A CELEBRATION OF

COURAGE

Honoring the Brave

URBAN LEAGUE OF LOUISIANA 2017 GALA

JULY 22, 2017 HILTON RIVERSIDE
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

A CELEBRATION OF COURAGE

Honoring the Brave

URBAN LEAGUE OF LOUISIANA

2017 GALA

Our Distinguished Honorees

HONORABLE EDWIN M. "MOON" LANDRIEU

FREEDOM FIGHTERS:
JEROME SMITH
CLAUDE REESE
DORATHA SMITH-SIMMONS
MATTHEO FRANCISCO SUAREZ
SANDRA NIXON THOMAS

HONORABLE MITCHELL J. "MITCH" LANDRIEU

IN MEMORIAM:
DYAN "MAMA D" FRENCH COLE
LOLIS EDWARD ELIE, ESQ.

RISING STAR AWARD:
MICHAEL "QUESS?" MOORE

URBAN LEAGUE OF LOUISIANA
4640 S. CARROLLTON AVE., SUITE 210 NEW ORLEANS, LA 70119
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Dear Urban League Friends and Supporters:

The Urban League of Louisiana's Annual Gala is an opportunity for us to celebrate the accomplishments of our missioned Movement of attaining civil rights through education and economic empowerment.

This year's theme, "A Celebration of Courage: Honoring the Brave," honors the leadership and courage necessary to increase understanding, promote tolerance and create change. We are honored to recognize individuals whose efforts and selfless acts of courage have made a significant impact.

Tonight you will hear incredible stories of bravery, perseverance, and determination. Our honorees are individuals who have made incredible sacrifices, some even shedding their own blood, to make strides towards equity and justice not only in the city we call home, but throughout the nation.

It seems that every day, we are confronted with yet another headline or news story of disturbing injustice, incomprehensible violence and regression. As we see that there is still so much work to be done in the fight for civil rights and equity, we look to our pioneers and leaders for hope, inspiration and most of all, courage. As we continue to move forward in our mission, we are forever indebted to the work and sacrifice of these individuals who helped pave the way. We hope that our honorees inspire you and fan the flames of your own courage to boldly act and advocate for what is right and just.

We are sincerely grateful to all of our corporate sponsors, partner organizations and supporters who have made this night possible. Specific acknowledgment of generous support goes to Entergy and Aptim. Thank you for standing with us as we continue to ***Empower Communities and Change Lives.***

Sincerely,

Erika McConduit

Erika McConduit
President & CEO

Chris D'Amour
Chairman

Entertainment

Erica Falls

Lejit featuring roi anthony and Shaun Ward

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Urban League

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*Empowering Communities.
Changing Lives.*

July 22, 2017

Dear Friends,

It is with great honor and pride that I join the Urban League of Louisiana in recognizing that singular strength in the face of pain, grief, fear and what often seems like insurmountable odds: courage.

Tonight we recognize individuals who have chosen to take a stand against injustice despite great personal risks. I want to congratulate this year's 2017 Annual Gala Honorees and commend them for their perseverance in the face of adversity and for their commitment to equality and justice. We thank them for their contributions to our continuing crusade to stand firm and to speak up, demonstrate and work diligently for what is right and just.

I'm so very proud of the Urban League of Louisiana and their continuing commitment to the betterment of my home state. On behalf of the National Urban League, thank you. We are all grateful to you and your dedicated staff for the work that you do to empower communities and change lives.

Yours in the Movement,

Marc H. Morial
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Urban League

Office of the Governor
State of Louisiana

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 94004
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804-9004
(225) 342-7015
gov.la.gov

July 22, 2017

Dear Friends of the Urban League of Louisiana,

My wife, Donna, and I join you in celebrating the leadership and courage that are necessary to increase understanding, promote tolerance and create change. We congratulate you on hosting your 2017 Gala.

This year's theme, "A Celebration of Courage, Honoring the Brave," is especially timely and fitting with your core values. Creating lasting change and advocating for economic self-sufficiency are vital to helping producing greater prosperity for everyone.

