

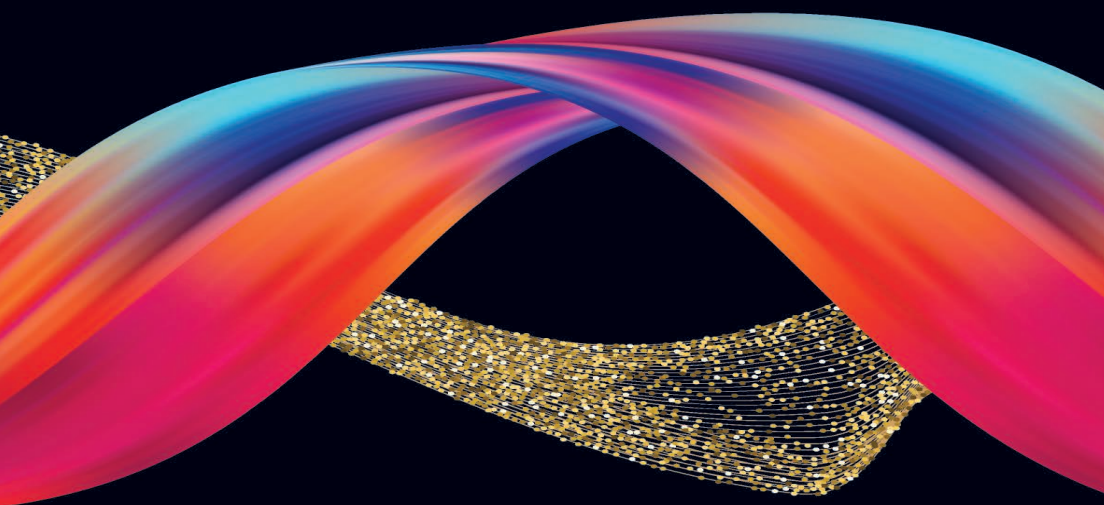


Urban League  
of Louisiana

*Annual Gala*  
2019

Our *Vibrant* Vision  Empowering Communities  
Through Collective Impact

June 29, 2019 Hyatt Regency  
New Orleans, Louisiana



2019  
*Honorees*

Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus

Louisiana Youth Justice Coalition

New Orleans Parks and Recreation Partners

Together Baton Rouge

Unanimous Jury Coalition

YouthForce NOLA



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Welcome to our 2019 Annual Gala! Tonight we celebrate our “Vibrant Vision” by recognizing partners and organizations that have effectively utilized a collective impact strategy to empower local communities in dynamic ways.

If there’s anything we can be certain of, it’s that no one organization or no one individual can do all of the work that needs to be done – alone.

Collective impact is a concept that’s full of exciting new energy. It’s an incredible achievement when organizations can truly come together, perhaps even unlikely organizations, to focus on addressing and finding solutions for exceedingly complex issues. We hope that you will find much inspiration tonight as you hear their incredible stories. From providing better recreational spaces for our families to enjoy here in New Orleans, to extinguishing the last Jim Crow law in Louisiana, the stories you will hear tonight are sure to move you.

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 Hancock Whitney Corporation and the Hyatt Regency New Orleans for their Platinum gifts. Thank you for standing with us as we continue to Empower Communities and Change Lives.

Sincerely,

Judy Reese Morse  
President & CEO

Chris D'Amour  
Chairman

# Honored Guests

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**First Lady Donna Hutto Edwards**  
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**Judge Terri Love**  
*Court of Appeal - Fourth Circuit State  
of Louisiana*

## Entertainment



**Caren Green**



**DJ Raj Smoove**



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*Empowering Communities.  
Changing Lives.*

June 29, 2019

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to join with the Urban League of Louisiana in celebrating their "Vibrant Vision" and empowering communities through collective impact. We must never underestimate the dynamic transformation that occurs when people, communities and organizations join together to bring about change.

Tonight we recognize organizations that came together to bring about incredible changes within Louisiana. I want to congratulate all of the 2019 Annual Gala Honorees and commend them for their willingness to work together for the greater good of the community as a whole.

