Castile a few days before the confrontation.

While a lawyer representing the officers said the conversation the officers had were accurate in the audio recording, no official source has authenticated the audio.

The Yanez's lawyer, Tom Kelly,



Philando Castile was only 32 years old when killed by St. Anthony Police. PC- "The driver looks more like one of our suspects, just 'cause of the wide-set nose," one officer said in the audio recording.

told KARE that Castile was not a suspect in the robbery, but that the officers "had a reasonable suspi-

cion he may match the description of the suspect in the earlier robbery," Kelly said.

"This incident is not about race, it's about the presence of a gun. He saw it in the possession of the driver," Kelly added. According to KARE, when Castile's family heard the audio recording, they thought the police were engaging in racial profiling.

"It's hard to see a flared nostril from a car," Castile's uncle, Clarence Castile, told KARE.

The Story

On Wednesday, July 7, 2016 Philando Castile was pulled over for a broken tail light in Falcon Heights, MN. Castile was accompanied by his fiancé Diamond Reynold and her four-year-old daughter.

Yanez approached the car from the driver side and Kauser was on the passenger side, according to the BCA press release.

Castile told the officer he had a permit to carry a firearm. When Castile reached for his license and registration, Yanez shot 5 rounds into Castile. Castile was taken to Hennepin County Medical Center where he was pronounced dead.

The end of the conflict was caught on Facebook live, a real-time live streaming application for smartphones. Reynolds hosted the livestream, capturing moments after Castile was shot and her initial arrest on the scene.

The Officers

Both officers graduated from Minnesota State University at Mankato in 2010 at the top of their class. The two officers have been a part of the St. Anthony Police Department for four years.

Until the recent shooting, both officers had a clean record, according to the Washington Post.



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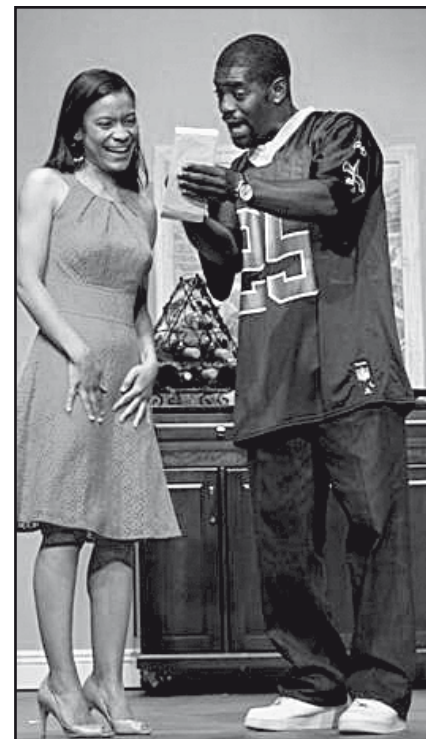
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"The High Priestess of Dark Alley" is Playing Now



"The High Priestess of Dark Alley" demonstrates New Orleans issues, such as colorist, religion, social class and marriage. Photos by John B. Barrios

Eric Craig Multimedia Editor

A New Orleans flavored original play kicked off Le Petit Theatre Du Vieux Carre's 100th Anniversary on July 7, 2016. The "The High Priestess of Dark Alley," is written by Jackie Alexander, who is a New Orleans native. Alexander is one of the first playwrights to kick off Le Petit's Anniversary.

The play will continue to play at Le Petit Theatre until July 24th.

"The High Priestess of Dark Alley" was originally written and produced in 2009 and premiered at the Billie Holiday Theatre.

Like in previous work by Alexander, he uses his art to express his viewpoint of the African-American experience. He writes about ideas such as joy, anger, failure and success within the African-American community.

The featured play at Le Petit continues that trend of African-American experiences by exemplifying issues on creole culture, colorism, marriage, social class in the City of New Orleans.

Alexander has been happy about the results so far at Le Petit.

"The reaction is what I hoped for," Alexander said.

"You never know how the audience will react. I don't know if it's a surprise or a relief that people really got the show on all levels. Having done the show before, I've seen reactions before, but this (New Or-

leans) crowd really pulled for the characters," he added.

Alexander believed the concepts of the play were universal to people living in New Orleans.

"There were people from different economic level, but everyone saw themselves on stage. It was really the personal connections to the characters and relating to the creole society in New Orleans," Alexander said.

Alexander wasn't the only one that enjoyed the audience's presence.

