

The Weekly Press

SERVING BAKER, CENTRAL, AND ZACHARY

THURSDAY, JULY 13-19, 2023

A PEOPLE'S PUBLICATION

VOL. 46 • NO.12 • FREE

Charges dismissed in Ronald Greene beating death



Wes Muller/Louisiana Illuminator

Former Louisiana State Trooper Dakota DeMoss arrives for his court arraignment Tuesday, April 11, 2023, in Farmerville for his role in the May 2019 death of motorist Ronald Greene in Union Parish following a police pursuit. DeMoss was indicted on obstruction of justice but had the charge dismissed on Monday, July 11, 2023. (Wes Muller/Louisiana Illuminator)

DeMoss and Peters walk free as judge tosses indictments in Ronald Greene beating death

By: Alysia Baker
Courtesy of Manship News Wire

Two of the five law enforcement officers who were indicted in December for the 2019 death of Ronald Greene had their obstruction of justice charges dismissed by a Louisiana judge this week.

On May 10, 2019, just after mid-

night, Greene, 49, led police on a high-speed pursuit south of the Arkansas state border. Authorities attributed his death to a car accident before body camera video revealed white officers dragging, beating, and stunning the Black motorist.

A 46-minute bodycam video depicts troopers approaching Greene's

See **BEATING**, on page 1

Mayor Broome lauds Police Chief Murphy Paul's departure, leadership



Wes Muller/Louisiana Illuminator

A Moment of Transition: Mayor Sharon Weston Broome and Chief Murphy Paul reflect on his unexpected resignation, paving the way for a new chapter in Baton Rouge's law enforcement journey."

By: M. Armstrong
Mayor's Office

BATON ROUGE, La. — Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome announces the departure of Baton Rouge Police Department Chief Murphy Paul later this year after an extraordinary five and half years of exemplary service. Chief Paul, known for his transformative leadership, has made significant contributions to the community during his tenure and has decided to move on from his position.

Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome expressed her gratitude for Chief Paul's exceptional service, stating, "Chief Murphy Paul's leadership and dedication have brought about positive change within our po-

lice department. His vision and tireless efforts have laid a strong foundation for the future. We thank him for his remarkable service and wish him continued success in his future endeavors."

Under Chief Paul's guidance, the Baton Rouge Police Department experienced a monumental transformation. Notable achievements include the establishment of the Real Time Crime Center, which incorporates a network of hundreds of crime cameras and license plate readers throughout Baton Rouge. Additionally, Chief Paul spearheaded crime camera initiatives in collaboration with local businesses and residents, bolstering community safety. His dedication to modernizing law enforcement standards

See **CHEIF**, on page 1



READ MORE OF THIS STORY ONLINE @ www.brweeklypress.com

READ ONLINE

■ Louisiana Labor Administrator Ava Cates to Depart After Eight Years of Service

■ Baton Rouge School Board Boosts Educator Pay by \$4,000, Budget Still in Flux

■ Majestic Ensemble Presents Youth Rally 2023: Healing A Generation at Restore Church in Baton Rouge

WEATHER

MON. 06/12
Mostly Cloudy
High 98°.

MON. 06/12
Mostly Cloudy
High 98°.

MON. 06/12
Mostly Cloudy
High 98°.

MON. 06/12
Mostly Cloudy
High 98°.

INDEX

State & Local 2
State & Local 3
Religion 4
Church Directory 4
Business 5
Business Directory 5
More News 6

Former State Senator Elbert Guillory Named Top 100 Influential Black Republican

OPELOUSAS, La. - In a recent announcement by the Birmingham Times, former State Senator and Lieutenant Governor candidate Elbert Guillory has been recognized as one of America's top 100 most influential Black Republicans. Guillory, hailing from Opelousas, has secured the impressive 19th spot on the prestigious list, showcasing his significant impact on the political landscape.

Guillory's selection for this extraordinary honor is attributed to his remarkable achievements throughout his career. Notably, he gained widespread attention by switching his political affiliation from Democrat to Republican, elucidating his decision in a viral video that amassed over two million views. This bold move garnered admiration and curiosity, making him a notable figure within the political sphere.

Moreover, Guillory's tireless

efforts in supporting minority Republican candidates nationwide through his political action committee, Elbert Guillory's America, played a pivotal role in his recognition. His dedication to bolstering these candidates and fostering their success has showcased his commitment to creating a more diverse Republican representation.

The former State Senator has also left an indelible mark through his successful tenure as both a State Senator and State Representative.

See **GUILLORY**, on page 1



Elbert Guillory

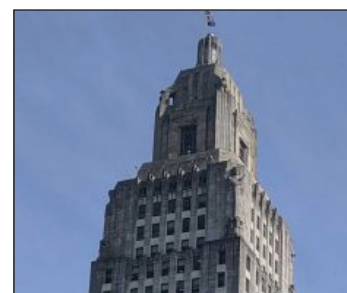
Lawmakers pass state budget plan with only temporary teacher pay increase

By: Julie O'donoghue
Courtesy of Louisiana Illuminator

BATON ROUGE, La. — In the end, Louisiana public school teachers will get a pay increase, but it will only be effective for one year.