We have seen first-hand in Louisiana what can happen when elected leaders not only talk about family values but start implementing policies that truly value families. Expanding Medicaid in Louisiana, my first official act as governor, has led to more than 436,000 Louisianans getting health coverage. Consequently, they are living healthier lives. Additionally, it has saved the state millions, added more than 1,000 direct jobs and generated $4 billion in new revenue that is helping to improve our state's economy. This year, we successfully passed legislation that I have proudly signed into law, which will protect and save our coast, strengthen community policing standards and substantively reform our criminal justice system. There are many more important issues to tackle but by working together we can courageously face those challenges and turn them into opportunities.

Congratulations to all of this year's honorees whose efforts and selfless acts of courage have made a lasting impact. The work of the Urban League is critical as evidenced by the countless and diverse groups of corporate sponsors, business, civic, local and state leaders, and volunteers who are dedicated to ensuring its sustainability. The support you provide for families each year is far reaching and is making a positive difference.

I hope you have a delightful time and wish you continued success.

Sincerely,

John Bel Edwards
Governor

MITCHELL J. LANDRIEU, MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Greetings!

As Mayor of New Orleans, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Urban League of Louisiana's 2017 Annual Gala to commend this year's theme "A Celebration of Courage: Honoring the Brave." Thank you for honoring my father and me at this special celebration.

The noble purpose of this festive evening is to raise funds that will support the work of the Urban League of Louisiana and its programs that target local communities and workforce development. It is evident that the Urban League's focus on education and economic development continue to make a difference in communities throughout the city.

Together, we are creating the New Orleans of our dreams and the Urban League of Louisiana continues to be a valued partner in making our dreams a reality. To all the members and guests, thank you for making the Urban League of Louisiana's 2017 Gala an enormous success. On behalf of the City of New Orleans, welcome and have a wonderful evening.

Sincerely,

Mitch

Mitchell J. Landrieu, Mayor
City of New Orleans

1300 PERDIDO STREET | SUITE 2E04 | NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA | 70112
PHONE 504-658-4900|FAX 504-558-4938

Urban League of Louisiana

Our Mission

The mission of the Urban League of Louisiana is to assist African Americans and other communities seeking equity to secure economic self-reliance, parity and civil rights.

Our Movement

For nearly 80 years, the Urban League of Louisiana has fostered and encouraged activities that lead to increased opportunities for under-served communities. The Urban League of Louisiana is one of 88 affiliates of the National Urban League, which provides advocacy and direct service programs spanning 36 states. The strength of "the Movement" has been the identification of equality gaps in the African American community and the League's ability to design and deliver vital programs and policy initiatives to bridge these barriers.

Throughout our history, Urban League programs have been focused to ensure quality education and access to information, equal employment, entrepreneurial opportunities, economic inclusion and shared dignity under the law. The Urban League believes the opportunities that emerge from closing these gaps will benefit business, industry, and the greater community, and create a sustainable and dynamic future for everyone. With our tradition of success, coupled with support from every sector of the community, the Urban League is destined to remain the leading entity for social and economic equality as the new century continues to unfold.

During the past year, the Urban League has served more than 10,000 citizens through an array of advocacy and direct service programs housed within our Center of Education and Youth Development, Center of Workforce and Economic Development, and our Center of Policy and Social Justice. These important programs include Urban League Head Start; Project Ready; Parent Information Center; Education Empowerment Program; Office of Workforce Development; the Women's Business Resource Center and Entrepreneurship Center; and Policy and Social Justice Initiatives.

Honorable Edwin M. "Moon" Landrieu

Long before he was elected mayor, New Orleans functioned almost like two cities: a black New Orleans and a white New Orleans. Some people liked it that way, but Moon Landrieu did not, and so he did something about it. Moon Landrieu was born in Uptown New Orleans. He attended Jesuit High School and later won a baseball scholarship to Loyola University New Orleans, where he received a Bachelor of Arts in business administration in 1952 and a law degree in 1954. He was elected student body president at Loyola as an undergraduate. He served for three years in the United States Army, and then opened a law practice. In 1954, Landrieu married Verna Satterlee, with whom he had nine children.