New Orleans native and Supporting Actor Nicoye Banks, who played the character Sweet, has been following the progress of the play since it debuted in New York in 2009.

Traci Tolmaire, who played Jannée in "The High Priestess of Dark Alley," was excited to perform in the show.

"We're super excited and ready to keep building and improving every night," Tracie said.

"The show is funny and you'll have a very good time and you'll see characters that you know and can relate to and find them enjoyable and entertaining," she added.

"I must admit that It felt like this play came full circle. While the plot and setting are in New Orleans, it was infant in New York and New Carolina and we had a chance to expose them to our rhythm and our culture. There is definitely a goodwill and love for

New Orleans," Banks said.

"I believe that the show is about love. It's a love story being told of a parent and her children and giving her children. You have young love and love that is in bloom. It's a story about Faith, intra-racial issues that are brought up. You definitely have to come an experience the "gumbo," he added.



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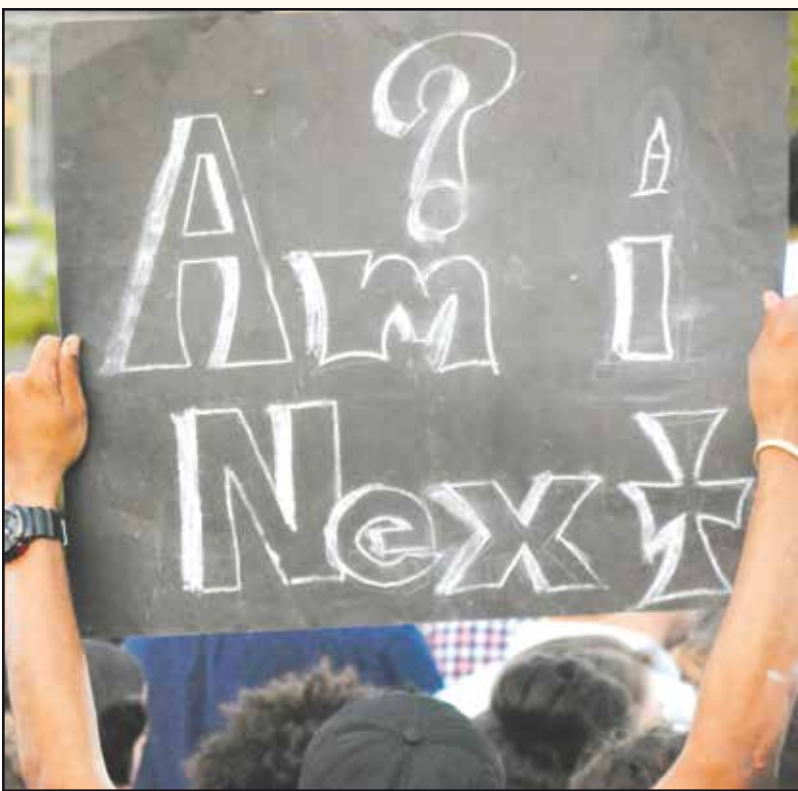
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Black Lives Matter Protest New Orleans



Delaney George
Data News Weekly Contributor
Photos by Delaney George

Last Friday at Lee Circle thousands of New Orleans natives filled the streets surrounding the confederate Robert E. Lee Monument to express

press concerns on the devaluing of Black lives in more ways than one.

Posters, art work, chants, surrounded the monument last Friday. The curator of the rally John Lacarbiere III, a local poet, photographer and activist, along with several other speakers stood front and center in front of the massive crowd to address

not only the police brutality cases that had occurred throughout the country last week but one that actually hit close to home. New Orleans native Eric Harris, was murdered on St. Philip Street by Jefferson Parish deputies back in February 2016.

Citizens gathered in remembrance

of Eric Harris, Philando Castile, Alton Sterling and many other victims of police brutality.