During the final, confusing 30 minutes of a two-month legislative session, state lawmakers passed a budget plan Thursday that includes a \$2,000 temporary hike for teachers, as well as hundreds of millions of dollars that is supposed to cover universities, transportation needs, coastal restoration and legislators' pet projects in their home communities.

But lawmakers also reduced funding for the Louisiana Department of Health by \$100 million with little explanation about what that cutback might do. Gov. John Bel Edwards and several senators said



Louisiana lawmakers passed a budget plan that included hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure payments. (Photo by Julie O'Donoghue)

they were blindsided by the health care change and that it could end up costing the state a few hundred million dollars more when lost federal funding is included.

See **INCREASE**, on page 1

Stellar Awards NOMINATED
24/7 PRAISE RADIO Online!
YOUR GLOBAL INSPIRATION STATION
ALWAYS ON • ALWAYS CLEAR NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE IN THE CITY THE STATE OR IN THE WORLD! • WWW.247PRAISERADIO.COM



LOCAL & STATE

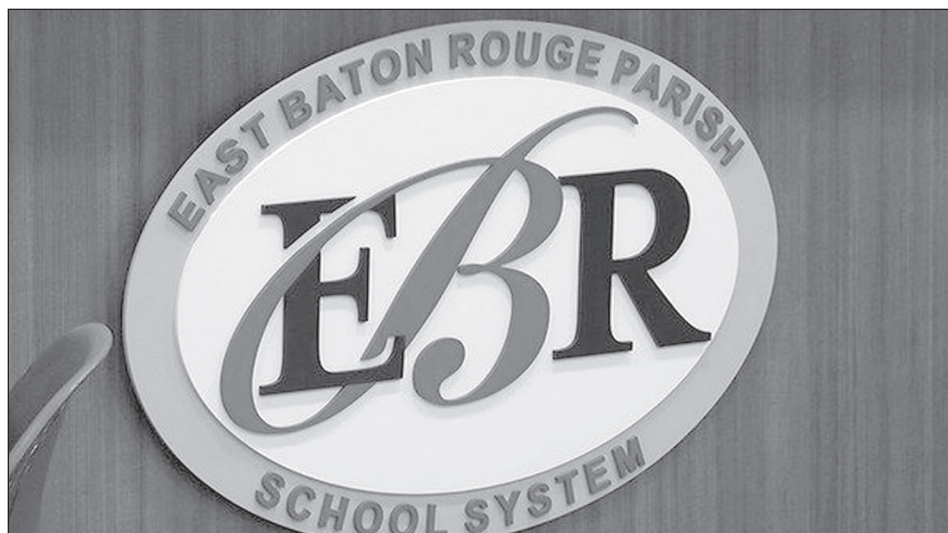
Baton Rouge School Board Boosts Educator Pay by \$4,000, Budget Still in Flux

The East Baton Rouge Parish School Board made progress on Thursday in finalizing its budget for the upcoming school year. The board agreed to increase pay for educators by \$4,000 and support workers by \$2,000. However, the budget is not yet set, with a final vote scheduled for July 31. The budget, which covers the 2023-24 fiscal year, must be unveiled for public inspection by July 17, as per state law.

Board President Dadrus Lanus emphasized the flexibility to make changes until the budget is advertised. Board members Patrick Martin V and Nathan Rust are pushing for last-minute alterations to address their concerns about spending cuts, particularly the elimination of 15 assistant principals due to declining enrollment.

Option 4B, one of five budget proposals, calls for an increase in spending by \$5.7 million compared to a week ago and \$15.7 million more than the original budget proposal. Superintendent Sito Narcisse wants to restore three contracts that were initially slated for elimination. Additionally, new contracts and added funding for student internships and teacher training are part of the proposed budget.

The board voted 6-2 in favor of Option 4B, with Board members Katie Kennison and Cliff Lewis dissenting and Vice



President Carla Powell abstaining. This meeting marks the fifth in six weeks dedicated to the budget, mainly focusing on the challenge of funding a promised pay raise.

Various pay proposals rely on the General Fund and Proposition 3, a special fund supported by a sales tax approved in 1998. Narcisse's initial budget, which faced criticism, sought a permanent pay raise funded primarily through Proposition 3. Option 4B suggests a combination of a pay raise and stipend, ultimately leading to a permanent pay raise of \$6,000 for educators and \$3,000 for support workers by 2025-26.

Option 2, favored by Kennison, Lewis, and Powell, pres-

ents a smaller one-time stipend of \$2,000 for all employees this school year. Unlike Option 4B, Option 2 balances spending and revenue, leaving an additional \$1.1 million for the district's coffers.

Notably, Option 4B excludes top administrators but includes a special \$1,000 stipend for certain administrators with at least 20 years of service, costing approximately \$60,000.