In 1960, Moon was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives. He was one of the few white legislators who voted against the "hate bills" of the segregationists which the legislature passed in the effort to thwart the desegregation of public facilities and public schools. In 1966, he was elected Councilman-at-large and led a successful push for a city ordinance outlawing segregation based on race or religion in public accommodations. As councilman, Landrieu also voted to remove the Confederate flag from the council chambers and voted to establish a biracial human relations committee.

Moon Landrieu was elected mayor of New Orleans in the election of 1970. His platform promised the integration of city hall as well as equal access for all citizens, no matter their race. He won in a landslide victory, earning more than 90% of the African American vote.

During his tenure as mayor, Landrieu oversaw desegregation of city government and public facilities as well as encouraging integration within business and professional organizations. Before Landrieu was elected, there were no high-ranking black employees or officials in City Hall; he worked actively to change this by appointing African Americans to top positions, including the selection of Terrence Duvernay as Chief Administrative Officer, the number two position in the executive branch of city government. When Landrieu took office in 1970, African Americans made up 19 percent of city employees; by 1978, that number had risen to 43 percent. He also appointed Rev. A.L. Davis, a prominent Civil Rights Movement leader, to fill a temporary vacancy on the City Council; Davis was the city's first black city councilor.

Landrieu obtained federal funds for the revitalization of New Orleans' poor neighborhoods, and he promoted the involvement of minority-owned businesses in the city's economic life. After leaving office in 1978, he was succeeded by Dutch Morial, the city's first black mayor. Landrieu then served as Secretary of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and later as Judge of the Louisiana 4th Circuit Court of Appeals from 1992 until his retirement in 2000.

In 2004, Landrieu was inducted in the Louisiana Political Museum and Hall of Fame.

The Freedom Fighters

In the spring of 1961, groups of courageous young men and women, both white and African American, set out on a mission to test the 1960 Supreme Court decision Boynton v. Virginia, which made racial segregation illegal in interstate bus stations, restaurants, bathrooms and on buses. The Freedom Rides were organized by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and individuals traversed through Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi, with hopes of ending the tour with a rally in New Orleans.

They braved hostility, fear, and violence in their attempt to expose continuing segregation across the south. They were jailed and beaten, their buses stoned and firebombed, but word spread of their efforts and over 400 individuals joined their movement in those six months. Because of their work, that fall, the Interstate Commerce Commission issued regulations prohibiting segregation in interstate transit terminals, helping to fulfill their short-term goal. But the long-term vision of justice and equity for all had just begun. Building on this grass-roots effort, the Freedom Fighters dedicated their lives to fighting for justice and equity. Their courageous actions galvanized the movement for racial justice across the nation and have inspired the next generation of activists and advocates.

Jerome Smith

Jerome Smith was born in the late 1930s and raised in New Orleans. Throughout his lifetime he's been involved in community and political activism in New Orleans and was a Civil Rights Freedom Rider in the 1960s as well as a leader within the New Orleans chapter of the Congress on Racial Equity (CORE). While a freshman at Southern University in Baton Rouge, he joined student demonstrations that broke out in the spring of 1960. He then dropped out of college in order to devote himself to the movement, returning to New Orleans and working as a longshoreman while participating in and organizing demonstrations as the need arose.

As a leader within CORE, he participated in Freedom Rides throughout Alabama and Mississippi, where he was beaten and arrested. His efforts helped bring attention to the work of the civil rights movement, most notably within an historic meeting with U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy petitioning him to do more for the movement. It was attended by Jerome and several other national high profile civil rights leaders,including James Baldwin, Harry Belafonte, Lorraine Hansberry, Chicago Urban League President Edwin C. Barry, and Lena Horne among others. Many say that Jerome's impassioned pleas for justice during that meeting was a long-term turning point in Kennedy's attitude towards the Black liberation struggle and directly led to President Kennedy's landmark Civil Rights Address and the subsequent Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Jerome returned to New Orleans in the late 1960s and immediately began his work in community activism. He co-founded the club Tambourine and Fan in 1968, which served to entertain children in the 7th ward while teaching them about the traditions of the Mardi Gras Indians as well as dance, culture, New Orleans heritage all while keeping them off the streets and out of trouble.