"The purpose of the rally was to remind everyone that while we stand in solidarity with the many predominately Black families across the nation who have lost

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Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events

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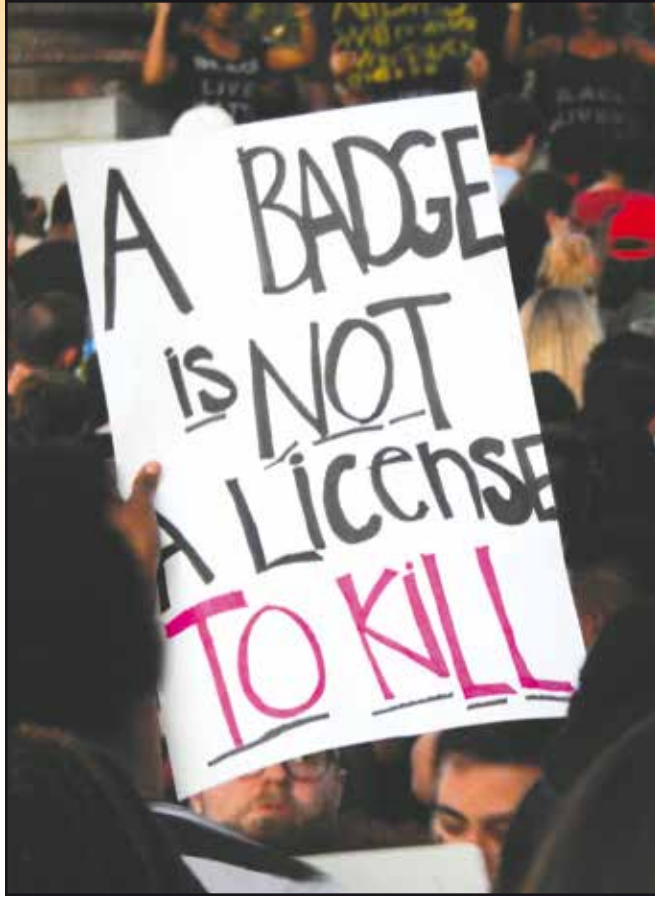
a loved one to state sanctioned violence, we cannot forget that New Orleans has and is still currently a place where Black people are targeted," said Angela Kinlaw.

Attendees of the rally consisted of people of all races, and backgrounds who came together to support the same cause. During the rally citizens took the time to shout concerns, grieve, and do their part to inspire change with their art, posters, and fist raised to the sky.

"It was a powerful thing for New Orleans to show that we value Black lives and are tired of seeing innocent people die" Brandon Myers said.

"The rally is a step in the right direction as far as gaining true traction in an effort to change things among society" he added.

For more information on upcoming demonstrations visit www.facebook.com/justiceforericharrisonla.



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Recent Police Shootings Show Our Nation's Hypocrisy



Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

Just a day after millions of Americans celebrated the "Fourth of You Lie," our nation got more

evidence of the lie we live when we "celebrate" freedom. On July 5, 2016, Alton Sterling was killed by White police officers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in an encounter that was blessedly videotaped. The footage showed a man being shot, even as he was down on the ground. A day later, on July 6, 2016, Philando Castile was shot four times as he attempted to comply with a police officer's request to provide identification. Diamond Reynolds, his fiancé, videotaped the encounter, as her 4 year-old

daughter sat in the backseat.

If patriotic fireworks make you feel warm and fuzzy about our nation, these two videos ought to be enough to throw ice water on them. I am chilled, disgusted, and angered at yet more senseless killings of Black men by police officers, 136 so far this year (about 25.3 percent of all police killings). You ought to read Frederick Douglass' speech and understand why those videos leave me with cold antipathy for "my country." Many things have changed since he delivered this or-

atorical masterpiece in 1852. Many things have not.

Watching Philando Castile's blood seep from his body reminds me of our nation's hypocrisy, and of Douglass' searing words:

"What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer; a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity;

your sound of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants brass fronted impudence; your shout of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are to him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy — a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages."

Indeed, while there is talk of

Commentary,
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The New Hip Hop Culture is the Monster that the Black Community Created



Raynard Jackson
NNPA Columnist

I am quite confident that what I am about to write will prove to be quite controversial, but I implore my readers to please read carefully what I am about to write.

I will preface this column with one of my favorite Bible verses, Proverbs 4:7: "Wisdom is the principle thing, therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting, get understanding."

Let's see if we can get some understanding as to why it seems that Blacks, especially young Black males, seems to have a bullseye on them when it comes to routine encounters with police departments all across the country.

Who could not help but be stunned at the shocking death of Alton Sterling last week in Baton Rouge, La.? Who could not help but be in tears at the heart-wrenching death of Philando Castile in Minneapolis, Minn.?

Police clearly had Sterling on the ground with two policemen on top

of him when one of the policemen shot him point blank in the chest, all under the guise of him having a gun in his pocket.