While the pay raise remains a contentious issue, other concerns involve potential job cuts, mainly in the district's Central Office, which could affect up to 86 employees. The school officials have sent letters to 160 employees in affected positions but have not disclosed specific names.

Despite changes in spending estimates, the projected general operating revenue for 2023-24 remains at \$544.3 million, representing a 4.8% increase over 2021-22 but a 1% decrease compared to the current fiscal year. However, the district's reserves are currently high, estimated to reach \$91.2 million if spending aligns with revenue. Option 4B would reduce reserves to around \$75.7 million.

Board member Martin expressed confidence in deficit spending, citing a trend of ending the year with more funds than anticipated in previous years. The school system aims to finalize the budget before the start of the school year in August to avoid complications.

Partisan Divide Over LGBTQ+ Legislation Reflects National Trend, as Louisiana Governor Prepares to Veto Controversial Bills

BATON ROUGE, La. - The growing partisan divide in Louisiana over LGBTQ+ legislation mirrors the patterns seen in Republican-led state legislatures nationwide. Conservative agendas have prominently featured bills specifically targeting transgender individuals, sparking criticism from LGBTQ+ advocates who perceive them as perilous and a direct assault on their community.

During the recent legislative session, Louisiana's Republican-dominated Legislature passed several controversial bills, including a ban on gender-affirming medical care for transgender minors, a "Don't Say Gay" provision that restricts discussions on gender identity and sexual orientation in public school classrooms, and a measure requiring teachers to adhere to assigned birth pronouns and names. While these bills received a two-thirds majority vote, Democratic Gov. John Bel Edwards has announced his intention to veto them.

The upcoming veto by Gov. Edwards highlights

the deep divide within Louisiana's political landscape. As the state's executive, Edwards aims to use his veto power to block the enactment of these bills. The governor argues that such legislation is discriminatory and could harm transgender youths by denying them necessary medical care and perpetuating stigmatization.

The contentious debates surrounding LGBTQ+ legislation in Louisiana are in line with the prevailing trends observed in statehouses led by Republicans nationwide. Many conservative lawmakers argue that these bills are necessary to protect children, while opponents contend that they place an already vulnerable group at heightened risk, potentially exacerbating stress, depression, and suicidal thoughts.

Critics assert that bills targeting transgender individuals, including those subject to the governor's veto, form part of a broader conservative agenda that seeks

See **BILLS**, on page 1

GUILLORY from page 1

Guillory played a crucial role in passing Louisiana's first Criminal Justice Reform Bill, emphasizing his dedication to creating positive change within the state's legal system. Furthermore, he has been renowned for his efforts in job creation by assisting local businesses,

solidifying his reputation as an effective legislator.

Guillory's influence extends beyond his political career, as he has demonstrated his expertise in civil rights through managing civil rights agencies in multiple states. His contributions to the design and litigation of modern civil rights laws have been instrumental in promoting equality and justice.

Additionally, Guillory's rich and diverse background

has made him a standout figure even in the vibrant landscape of Louisiana politics. Known for his passions in ballet, dance, mountain climbing, ironman triathlons, martial arts, culinary arts, world travel, broadcast and written journalism, and more, he has continuously captivated the attention of both supporters and critics alike.

Together with his son, Elbert Guillory II, Guillory has produced hundreds of videos

that have garnered millions of views worldwide. This digital presence has further expanded his reach and allowed him to connect with a broader audience.

As a Louisiana native son, Guillory's accomplishments bring pride to every Louisianan. His notable achievements in politics, dedication to minority representation, and unwavering commitment to justice and reform have positioned him as an influential figure within the Republican party. Guillory's impact continues to resonate, leaving an indelible legacy for future generations to admire and emulate.

BEATING from page 1

sports utility vehicle after it crashed, ordering him to put his hands up while repeatedly tasing him as he seemingly raised his hands. "I'm your brother!" he could be heard saying. "I'm afraid! I'm terrified."

In interviews on downtown streets in Baton Rouge on Thursday, a variety of people expressed shock and dismay at what happened to Greene and at the judge's decision to dismiss some of the charges.

"it's all just messed up," said Jevaughn Williams, a young Black man who was walking near Third Street and Florida Boulevard. "Police officers should uphold the law and not be the law."

The five officers who were charged included Kory York, who is accused of negligent homicide and 10 counts of misconduct in office; John Clary, who is charged of obstruction of justice and misconduct in office; Dakota DeMoss, who is charged of obstruction of justice; Christopher Harpin, who is charged of misconduct in office on three counts; and John Peters, who is charged of obstruction of justice.

DeMoss, a trooper who responded to the collision and disabled the audio on his body camera for most of Greene's arrest, and Peters, a troop commander at the time of the incident who is accused of instructing detectives to withhold evidence in Greene's case, were both cleared of obstruction charges Monday by 3rd

Judicial District Court Judge Thomas Rogers. Rogers ruled that neither officer's actions were considered "tampering" under state law.