I'm so very proud of the Urban League of Louisiana and their continuing commitment to making a positive impact on 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.

Keep Pushing!

Yours in the Movement,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'm morial'.





Office of the Governor  
State of Louisiana

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GOVERNOR



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June 29, 2019

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that Donna and I join you in celebrating and congratulating the Urban League of Louisiana on an impressive anniversary of 81 years. Such longevity is a testament to your organization's importance and strong leadership.

The Urban League of Louisiana is truly living this year's theme. Your vibrant vision has been empowering communities through collective impact for decades. Securing equal opportunities for economic self-reliance, eradicating barriers to equality for all in education, housing and business are necessary to bettering life for Louisianans individually and collectively. As one of this nation's premier civil rights organization, your dedication to ensuring everyone has an opportunity to achieve success is paying off and is to be commended.

Donna is especially proud to serve as this year's honorary chairperson. She uses her platform to advocate for Louisiana's children and families. As a former public school teacher, she champions programs and services that will help educate the whole child through music, arts and movement. She has also developed a strong network of support for foster children and families through Louisiana Fosters and continues to partner with me to raise awareness about how to prevent human trafficking in our state and help restore the lives of survivors. Together, we strive every day to connect people with the resources they need to succeed, and we are thankful to work alongside your organization in moving Louisiana forward.

Congratulations to all of the honorees and especially to the Urban League of Louisiana on your celebration. May God continue to richly bless you and the great State of Louisiana.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bel Edwards".

John Bel Edwards  
Governor





**City of New Orleans**  
**Mayor LaToya Cantrell**

Dear Friends,

It is my absolute pleasure, as the Mayor of the City of New Orleans, to welcome you to the Urban League of Louisiana's Annual Gala Celebration.

I am honored to support this event that supports the work of the Urban League of Louisiana targeting workforce development and building communities. Without a doubt, your programming changes lives and New Orleans is a better city because of it. Every day, your organization and our community partners work toward embodying this year's theme of "Empowering Communities through Collective Impact." We all know that we are better and can achieve more when we work collaboratively.

Together, we are moving New Orleans forward and the Urban League of Louisiana is a strong partner in our city's progression. To all the guests and those being honored, thank you for your valued support of this impactful organization. On behalf of the people of New Orleans, welcome and I wish you a joyous and vibrant evening.

Sincerely,

LaToya Cantrell  
Mayor  
City of New Orleans



## 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 over 80 years, the Urban League of Louisiana has fostered and encouraged activities that lead to increased opportunities for underserved communities. The Urban League of Louisiana is one of 95 affiliates of the National Urban League, which provides advocacy and direct service programs spanning 35 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.



Imagine what we could do **together**.

This is the quintessential principle of **collective impact**. It simply means bringing people and organizations together, in a structured way, to solve complex social issues and achieve **social change**.

Collective impact is a **dynamic** way to empower our communities.

**These next few pages feature the inspiring stories of our collective impact honorees.**

# Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus



Since its establishment in 1977, the mission of the LLBC has always been to raise the quality of life for African Americans, the indigent and working people through legislation, education and economic development. The caucus, currently chaired by Representative Randal Gaines (57th District), has accomplished this through enacting legislation that positively impacts African Americans and repealing legislation that negatively impacts the Black Caucus' constituencies.

Since the inception of the LLBC, the number of African-American legislators has increased tremendously which is attributed to the LLBC's legislative skill and wisdom. For example, the Black Caucus successfully passed reapportionment legislation in 1983 and 1990, which established more African-American legislative districts, thus allowing for the election of more African-American representatives and senators. Other achievements of the LLBC include expanding voting rights, enhancing historically Black colleges and universities, eliminating Jim Crow laws, increasing minority business opportunities, and fighting against abolishing affirmative action and minority set-asides.