Castile was shot while following orders from a Hispanic-American policeman. The policeman was informed by Castile that he had a licensed gun on him along with his permit to carry; following the policeman's commands to show the documentation, he reached into his pocket to retrieve them and was shot and killed.

Even when Blacks follow instructions, somehow, we still end up dead.

Many Blacks feel like there has been an unofficial war declared on us, especially on young, Black males.

As tragic as these actions were, they should spark a larger, separate conversation about the images that we have created around Black life and Black culture. Regardless of these images, there is no justification for killing those young, Black men. Let's be clear about that.

For the past 30 years, we have created images of Blacks in the most negative of lights. For those who would say it's just music, it's just a movie, it's just a reality TV show, I say now there is just another Black body lying in the streets of America.

Before you go to war, the first

thing that is needed is to create a psychological operations campaign (psy-ops). This is a tactic that the military uses to marginalize its targeted population so that when the troops are sent in to destroy this group, there is little or no public outcry.

Just look at how the U.S. military vilified and demonized former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein and terrorist Osama Bin Laden, before we set out to kill them. Upon their deaths at the hands of the U.S. military, the American people cheered because we had devalued and marginalized them before the American people.

I can't help but ask the Black community, have we unleashed a psy-ops campaign on our own people?

In the horror movie "Frankenstein," Dr. Frankenstein did not set out to create a monster, but rather he was a scientist playing around in his laboratory. As a result of this experimentation, he created a monster that neither he nor society could control.

In a similar manner, one could argue that Blacks, specifically in Hip-Hop, have experimented in the laboratory called a recording studio; and by exercising their First Amendment Right to freedom of speech and expression through music, they have created their own

version of Frankenstein.

In the beginning, like with Frankenstein, people marveled at this new creation and people were willing to pay to see and hear it. There was "Rappers' Delight," there was "The Message," and there was "Fight the Power." Then, the imagery and lyrics took a twisted turn under a perverted interpretation of the First Amendment called "keeping it real."

Now, the establishment, especially the police, had become the enemy. Hip-Hop was a counter-culture movement that turned into a monster that could no longer be controlled. Women became "bitches and hoes," men became hypersexualized thugs who were only out to force themselves on your daughters and to "Get Rich or Die Tryin'." When rap music started, it was a verbal extension of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s in the spirit of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It was about the uplifting of our community and providing a voice to those often without a voice.

Then in the 1990s, rap took a more militaristic tone with the creation of "gangsta rap." This too, was a verbal extension of the Civil Rights movement, but more in the spirit of Malcolm X on steroids. These artists represented those in the "hood" who felt trapped and abused by the system. They felt like no one cared

about them and that life was about the here and now — immediate gratification, so screw the future. They wanted to "get theirs now." They wanted to live fast, even if it meant dying young.

This ultimately led to the "thug" culture, personified by hit movies like "Scarface," "New Jack City" and "Carlito's Way," each glorifying the criminal lifestyle.

Then you had the crack epidemic of the 1990s with the violence that it brought into the hood. All these factors combined to create a narrative that Black life was worthless and that young Black males were a menace to society.

It's too bad the rap world didn't heed the words of Chuck D, KRS-One, Doug E. Fresh, Heavy D, MC Lyte, Kool Moe Dee, D-Nice, Daddy-O and others on the all-time classic, "Self Destruction," which had as its chorus, "Self-Destruction, ya headed for Self-Destruction."

Raynard Jackson is founder and chairman of Black Americans for a Better Future (BAFBF), a federally registered 527 Super PAC established to get more Blacks involved in the Republican Party. BAFBF focuses on the Black entrepreneur. For more information about BAFBF, visit www.bafbf.org. Follow Raynard on Twitter @raynard1223. Mr. Jackson is an independent commentator, and his views do not necessarily represent the viewpoints of Data News Weekly.

Make it Rain!

LMG Calla Victoria

In this blazing heat I simply have to talk about keeping plants hydrated, and nothing works better for giving thirsty plants a refreshing drank of water than an irrigation system. Because who wants to be standing out in this heat watering plants? More than likely you will have to turn the hose onto yourself to cool down WHILE watering your plants.

A lot of people have sprinklers systems with those pop-up heads that come up and spray the area. Sprinkler Systems are not very effective in watering plants because they spray everything including sidewalks and steps, etc.; and you are paying for all of that lost water. Soaker Systems are so much more effective because they water the roots of the plants ONLY, and not everything else.