"Sometimes when stuff like that happens, you want all the facts; when you don't get those facts it just leads to more questions and concern," said Jordan Partridge, who is employed by a parking company in San Antonio and was in Baton Rouge for work.

Clary was charged with obstruction of justice since it was alleged that he had withheld the video taken by his body camera—the only one to capture the moment Greene complained beneath the weight of two troopers before jerking and falling limp.

The judge did not address York's charge of homicide but allowed other felony charges to stand. Graphic video shows York dragging Greene by the ankle shackles and abandoning him face down in the ground for more than nine minutes.

Rogers warned the prosecution to fix defects in the indictment's wording or risk having more felony charges against York and two other cops dismissed.

"I think anyone who is corrupted or wrong in any position needs to be moved out," said Malaiika Menina, who works in radio and was serving food plates to homeless people downtown.

"We live in a country that the United States says the land of the free and the home of the brave," she said. "That's the foundation, and I feel when we took that foundation out of everything. That's why we're in the position we're in."



WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

I can help you protect more than you'd expect. I also have lots of ways to help you save when you bundle your policies. Get the savings you deserve. Call or stop by my office for a free quote.



AGNES SMITH ANDREWS



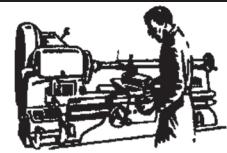
Insurance Agent/Owner
214 S. Acadian Thruway
Baton Rouge LA 70806
Phone: 225.383.0877
Fax: 225.383.0877
Claims: 225.383.0877



Allstate
You're in good hands.

Email: AgnesAndrews@Allstate.com
www.allstateagencies.com/agnesandrews

READER INFORMATION



How to Reach Us
General Information 225-775-2002
Email brweeklypress@yahoo.com

The office is open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday and located at 4910 Monticello Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70814

Correction Policy
The Baton Rouge Weekly Press strives to be fair and accurate. The newspaper corrects any significant errors of fact brought to the attention of the editor. If you think an error has been made, call 225-775-2002

**INJURED IN A CAR WRECK?
INJURED BY AN 18 WHEELER OR TRUCK?
INJURED IN A MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENT?**

CHARLES C. McMANUS ATTORNEY AT LAW
LA-21-436

CALL ME, ATTORNEY MCMANUS, AND WE WILL GO AFTER ALL YOU DESERVE!

8520 Scotland Avenue, Suite C
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70807 **225.774.5771**

charlesmcmamus@mcmanuslawoffice.brcoxmail.com • www.charlesmcmamus.com

Appeals Court Rejects St. George's Proposed City; Supporters Vow Supreme Court Appeal

BATON ROUGE, La. — In a significant blow to the contentious bid to establish the new city of St. George in East Baton Rouge Parish, an appeals court on Friday invalidated the incorporation petition, which had been approved by voters nearly four years ago, citing legal deficiencies.

A three-judge panel of the First Circuit largely dismissed St. George's arguments, emphasizing that the petition had failed to comply with state law. They concurred with the contention that Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome lacked the necessary standing under the state constitution to initiate the lawsuit, leaving Lamont Cole as the sole remaining plaintiff as the case heads to the Supreme Court.

The St. George movement, which began in 2010 with a focus on creating a separate school district for the southeast corner of the parish, has been marked by controversy from the outset. Opponents argue that the effort is fundamentally racist, seeking to divert tax dollars from a predominantly white, affluent area away from a city and school district with a majority Black population.

Proponents of St. George, on the other hand, argue that Baton Rouge, the city-parish government, and



the East Baton Rouge Parish School System are poorly run, and the incorporation would provide greater local control over tax dollars.

In an October 2019 election, 60% of registered voters within St. George's boundaries turned out, with 54% voting in favor of incorporation. However, Friday's ruling by the appeals court dealt a significant blow to the movement's aspirations.

The three-judge panel unanimously agreed that the St. George petition "failed

to comply" with state law, upholding the previous judgment of a Baton Rouge district court that denied the incorporation. While the petition listed the services that would be provided, it failed to provide the necessary information to inform the area's residents about a plan for delivering those services, as stated in the court's ruling.

Despite this setback, supporters of St. George remain determined to press forward. Andrew Murell, a spokesperson for the move-

ment, announced their intention to appeal the decision to the Louisiana Supreme Court. Murell emphasized the importance of thoroughly examining the evidence presented during the trial and the significance of the majority vote in favor of incorporation. He stated, "This is bigger than St. George. The voters have a right to self-determination."

The legal battle surrounding St. George has been

See **APPEAL**, on page 1

Louisiana Labor Administrator Ava Cates to Depart After Eight Years of Service

Governor Edwards Commends Cates' Leadership in Achieving Record-Low Unemployment Rates Amidst COVID-19 Challenges

BATON ROUGE, La. — Ava Cates, the lead labor administrator in Governor John Bel Edwards' cabinet, will be stepping down from her position at the Louisiana Workforce Commission at the end of August, as announced by the governor's office on Friday. Cates, who has successfully guided the commission through nearly eight years, including the challenging period of the COVID-19 pandemic, will be concluding her tenure.