Jerome has devoted the last five decades of his life to serving as an advocate for children as well as the director of the Treme Community Center. The majority of his community work is centered in the Treme neighborhood, where he once worked tirelessly to rebuild what Hurricane Katrina destroyed in the treacherous days that followed, specifically with the restoration of the Community Center in order to continue its positive influence in the lives of the community.

He remains active in the Treme community and is affectionately known as "Big Duck" because he always seems to have a group of children following him wherever he goes.

Claude Reese

Claude H. Reese is a retired public administrator, political activist and Civil Rights Freedom Rider from New Orleans, Louisiana. He began his civil rights work as a college student, when he joined the New Orleans chapter of the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) in 1961. He was recruited to serve by civil rights giant, Oretha Castle Haley, whose leadership he has described as "strong and determined."

As a member of CORE, Reese participated in a student demonstration at SUNO that led he and many others to be arrested. He also took part in lunch counter sit-ins at Woolworth and McCrory's, and a freedom ride to McComb, Mississippi. His efforts helped bring attention to the work of the civil rights movement.

In 1970, with the racial integration of City Hall by former mayor Moon Landrieu, Claude began his career as a public administrator. During the Landrieu administration, he served in several positions and continued his service in city government in the administration of the city's first black mayor, Dutch Morial, where he served as Deputy Director of the Utilities Department.

Prioritizing civic engagement as an important civil rights issue, Claude has worked on a multitude of political campaigns for more than a quarter of a century. These days, Claude serves as an informal advisor to candidates who wish to tap into the breadth of his institutional knowledge about the political scene in the city.

Since his retirement in 2010, Reese enjoys spending time with family, especially his grandchildren, and attending services and activities at Franklin Avenue Baptist Church.

Doratha Smith-Simmons

Doratha 'Dodie' Smith-Simmons was born in Benton, Mississippi on May 30, 1943. In 1945, her family moved to New Orleans where she attended public schools and graduated from Southern University.

Dodie credits her sister Dorothy for her involvement in civil rights in the late 1950's. Dorothy was a member of the NAACP Youth Council and was among students that desegregated LSU in New Orleans. Dodie joined her sister in the Youth Council. In 1960, Dodie became an active member of the New Orleans Congress Of Racial Equality, CORE, participating in sit-ins, picketing, and was jailed several times. During the Freedom Rides of 1961, she was a trainer for Freedom Riders leaving from New Orleans for Jackson, Mississippi. Approximately 40% of the riders, who went to Jackson, were trained by or were members of New Orleans CORE. After the passing of the Interstate Commerce Commission ruling abolishing segregation in interstate travel, Dodie became a tester, traveling to McComb, Mississippi, where she and fellow testers were beaten in Poplarville, Mississippi, and some were arrested and jailed.

In 1965, Dodie worked at Preservation Hall, touring the U.S. and the world with many of the city's brass bands. She was also a founding member of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival. Dodie now spends her time speaking about her involvement in New Orleans CORE and the Civil Rights Movement. In June, 2014, Dodie organized a 3 day conference around the 50th anniversary of Freedom Summer in Louisiana.

Mattheo Francisco Suarez

Matt Suarez was born in New Orleans 79 years ago. He grew up in the seventh ward and through the civil rights struggle and hard work, he successfully became an entrepreneur and community leader of this city. His transition did not come easy.

In the 1950s, Matt served in the Navy settling in California. Later, when the sit-ins began, he returned to New Orleans to join the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). That activism led to his moving to Mississippi and joining the movement there. He was the first Director of the Freedom Democratic Party; however, when CORE refused to take a position against the Vietnam war, Matt withdrew from the organization and returned to New Orleans. He then supported and worked with politicians to improve conditions in the city for the less fortunate and deprived.