Most plants pull nourishment from their roots, therefore that is the only area of the plants that requires water. You can install a Soaker System for a fraction of what you will pay to have a Sprinkler System installed, and include a timer and voila' you are in business! Soaker hoses are also referred to as Drip Irrigation Systems because the water seeps out of the soaker hoses very slowly. In fact, it looks like the hose is sweating more than watering. So because the water



comes out more slowly it can water the plants deeply.

You do have to run Soaker Systems for longer periods of time than you do Sprinkler Systems, at least an hour or two. The take away is that all of the water used by the soaker hose goes to the root of the plants and you definitely get your

money's worth. And with the technological advances in irrigation you can even program the Irrigation System through your smart phone and schedule times to water your garden on demand. Soaker hoses are quite expensive, costing only about \$8 for twenty-five feet of hose. Buy as many as you need and place

them around your plant material (circling the thirsty plants a couple of times), cover the system with mulch, attach it to a timer which you program through your mobile phone and you are in business.

Aside from masking the ugly soaker hoses, Mulch is excellent for retaining moisture around plants

and suppressing weeds. Some soils like Miracle Gro potting soil retain moisture, so definitely use it in your outdoor containers and around those heavy feeders that you may have in your garden like hydrangeas, and wave petunias. Also use it around plants that are near trees, because the trees' large roots suck up a lot of water that smaller plants might suffer. But if the plants near your trees are surrounded with moisture-retaining soil and mulch, they will fair out very well.

I like lush plantings because it forms a privacy hedge, hides ugly structures in my neighbor's yard, and suppresses weeds. But with dense plantings, you must pay attention to those plants that are not thriving and add some mulch and moisture-retaining soil around them.

Also, by all means include a Rain-water Harvesting System in your irrigation plans. Did you know that for every inch of rainfall, we can expect to collect 600 gallons on 1000 square feet of collection area, that means that every square foot of roof will collect 0.6 gallons of rain-water for every inch of rain that falls ($1000 / 600 = 0.6$). 3.

(see: <http://ucanr.edu/sites/scmg/files/30178.pdf>)

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Civil Rights Organizations Launch Pro Bono Legal Support Program for Protesters in Louisiana

Data News Staff Edited Report

In the wake of the tragic death of Alton Sterling, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (Lawyers' Committee), the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society of Baton Rouge – an affiliate of the National Bar Association, and the National Lawyers Guild of Southern University Law Center at Baton Rouge have partnered to provide pro-bono legal services to peaceful protesters arrested while exercising their right to call for justice.

"The fatal shooting of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge is a matter of great national interest. Communities across Louisiana are calling for reform by exercising their first amendment right to demonstrate



LOUIS A. MARTINET LEGAL SOCIETY, INC.
Greater Baton Rouge Chapter

and protest," said Kristen Clarke, President and Executive Director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. "We seek to ensure that the first amendment rights of those demonstrators are protected."

The coalition received service requests from over 70 jailed protesters in just 24 hours, and continues to field requests.

"We are investigating claims that officers arrested scores of peaceful protesters. This is truly unacceptable," said Ashley Greenhouse,

President of the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society of Baton Rouge, a National Bar Association Affiliate Chapter. "The Louis A. Martinet Legal Society will promote peace and productivity. We will fight every obstruction of the right to protest peacefully."

"The action of the Martinet Legal Society, an NBA Affiliate Chapter, in answering the call of justice in Baton Rouge is a shining example of the dedication that our members have throughout the country as we remain steadfast in our commit-

ment to assure due process of the law is a reality in our communities of color," said National Bar Association President Benjamin L. Crump.

As mass demonstrations are expected to continue into the week, the coalition encourages demonstrators and protesters to contact 866-459-1220 should they face arrest. For more information on how you can support the effort, contact the Martinet Legal Society of Baton Rouge at brlouisamartinet@gmail.com or the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law at [help@](mailto:help@lawyerscommittee.org)

lawyerscommittee.org.

About the Lawyers' Committee
The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (Lawyers' Committee), a non-partisan, non-profit organization, was formed in 1963 at the request of President John F. Kennedy to involve the private bar in providing legal services to address racial discrimination. Formed over 50 years ago, we continue our quest of "Moving America Toward Justice." The principal mission of the Lawyers' Committee is to secure, through the rule of law, equal justice under law, particularly in the areas of fair housing and community development; employment; voting; education; environmental justice; and criminal justice. For more information, visit www.lawyerscommittee.org.