Governor Edwards expressed his gratitude and recognition for Cates' honorable service since the beginning of his administration. Under her leadership at the Louisiana Workforce Commission, the state has achieved unprecedented record-low unemployment rates, with a remarkable surge in employment numbers. This accomplishment is par-

ticularly noteworthy considering the immense difficulties imposed by natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic. Governor Edwards expressed his profound appreciation for Cates and her dedicated team, acknowledging their unwavering commitment to assisting the people of Louisiana in navigating through those trying times and accessing the essential support they needed.

As Cates prepares to depart, her significant contributions and steadfast leadership at the Louisiana Workforce Commission will be remembered. The governor's office will now initiate the process of identifying a suitable successor who will build upon the accomplishments achieved under Cates' tenure, ensuring the continued progress and prosperity of Louisiana's labor force.

CHIEF

from page 1

brought 21st-century practices to the police department, including the implementation of new hiring policies.

Chief Murphy Paul acknowledged the support he received during his tenure, saying, "It has been an honor to serve as the Police Chief of Baton Rouge. I am grateful for the opportunity to have made a difference and to have worked alongside such dedicated officers. I have full confidence in the future leadership of the department and will continue to support the seamless transition process."

Chief Paul played a crucial role in the department's successful exit from a federal consent decree, addressing racial and gender bias in hiring. He championed the cause of police officers, leading to a significant pay raise of 13%, effectively making the Baton Rouge Police Department competitive with its

regional peers. During challenging times such as the aftermath of the Alton Sterling shooting, police ambush killings, and subsequent reforms, Chief Paul demonstrated exceptional leadership, guiding the department with integrity.

Chief Paul's tenure also coincided with the tragic events surrounding George Floyd, and he played a pivotal role in unifying the Baton Rouge community during those times. His unwavering commitment to fostering collaboration and understanding among residents has been invaluable.

Under Chief Paul's leadership, Baton Rouge experienced significant achievements in crime reduction, particularly during challenging periods such as the aftermath of the

Great Flood of 2016 and the COVID-19 pandemic. While other communities struggled with ever increasing crime rates, Baton Rouge witnessed a 21% decrease in homicides and a 14% reduction in non-fatal shootings in 2022.

These results can be attributed to the diligent efforts of the Baton Rouge Police Department, which implemented data-driven strategies, proactive policing measures, and crucial community outreach initiatives under Chief Paul's guidance. By prioritizing the identification and accountability of individuals engaging in criminal activities, the department made substantial progress in creating a safer environment for the community.

Chief Paul's commitment

to public safety extended beyond crime reduction. His emphasis on community outreach fostered stronger bonds between law enforcement and the residents of Baton Rouge, enhancing trust, cooperation, and shared responsibility in maintaining a secure and harmonious city.

Chief Paul's dedication to fostering collaboration among various law enforcement agencies, community organizations, and local stakeholders played a pivotal role in achieving these positive outcomes. By facilitating effective partnerships, Chief Paul promoted a united front and ensured that Baton Rouge remained a resilient and vibrant city for its residents.

Mayor Broome's Chief Administrative Officer, Dr.

James Llorens, stated, "Chief Paul's departure marks the end of an era in our police department, but it also presents an opportunity for new leadership to build upon his accomplishments. We are committed to a thorough and diligent process in selecting the best candidate for the position of Police Chief."

Chief Paul has an extensive law enforcement career, having contributed to various boards and commissions. These include the Louisiana Governor's Drug Policy Board, the Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies (ASCIA), the Regional Counter-Drug Training Academy (RCTA), and the High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Executive Board. Currently, Chief Paul holds a position on the Board

of Directors of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). Furthermore, Chief Paul is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and the FBI National Executive Institute.

Mayor Broome's administration is initiating the appropriate steps, including the administration of the Louisiana police chief exams, to identify candidates for the position. Successful candidates will proceed to interviews with Mayor Broome and her team, with the aim of finalizing the selection process and transitioning to a new Police Chief by November 2023. Dr. James Llorens, the Mayor's Chief Advisor, will oversee a rigorous process to ensure the best possible candidate is chosen.

BILLS

from page 2

to limit the rights and inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals. LGBTQ+ advocates view these measures as alarming and a direct affront to their community, decrying them as dangerous attempts to undermine their rights and well-being.

The intense divide in Louisiana reflects the ongoing battle over LGBTQ+ legislation, which continues to draw nationwide attention and evoke strong reactions from both sides. With Gov. Edwards poised to veto these controversial bills, the stage is set for a high-stakes political showdown in the state.

INCREASE

from page 1

"There was no heads up. Period," said Edwards about the health care reduction.