*Rep. Randal Gaines*

With policy always close to the heart of the LLBC's mission, and with the collaborative vision of Chairman Gaines, the organization has recently partnered with the Urban League of Louisiana to host the first Policy Conference of its kind in the State of Louisiana. The 2019 Empowerment and Policy Conference is a statewide convening designed to examine systems, influence policy decisions and enact changes that will positively impact the African-American community.



The Conference will provide a platform for local, state and national thought leaders, policy makers, sector and community leaders to discuss, debate, and advance conversation and thinking around a multitude of issues that are of importance to African Americans in Louisiana. Conference panelists and guest speakers will engage conference attendees on economic, social, and political topics, including issues that impact opportunity youth and their families. The conference will take place on September 27-28 in New Orleans, LA.

# The Louisiana Youth Justice Coalition

Established by the Louisiana Center for Children’s Rights in 2015, the Louisiana Youth Justice Coalition led by its Executive Director Aaron Clark-Rizzio, is a broad network of organizations and individuals that support a legislative and policy agenda for common-sense juvenile justice reform. The coalition was founded on the idea that Louisiana needs a safe, smart, cost-effective, and fair juvenile justice system — one that will prepare vulnerable youth to be productive and successful adults, instead of pushing them out of school and into the criminal justice system.



With over 70 member organizations, the coalition has been overwhelmingly successful in the last several legislative sessions when it comes to juvenile justice reform. Since



*Aaron Clark-Rizzio*

the formation of the coalition, legislative reforms they have influenced include the approval of the Raise the Age Act to finally include 17-year-olds in the juvenile justice system, as the vast majority of states already do, and the approval of limitations on juvenile life sentences, which will save children from years of incarceration and give them a greater chance of success when they come home.

Because of their work, indiscriminate shackling of children has been eliminated with several exceptions, making this practice the exception rather than the norm and sparing children a traumatizing experience while preserving the presumption



of innocence. Scheduled “status check” hearings for incarcerated youth, at which a judge determines if they are rehabilitated and ready to return home, are also now guaranteed.

The coalition is committed to continuing its work to chip away at the barriers that stand between system-involved children and their success.

# New Orleans Parks and Recreation Partners

For decades, New Orleans residents have had access to thousands of acres of green space across the city, combined with dozens of fitness, swimming, and recreation centers offering free programming and activities for all ages, but funding for these spaces has not been equitably distributed.

All of that dramatically changed on May 4, 2019, when the voters of New Orleans overwhelmingly supported a measure to re-allocate existing millages to be more equitably distributed to all four of New Orleans' parks and recreation agencies, including New Orleans City Park, the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission (NORDC), the Department of Parks and Parkways, and the Audubon Commission.



Mayor LaToya Cantrell

Leading up to the voting day, Mayor LaToya Cantrell, Ron Forman, President and CEO of the Audubon Institute, Larry Barabino, NORD Commission CEO, Bob Becker, CEO of New Orleans City Park and Ann McDonald, Director of Department of Parks and Parkways worked together to promote a reallocation of millage rates that allowed for a fair and equitable share of taxpayer dollars. This included adding funding (*for the very first time*) for the city's biggest green space, City Park. The collaborative effort was developed in partnership with Trust for Public Land, a national leader in parks and recreation advocacy.



Ron Forman

Because of their collaborative efforts, the partners were able to convince voters to provide sustainable and more equitably distributed funding for maintenance, park safety, programming, and capital improvement.



Larry Barabino

# Together Baton Rouge

Together Baton Rouge (TBR) is a broad-based coalition of congregations and community-based organizations in the Greater Baton Rouge area, with the capacity to address community problems large and small. The coalition has deliberately set out to cross the lines



of race, religion, neighborhood and political affiliation. It works on issues affecting families and communities, and is a strictly non-partisan organization. TBR is made up of over 40 local organizations who have come to the conclusion that they can more completely fulfill their mission by working in deep relationships with other organizations, rather than alone or through sporadic partnerships.



Since its founding in 2011, the group has gained many community victories including winning a dedicated revenue source for public transit, winning \$1 million in state funding for the Healthy Food Retail Act, to bring grocery stores to low-income communities with no access to healthy food, winning Medicaid expansion, bringing health insurance coverage to 300,000 Louisiana residents, and winning an increase in the state cigarette tax generating \$189 million for healthcare.