He organized the Community Consultants and Development Corporation (CCDC), which established programs that developed a freedom school, food banks, after school tutorials and summer camp programs. He also wrote a book "This Old House" that gave people with limited funds information on opportunities available and how to upgrade and redesign their homes.

Through the years, Matt has owned many businesses: construction companies, restaurants, and day care centers, including Rainbow Academy and Preschool. His centers have received national acclaim for their educational programs, and Matt garnered recognition by President Barack Obama for his 43 years of service educating the children of New Orleans. Additionally, he was recognized along with others by Oprah Winfrey for their hard work during the civil rights movement. Both acknowledgments mean so much to him. He knows that his hard work has not gone unnoticed.

Sandra Nixon Thomas

Sandra Nixon Thomas is the fourth child of ten children and grew up in New Orleans, the city she still calls home. She was the first of her family to attend college at Southern University and it was there that she first connected with the Congress on Racial Equity (CORE). She was inspired by their nonviolent principles and outraged by stories of local and national social injustices they shared with her. She became very involved in the movement, participating in sit-ins and other demonstrations in New Orleans.

Thomas officially joined the Freedom Riders movement in 1961. She traveled by train from New Orleans to Jackson, Mississippi on May 31, 1961, where she was arrested and charged with breach of peace for attempting to use a public restroom. She remained in jail for several weeks with her fellow female Freedom Riders in maximum security, next to Death Row, in a very overcrowded cell. They managed to keep their spirits up by singing freedom songs. She was only 19 years old. Later that year in October, she was arrested along with Reverend Avery Alexander at New Orleans City Hall after they attempted to eat in the segregated cafeteria. They were forcibly removed from the building by the NOPD and charged with disturbing the peace.

At the time of her arrests, she was an English major at Southern University, and once being released from jail, went back to Southern and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. She married Isaac Thomas after college and was soon employed with the Department of Public Welfare. She also continued to work with CORE and participated in local demonstrations throughout New Orleans.

Thomas retired from the Department of Social Services in 2007, after serving there for 28 years. She feels that the movement she was a part of made great strides in that it was able to break down racial barriers that existed only a few decades ago.

Honorable Mitchell J. "Mitch" Landrieu

One Team. One Fight. One Voice. One City. These words are the personal and professional creed of the 61st mayor of New Orleans, and throughout his two terms, he's worked diligently to make that mission statement a reality.

To address income inequality, in September 2014, Landrieu introduced a comprehensive strategy to connect disadvantaged job seekers and businesses to new opportunities, unveiling an economic opportunity strategy and the Network for Economic Opportunity. He also raised the City employee minimum wage to $10.10, setting an example for public and private bodies to pay a living wage.

With his installation of the New Orleans Welcome Table, diverse groups of residents come together to discuss and find solutions to issues concerning race, reconciliation and community. His recent display of courage was evidenced in the removal of four of the city's prominent Confederate statues, culminating in the delivery of one of the most poignant and impassioned speeches regarding the truths of our city and its history that we must confront.

The year 2017 also included other notable advancements of racial equity with the start of EquityNewOrleans, a citywide initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, in partnership with the Foundation for Louisiana. This initiative seeks to identify how city government can begin to understand and address equity in New Orleans in a data-driven, strategic manner to identify the best and most immediate opportunities for the City to demonstrate equity in policies, programs and service delivery.

Prior to becoming mayor, he served as Louisiana's Lieutenant Governor for six years and previously in the Louisiana House of Representatives for 16 years.

Building on the legacy of his father, Mayor Landrieu has also secured his place as one of the city's most extraordinary leaders committed to racial justice and healing.

In Memoriam

Dyan "Mama D" French Cole

Fiery community organizer and civil rights advocate Dyan French Cole, widely known as "Mama D," transitioned May 20th after a long battle with cancer. She was 72. Mama D was a trailblazer. In January 1975, she became the first woman to become president of the New Orleans branch of the NAACP.