House Speaker Clay Schexnayder, R-Gonzales, and Senate President Page Cortez, R-Lafayette, couldn't explain what health services might be affected. Edwards vowed to try to lessen the impact, though he wasn't specific about what action he would take.

The teacher's pay raise will now function more like a stipend. Lawmakers never came to a consensus with the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) on a school funding formula, which had to be approved by both parties for the raises to carry over from year-to-year.

Now, teachers must hope the next governor

and future state lawmakers work the pay raise into a new school funding formula next year. That will ensure it becomes part of their base salary moving forward.

Teachers are not the only ones to get extra money in this state budget cycle with unprecedented resources. Edwards and legislators have spread around most of the \$2.2 billion in unexpected revenue available over the next 13 months.

Lawmakers raised pay for public university faculty, local police and judges. They also continued to make heavy investments in infrastructure, with more money going to roads, bridges, college campus buildings, ports, and water and sewage systems. A popular roof fortification program and an incentive fund set up to lure more property insurance companies to the Louisiana market also received more financial support.

THIS MONTH
[JULY]
@ BREC

TWILIGHT TOURS
BRECs Baton Rouge Zoo
Every Tuesday + Thursday in July
6-7:30 p.m.

EVENING SKY VIEWINGS
Highland Road Park Observatory
Most Fridays + Saturdays | 7:30-10 p.m.

ADULT FUN PICKLEBALL DOUBLES TOURNAMENT
Greenwood Community Park
Tennis Center
July 1 | 8 a.m.-6 p.m.

RED, WHITE + ZOO DAY
BRECs Baton Rouge Zoo
July 1 | Regular Zoo Hours

MOVIE AT THE LAGOON:
THOR: LOVE + THUNDER
Liberty Lagoon
July 7 | 7:30-9:30 p.m.

CELEBRATE PARK + RECREATION MONTH



ADAPTIVE AQUATICS
Liberty Lagoon
July 11-13 | 9-9:30 a.m.

MOVIE AT THE LAGOON
SPACE JAM: A NEW LEGACY
Liberty Lagoon
July 21 | 7:30-9:30 p.m.

BATON ROUGE OPEN
Santa Maria Golf Course
July 24 + 25

Let us Take Care of One of Your Most Important Investments

NOLA Lending Group offers:

- Conventional Loans
- Jumbo Mortgages
- FHA - Federal Housing Administration Loans
- VA - Department of Veterans Affairs Loans
- RD - Rural Development Loans¹
- Mortgage Refinances
- Condominium Financing

SPEAK TO A NOLA LENDING GROUP LOAN OFFICER TODAY!

BATON ROUGE OFFICE: 225.291.2100

NOLA LENDING GROUP
A Division of Fidelity Bank
NOLALending.com

Fidelity
FIDELITY BANK
BankWithFidelity.com

1. Available in select markets. The services and products advertised are not approved or endorsed by HUD, USDA, the Department of Veterans Affairs, or any government agency. This does not constitute an offer to lend. All loans are subject to credit approval. Not all applicants will qualify for all products offered. All loan programs, terms and interest rates are subject to change without notice. Co. NMLS# 488639

Member FDIC

BREC.ORG/THISMONTH

BREC

BREC does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, veteran status or sexual orientation in its programs and activities.

RELIGION

Majestic Ensemble Presents Youth Rally 2023: Healing A Generation at Restore Church in Baton Rouge

BATON ROUGE, Louisiana - The Majestic Ensemble Presents Youth Rally 2023: Healing A Generation is set to take place on July 29th and 30th at Restore Church in Baton Rouge, promising a dynamic and transformative experience for attendees of all ages. The event is spearheaded by Majestic Ensemble, a non-profit organization committed to empowering and uplifting the younger generation.

On Saturday, July 29th, the rally will kick off at 10:00 am, inviting attendees to partake in a day filled with exciting activities, inspiring workshops, and essential services. The event boasts free food offerings, not

only catering to diverse tastes but also fostering a sense of community as people gather to share a meal together.

As part of their dedication to promoting overall well-being, the organizers have arranged complimentary health screenings, allowing participants to gain insights into their health status and take proactive measures towards leading healthier lives.

To further support the local youth's educational journey, the rally will distribute free school supplies, ensuring that every young mind is equipped with the necessary tools for academic success in the coming school year.

The venue will be teeming with vendors offering a wide array of products and services tailored to the interests and needs of the youth. From educational resources to recreational items, attendees will have the chance to explore and discover new possibilities for personal growth and development.

But the excitement doesn't stop there! On Sunday, July 30th, at 6:00 pm, the rally will culminate with a captivating and soul-stirring concert by National Recording Artist Pastor Wess Morgan. The renowned artist's powerful music and heartfelt worship have touched hearts nationwide, making this concert a highlight of the event.

Open to the public, the free concert aims to bring people of all backgrounds together in unity and celebration. Pastor Wess Morgan's performance promises to inspire hope and healing, reinforcing the rally's theme of "Healing A Generation."