TBR also had a significant community impact immediately following the wrongful killing of Alton Sterling Jr, who was shot to death by police officers in the summer of 2016. Two founding members, Reverend Lee Wesley of Community Baptist Bible Church and Father Paul Andrus of St. Paul the Apostle Catholic church, witnessed firsthand the power of the group as its members gathered in both of their sanctuaries to grieve, talk, and try to gain an understanding of the issue and how they could effectively devise a positive outcome for the city. Before Mayor Sharon Weston Broome was elected, TBR worked with her to come up with a set of policies for police reform which she then signed into law on day one of her administration



*Rev. Lee Wesley*



*Fr. Rick Andrus*

TBR has successfully built the largest and most diverse citizens' organization in the history of Baton Rouge. Their goal is to continue to work on issues that move Baton Rouge, ALL of Baton Rouge, forward aligned with the philosophy that "a rising tide lifts all ships."



# Unanimous Jury Coalition

In the November 2018 election, Louisiana voters had the opportunity to strike down one of the last remaining Jim Crow laws in the nation. In forty-eight other states and in federal courts across the country, a conviction requires a unanimous vote – all jurors must agree on whether a prosecutor has met the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.



*Norris Henderson*

Up until this election, Louisiana was one of only two states where someone could be sentenced to life without parole without the unanimous decision of a jury. More than forty percent of all those who have been recently exonerated were (mistakenly) found guilty by non-unanimous juries.



*Angela Allen-Bell*

With only three months to educate the public before the election, the Unanimous Jury Coalition worked tirelessly to get the word out, as hundreds of volunteers made phone calls, distributed yard signs and lit up social media. Norris Henderson, Executive Director of Voice of the Experienced (VOTE), shared his own story of wrongful conviction that was ultimately overturned, as well as the stories of others who had been wrongfully convicted because of the antiquated law. Ed Tarpley, attorney and former District Attorney for Grant parish, also worked to educate legislators on both sides of the political spectrum, witnessing a collaborative spirit he'd never encountered before. Angela Allen-Bell, Southern University Law School Professor and expert on civil and human rights, who had spoken and published on the issue nationally, provided her expertise and knowledge to the coalition.



*Ed Tarpley*



*Sen. J.P. Morrell*



The amendment was presented to the Louisiana Legislature by Sen. J.P. Morrell and ultimately received more than the necessary two-thirds approval in the House and Senate. It also drew strong support from both conservative and liberal organizations and groups, a phenomenon rarely seen in politics.

Thanks to the work of the Unanimous Jury Coalition, a group of 16 partner organizations and the endorsement of numerous other groups state-wide, including the Urban League of Louisiana, voters overwhelmingly voted yes on Amendment 2 on November 6, 2018, eliminating one of the last vestiges of Jim Crow Law in the South.

# YouthForce NOLA



YouthForce NOLA is an education, business, and civic collaborative that prepares New Orleans public school students for successful pursuit of high-wage, high-demand career pathways and facilitates systemic change to ensure equitable outcomes. The main mission of the group is to ensure that New Orleans public school graduates are thriving economically, and that they are the most sought-after talent for hiring and

advancement in the region's high-wage, fast-growing industries.



*Cate Swinburn*

They are accomplishing this work by bringing together economic, educational, and civic leaders to build a network of programs and policies that serve to benefit the city's public school students under the leadership of Cate Swinburn and with the guiding assistance of the YouthForce NOLA Collaborative Steering Committee. The committee includes partner organizations Baptist Community Ministries, the City of New Orleans, the Louisiana Department of Education, Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans, JP Morgan Chase, New Orleans Career Center, New Schools for New Orleans, the New Orleans Business Alliance, Orleans Parish School Board, the Urban League of Louisiana, the United Way of Southeast Louisiana and Greater New Orleans, Inc.