Nearly every day, she headed to Orleans Parish Criminal District Court to advocate for young black men who were appearing in court. In her remarks, she often referred to the public official in charge as "baby," and she nearly always hearkened back to her days in the civil rights movement. She passionately advocated for quality housing, youth programs, and worked tirelessly on voter registration.

After Hurricane Katrina, when she refused to evacuate, Mama D organized crews she called the Soul Patrol, to go through her native 7th Ward and other neighborhoods, saving people, feeding them and finding them clothes, assistance and other relief. She housed so many people at her home on North Dorgenois Street that some people referred to it as Recovery Camp Dorgenois. She was known as "the Rock of New Orleans" and her reputation for kindness, generosity and bold truth-telling was legendary.

"Dyan French Cole was an authentic truth-sayer and a one-person community-accountability force of nature," Marc Morial said of her. He said her "in-your-face style reflected the no-nonsense activism and passion of the civil rights movement."

Lolis Edward Elie, Esq.

Lolis Edward Elie passed away on April 4, 2017 at his Treme home. He was 89. Born in New Orleans when segregation was so pervasive that police would holler at him just for walking through Audubon Park, Lolis not only represented people who challenged the social order, but also met with leaders of the white establishment to try to make changes happen.

As a New Orleans lawyer, his work put him in the thick of the civil rights movement, with clients who included African-Americans seeking jobs and the right to eat at lunch counters, Freedom Riders and even the Black Panther party and the Deacons for Defense and Justice, a resistance group that took up arms against the Ku Klux Klan.

Lolis attended Howard University on the G.I. Bill before transferring to Dillard University, where he graduated. In 1959, he obtained his Juris Doctorate from Loyola Law School. After graduation, Lolis started a legal practice with Loyola classmate Nils Douglas and Louisiana State University Law School graduate Robert Collins.

In 1960, the New Orleans chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) asked Lolis and his firm to represent CORE after a sit-in campaign. Lolis and his firm defended CORE chapter President Rudy Lombard and three others who were arrested for staging a sit-in protest at the lunch counter of the McCrory Five and Ten Cent Store in New Orleans. They appealed the case to the United States Supreme Court, which, in its decision, declared the city's ban on sit-ins unconstitutional.

Elie's firm also provided free legal counsel to the Consumers' League, a group of black civil rights activists who protested discriminatory employment practices. Lolis was one of eleven supporters of the Freedom Riders who met with then Attorney General Robert Kennedy in 1961, when Kennedy encouraged them to shift their efforts to registering black Southerners to vote. Elie's career spanned 46 years and he retired shortly after Hurricane Katrina struck in August 2005.

Rising Star Award

MICHAEL "QUESS?" MOORE

Michael "Quess?" Moore AKA "A Scribe Called Quess?" is a poet, educator, actor, activist and co-founder of the group "Take 'Em Down NOLA," a movement committed to the removal of all symbols of white supremacy in New Orleans as a part of a broader push for racial and economic justice.

Originally from Brooklyn, Quess? moved to New Orleans when he was 12 years old. After sitting in on a lecture at the New Orleans Public Library with local black historians, in which the audience was shown a grid of the city revealing that half of the streets were named after slave owners and confederate leaders, he was inspired to take action. He soon co-founded BYP100 NOLA, a young adult organization that advocates for the protection of black youth from state sanctioned violence. In November of 2014, Quess? circulated a petition at a BYP100 protest to take down the statue at Lee Circle. That petition planted the seed for Take 'Em Down NOLA. For the next three years, as the grassroots group continued to hold more protests, canvass the city's black communities, hold public forums, and receive media coverage, it garnered the attention of local government officials. In May of 2017, four of the largest monuments were finally removed.