For those who wish to be part of the transformative experience, the Youth Mass Choir will be actively involved in the event. Rehearsals for the choir will be held, and interested participants can call or text Sharon Washington at 225-485-5605 for more information and the rehearsal schedule.

The Majestic Ensemble Presents Youth Rally 2023 has garnered widespread anticipation and support from the local community and beyond. By celebrating the potential of the youth and fostering a sense of empowerment, the rally endeavors to inspire positive change and healing within the hearts of its attendees. "I am thrilled for the Healing A Generation Youth Rally 2023," said Bishop Ivory D. Payne, the overseer of Majestic Ensemble.

"I am thrilled for the Healing A Generation Youth Rally 2023," said Bishop Ivory D. Payne, the overseer of Majestic Ensemble. "It's a beacon of hope for our youth, fostering unity and igniting healing and growth. An incredible opportunity to celebrate their potential and chart a brighter future."

As the event draws near, community members and visitors alike are encouraged to mark their calendars for July 29th and 30th. The transformative journey awaits at Restore Church in Baton Rouge, where the Majestic Ensemble Presents Youth Rally 2023 will take flight, leaving an indelible impact on the hearts and minds of all those who participate.

Moving Forward Out of Unhealthy Friendships

By Creflo Dollar
World Changers Church

justice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out" (1 Corinthians 13:4-6, NLT).



Creflo Evans

Developing a relationship with someone always involves a heavy emotional investment. No matter what stage of life we're in, godly friendships keep us on the right track. However, some relationships were never meant to be; in these situations, no matter how hard we try to patch things up, they continue to deteriorate. God doesn't want us to be locked into a painful, toxic relationship; when we're in one, we may hear Him prompting us to move on.

We may pray and pray, but there's a good reason why God doesn't restore all broken relationships. Letting go can hurt emotionally because of all the work we've put in to make it succeed, but sometimes staying in it will keep us from moving forward. There's real spiritual danger in a believer continuing to associate with ungodly people. "Don't team up with those who are unbelievers. How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness? What harmony can there be between Christ and the devil? How can a believer be a partner with an unbeliever? And what union can there be between God's temple and idols? For we are the temple of the living God..." (2 Corinthians 6:14-16, NLT).

Sometimes the people we thought were our friends don't have our best interests at heart. God has a plan for each of us; we mustn't allow anything—not even our relationships—to stop us from moving forward into that plan. We may have been pals with someone for years, but not all friendships are healthy. A relationship built on the love of God doesn't tear people down, but instead builds them up and strengthens them. "Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about in-

Some people enter into a relationship because they feel incomplete without another person around. Some form friendships to use others for their own personal gain, or for any number of selfish reasons. Those are unhappy relationships marked by turbulence, strife, and the absence of godly love; they are the kind we must exit. In all our relationships we must keep loving each other earnestly, because love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8).

Breaking out of a bad relationship may seem like a spiritual battle, but God is always willing to help us through it. He created relationships to make life enjoyable, but the devil does his best to steal the joy out of them. There's no need to stay stuck in a joyless relationship; when we feel too dependent and weak to move out of something we know is bad for us, we can rely on God to strengthen us for the task at hand. "...Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10, NKJV).

Good relationships enrich our lives and allow God to work through them to bless us; bad relationships can make us feel hopeless and sad. God's will for us is to shun those that can ensnare us and gravitate toward godly people who encourage us to move toward the future He has planned for us. "There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off" (Proverbs 23:18, NIV). There's never any downside to letting Him lead us forward when it's time to say goodbye to the past.

MAJESTIC ENSEMBLE PRESENTS
HEALING A GENERATION
RESTORING HOPE & EMPOWERING YOUTH

Youth Rally 2023

WITH NATIONAL GOSPEL RECORDING ARTIST
PASTOR WESS MORGAN
IN *Concert* **SUNDAY JULY 30TH 6:00 PM**

SATURDAY • JULY 29th • 10:00 AM

- Free Food and Free Schools supplies.
- Free Health Screenings and Free Health Info.
- Information on how to start a business... And Much More!

EVENT HOST • RESTORE CHURCH
APOSTLE ERIC & PROPHETESS PAMELA WILLIAMS
14510 PLANK ROAD BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
WWW.RESTORECHURCH.ORG

BRWEEKLYPRESS CHURCH & PLACES TO WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Reach Thousands Weekly. Call 225-775-2002 to take advantage of our special rates

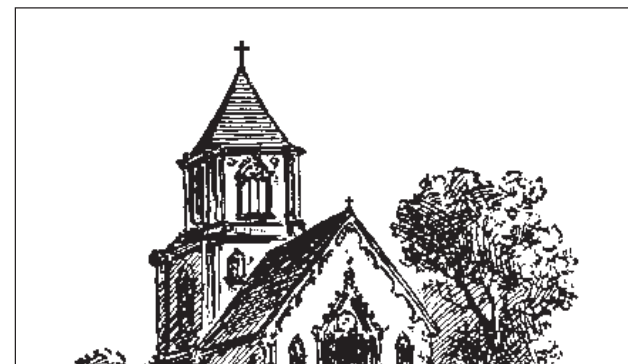
Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. - Hebrews 10:25