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Commentary, Continued from page 8.

fighting the terrorism of ISIS, when will we fight the terrorism that too many African Americans experience? If a law-abiding person with a right to carry a gun (Hello, National Rifle Association) can be killed because his taillight is busted, that's terrorism, defined as the use of violence and intimidation in pursuit of political aim. The aim is the maintenance of White supremacy "lite." It dictates "the talk" all young African American men get from their dads (White men don't have to have the talk because they aren't the victims of violence and intimidation). It explains the fear and mistrust between so called law enforcement officers and the African American community. It is a gut-wrenching reminder that, black President or not, it is still important to assert that Black Lives Matter.

Diamond Reynolds is a woman of amazing grace and courage. She had the foresight to use Facebook to livestream what happened after her fiancé, Philando Castile, was shot four times in Falcon Heights, Minnesota. She had the composure to respond with civility and respect, and in a level tone of voice, to the hysterical human being masquerading as a police officer who shot Mr. Castile. She had the presence of mind to remind the officer that Castile had indicated that he had a

conceal carry permit for a weapon before he reached into his jacket to provide the identification that had been demanded.

If you had a heart, the ten-minute video would break it at least a dozen times. I know that when the officer barked at Ms. Reynolds to get out of the car and get on her knees, my stomach lurched and I cried out in outrage. After witnessing an execution, and clearly not armed, why was Diamond Reynolds forced onto her knees and handcuffed? Did that sick White police officer think he was a god that had to be knelt to, paid homage to? He already had a license to kill. I guess a badge also gives you a license to humiliate. Diamond Reynolds had done nothing wrong. The police, surely, had a right to detain her as a material witness to Philando Castile's murder. They also claimed the right to demean her and to deny Philando Castile's relatives the right to identify his body the morning after his death.

I am, oh, so weary of these police killings, and all the more weary of our nation's hate, hubris, and hypocrisy. I am weary of the attempts, already, to discuss Alton Sterling's criminal record. And I will be weary of the conversation that will ensue as these murders are investigated and as the so-called police officers

are not prosecuted, because there was "reasonable doubt" that they "intended" to kill.

In the wake of Michael Brown's murder, President Obama appointed the Task Force on 21st Century Policing. A year ago, they submitted a report that talked about issues like trust between police officers and communities, and "best practices" for police officers. Nearly fifty years ago, President Lyndon Johnson appointed a similar commission, the 1967 President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. In their report, "The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society," one of the major findings stated, "Officials of the criminal justice system . . . must re-examine what they do. They must be honest about the system's shortcomings with the public and with themselves." Not much has changed in 50 years. Too many police officers are guided by hate and hubris, and protected by hypocrisy, and too many Black men are the "collateral damage" of our broken system.

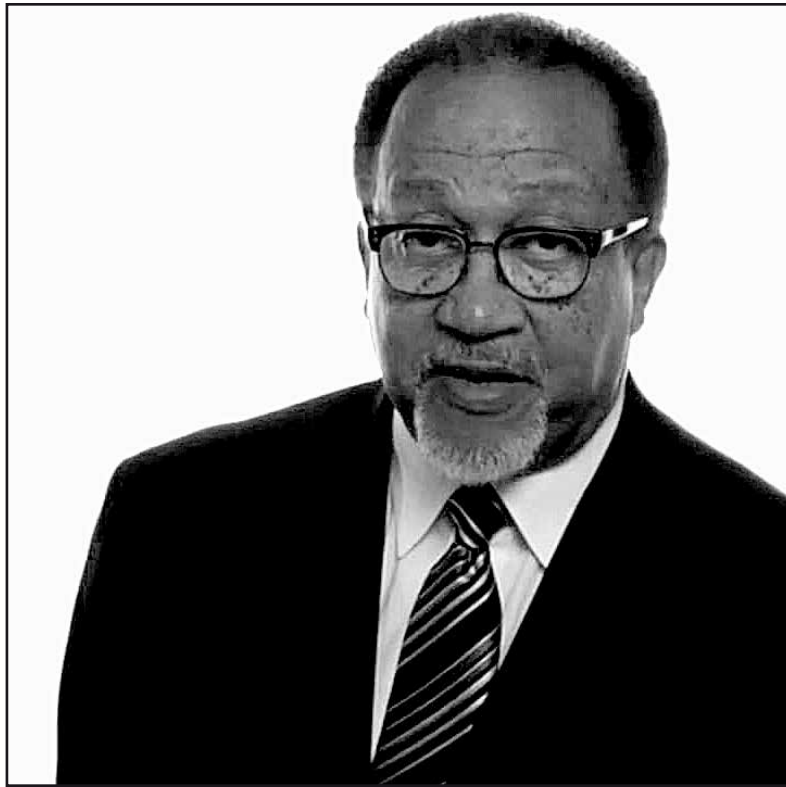
Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist based in Washington, D.C. Her latest offering "Are We Better Off? Race, Obama and Public Policy" is available via JulianneMalveaux.com or Amazon.com