YouthForce NOLA strategically partners with employers in high-wage industries to expose students to different career pathways and take their first step into the workforce. They focus on three major pillars that come together to form the Career Pathway Programs of Study (CPPS): an integrated student experience both inside and outside the classroom where they receive career exposure, skills building, and work experience throughout their teens.



Since their inception in 2015, they have made a tremendous impact on the city's youth. Hundreds of students have participated in YouthForce NOLA's paid internships, acquired the skills and credentials needed to join any of their partner organizations, and seen personal success in life. Their innovative efforts to prepare students for college and careers has informed both policy and practice around equipping students to get jobs with family-supporting wages.

# Program

Entertainment .....	Caren Green
Opening .....	Sheba Turk Mistress of Ceremonies News Anchor-WWL-TV
Welcome .....	Chris A. D'Amour Partner, Adams & Reese, LLP Chairman of the Board, Urban League of Louisiana
Presentation of Honorary Chairperson .....	Judy Reese Morse President and CEO, Urban League of Louisiana
2019 Honorary Chairperson Remarks.....	Donna Hutto Edwards First Lady, State of Louisiana
Governor's Greetings.....	John Bel Edwards, Governor, State of Louisiana
Presentation of Co-Chairpersons .....	Jade Brown Russell Incoming Chairman of the Board, Urban League of Louisiana
2019 Co-Chairperson Remarks.....	John M. Hairston President and CEO, Hancock Whitney Corporation
2019 Co-Chairperson Remarks.....	Michael O. Smith General Manager, Hyatt Regency New Orleans
Leah Chase Legacy .....	Sybil Morial
Remarks and 2019 Recognitions .....	Judy Reese Morse
The Toast .....	Judge Terri Love
Entertainment .....	DJ Raj Smoove

# Gala Committee

Ricardo Thomas, Chairperson

Deborah Anderson

Cherie LaCour Duckworth

Shawne Favre

Ginger LeBlanc

Telley Madina

Judy Reese Morse

Gilma Pavon

Jade Brown Russell

Toya Barnes - Teamer

Beth Trotter

Cathy Washington

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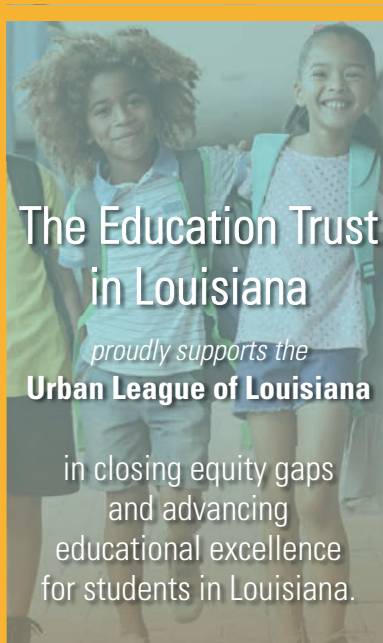
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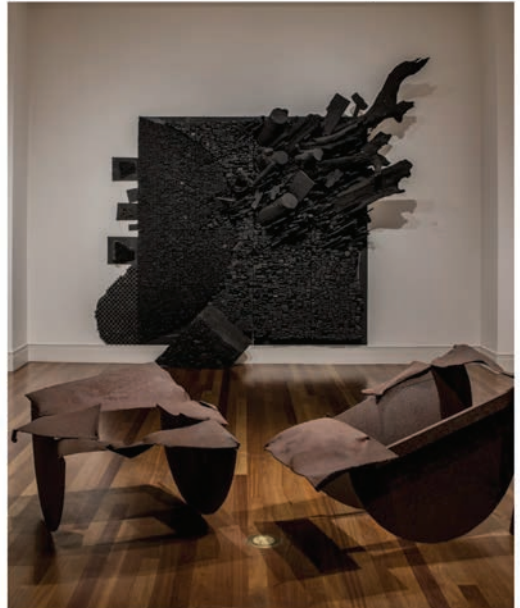
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*A special thank you to the Urban League of Louisiana and other YouthForce NOLA Collaborative Steering Committee Members.*



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