Quess? is a founding member of Team SNO (Slam New Orleans), New Orleans' national championship slam poetry team having won competitions in 2010, 2012 and 2013. He's also a member of VOIC'D (Voices Organized in Creative Dissent), a collective of actors spawned by Junebug Productions with a focus on social justice, whose last production, "Lockdown," received critical acclaim. He is the author of two books, Blind Visionz, and his most recent release, Sleeper Cell.

PROGRAM

Entertainment.....Erica Falls

Opening.....Norman Robinson, Master of Ceremonies

Welcome.....Congressman Cedric Richmond
U.S. House of Representatives, 2nd District Louisiana

Remarks.....Chris A. D'Amour
Partner, Adams & Reese, LLP
Chairman of the Board
Urban League of Louisiana

Remarks and Presentation of Gala Chairpersons.....Erika McConduit
President & CEO
Urban League of Louisiana

2017 Chairperson Remarks.....Charles Rice, Jr.
President & CEO
Entergy New Orleans
2017 Gala Co-Chairperson

Tyson Hackenberg
Vice President
APTIM
2017 Gala Co-Chairperson

2017 Recognitions.....Erika McConduit

Rising Star Award
Michael "Quess?" Moore

Honorable Mitchell J. "Mitch" Landrieu

In Memoriam:
Dyan "Mama D" French Cole
Lolis Edward Elie, Esq.

Mattheo Francisco Suarez
Sandra Nixon Thomas
Claude Reese
Doratha Smith-Simmons
Jerome Smith

Honorable Edwin Maurice "Moon" Landrieu

The Toast.....Sybil Haydel Morial

Entertainment.....Lejit featuring Roi Anthony & Shaun Ward

2017 Gala Committee

Dorothy "Dottie" Reese, Chairperson
Laverne Toombs, Chairperson
Erika McConduit
Ricardo Thomas
Beth Trotter
Cathy Washington
Jameeta Youngblood

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– Arthur Ashe

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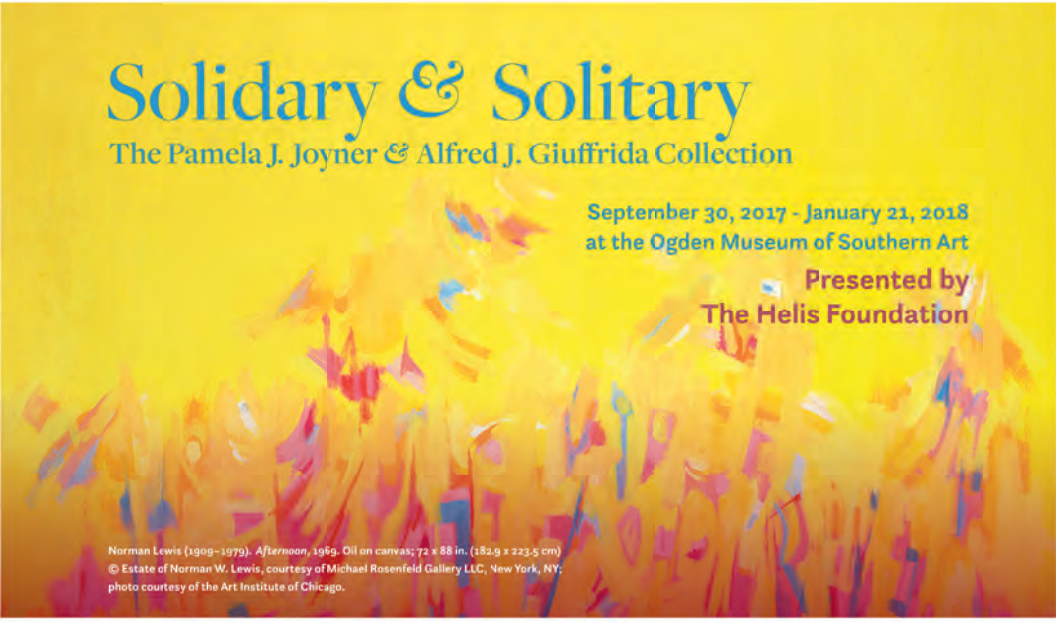

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