Black Press of America Calls for a Special Prosecutor in Deaths of Sterling and Castile

NNPA Newswire

This week, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), the nation's largest trade association of African American-owned newspapers and media companies, issued an urgent call and demand that President Barack H. Obama and U.S Attorney General Loretta Lynch appoint a Special Federal Prosecutor in the wake of the police killings of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Philando Castile in Falcon Heights, Minnesota. The NNPA also expresses sincere condolences to the families of the police officers who were unjustly killed in Dallas, Texas.

"The killings of African Americans in Louisiana and Minnesota during the past week represent an escalating national pattern of fatal police killings that appear to be racially motivated. These incidents are not isolated local tragedies, but are the terrible growing manifestations of a deadly national system of racism in the criminal justice system that needs to be effectively challenged and changed," said Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., the president and CEO of the NNPA. "There are, today, too many African American families and communities that



Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., the president and CEO of the NNPA is leading the call from the Black Press for a special prosecutor to investigate the police shootings of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile stating, "There are, today, too many African American families and communities that continue to endure police brutality and violence across the United States."

continue to endure police brutality and violence across the United States. This is a national crisis that demands immediate federal intervention to both investigate and to

prosecute police officers, who continue to commit these wanton racially motivated killings."

Chavis continued: "We, therefore, demand that a Special Federal

Prosecutor be immediately appointed by the United States Department of Justice. To date, unfortunately, local investigations and prosecutions have been ineffective and have not insured equal justice. The Special Federal Prosecutor has to be independent and impartial. We have heard from many of our NNPA member publishers throughout the nation who all expressed profound disgust and moral outrage about these brutalities. We will not be silent in the face of these continued injustices. We demand action by the federal government now."

The reform of the criminal justice system in America requires more intellectual honesty in the national dialogue about race, inequality and injustice. The NNPA will engage and participate in this dialogue as the movement for reform and social change unfolds.

The NNPA represents 209 African American owned newspapers based in 32 states and known as the "Voice of Black America" that reaches 20.1 million readers per week with national offices located in Washington, D.C. Please visit www.NNPA.org to learn more about the NNPA and go to www.BlackPressUSA.com to check out news and commentary about the Black community.

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and tragedies from occurring again and again."

This month Brooks is celebrating two years as National President, and the time is eerily similar to when he was just two weeks into the role, when Eric Garner was killed by officers in Staten Island, New York. Garner was detained after selling loose cigarettes.

"I would assert that people participating in this so-called underground economy, which is basically small entrepreneurship. This is nothing anybody should lose their lives for, so we're here to send the message that we're not going to grieve serially. We have to call for specific policy, legislative reform."

But before talking reform, Brooks encourages the community to allow a moment to grieve, followed by a moment to come together and then a

decisive course of action.

"Everybody needs to come together," Brooks said. "And beyond that, a plan. We are at a time of both increased activism and heightened apprehension. There's a reason to be vigilant, however it's not a reason to be paralyzed. We cannot outsource the safety of our community to other people."

He said, "We gotta act now."

Understanding that there are people who will be fearful to stand on the front lines in times of social and civil unrest and police misconduct, Brooks compared the movement to that of a band.

"One band, one sound, but that doesn't mean everyone plays the same instrument," he said.

"When you see your sons and daughters being profiled, when you see your people being disre-

spected, when you see your community being disrespected, now may be the time to engage in activism, even if that's not your thing," Brooks said.

"Beyond that, if you can't stand on the front lines, then you raise some money for the people standing on the front lines, then you register folks to vote so that they can support the agenda of the people standing on the front line."

The point being, in this post-millennium Civil Rights Movement, there is a role for everyone to play."

Brooks encourages individuals who want to participate in taking action to visit NAACP.org for resources, including research based data for each state in regards to protest and demonstration laws. He also encourages citizens to let their fears motivate them to join together with others who seek justice.

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