Good Shepherd Full Gospel B.C.
The People's Church
2865 Mission Drive • Baton Rouge, 70805 • Telephone (225) 356-5873
Bishop H. Hayes, Pastor

Hour of Power 12 Noon Each Wednesday
Sunday School 8:00am
Church Service 9:00am
Communion Service 2nd Sunday 9:00am
Bible Study Wednesday 7:00pm
Sister/Brotherhood Meeting 6:00pm

OASIS CHRISTIAN CHURCH
4524 East Brookstone Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70805
www.occhr.org
See Website for Service and Streaming Live Times

BISHOP CHARLES E. WALLACE, PASTOR



CAMPBOR MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
8742 Scenic Highway - Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70807
Telephone: (225) 775-4106 - Fax: (225) 615-8359
Rev. Elenora Mackey Cushenberry, Th.D., Senior Pastor
Rev. Tiffanie C. Postell, Associate Pastor

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service 10:55 a.m.
Youth Sunday & Contemporary Worship 2nd Sun. 8:00 a.m.
Bible Study Wed. 12:00 Noon and 5:00 p.m.
Prayer Ministry Tues 6:00 p.m.

Kingdom Life Family Center

Sundays at 10am
Wednesday Inspirational Service 7pm

- Youth ministry every Sunday and Wednesday
- Women's Ministry 2nd Saturday's

BISHOP DESIGNATE DOROTHY DANIEL SENIOR PASTOR

8894 AIRLINE HWY. BATON ROUGE, LA 70815
www.kingdomlifebr.com

THE BRWEEKLY PRESS CHURCH DIRECTORY ADVERTISE YOUR

- Church Services and programs
- Streaming Live URL
- FREE first priority announcement place

STARTING AT ONLY \$1000 per week

For details call 225.775.2002

NEW BIRTH FULL GOSPEL MINISTRIES
1283 Rosenwald Road
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70807
Bishop I. J. Payne, Pastor

'THE NEW LIFE' Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. — 2 Corinthians 5:17

SUNDAY WORSHIP Every Sunday at 11:30 A.M.
SUNDAY SCHOOL Every Sunday at 9:30 A.M.
HOLY COMMUNION Every 3rd Sunday at 11:30 A.M.
HOUR OF POWER Every Friday at 12 NOON

Radio Broadcast 1st and 3rd Sunday WXOK at 8:00am

ST. JOHN BAPTIST CHURCH
Dr. Donald R. Ruth, Pastor
820 New Rafe Mayer Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70807
Phone: 225-775-9756
Web Address: saintjohnbc.org

Dr. Donald Ruth, Pastor

Worship Times:
CrossWalk Classes: Sundays 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM
Sunday Worship Experience: 11:00 AM
Uplift Training: Thursdays 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH
5856 Greenwell Springs Road • Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806
Telephone: (225) 926-0246 • Facsimile: (225) 925-8022
Toll Free: 888-700-6174
Websites: www.newhopebr.com

Rev. Leo Cyrus Sr., Pastor
CHURCH SCHEDULE

Sunday Morning Worship 10:45 AM
Lord's Supper 3rd Sundays
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Prayer Service Wed. @ 6:00 PM
Bible Study Wed- @ 7:00 PM

Mission Statement: New Hope Baptist Church is a family of baptized believers who worship the Lord our God in spirit and in truth, teach the saved to reach the lost and minister to the needs of others, while encouraging one another through acts of love and living in obedience to Gods Word

BRWEEKLYPRESS BUSINESS/SERVICE DIRECTORY



FOR BUSINESS

Sonya's Creations LLC
Portraits / Weddings / Events



Photography & Custom Design
225-286-9377 sonyacreations@gmail.com
https://linktr.ee/sonyacreations

CYNTHIA M. DUNN, REALTOR

2900 Westford Dr, #401
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70827
Cell: 225.302.4598 • Hm: 225.752.5440
Email: cynthiadunn@innerspacebr.com

CJW Distributors, LLC
CHURCH FURNITURE • FLOORING

13937 Malbec Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70816

Ph: 225-292-0305
Cell: 225-405-3427
Fax: 225-292-0307

Email: cjw7@att.net
www.cjwdistributors.com

WTAA ENGINEERS
ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS AND CONSTRUCTION SUPPORT SERVICES

"Team Working For Success Through Quality Performance"

Civil Engineers Needed
W.T. Winfield, Manager
2622 North Street, Baton Rouge, LA
222-383-0822 or 1-866-324-WTAA Toll Free

BRIDGET MONTGOMERY
Certified Tax Accountant

Accounting & Finance Group LLC

4910 Monticello Blvd., Ste C
Baton Rouge, LA 70814
Cell PH: 407.630.2947

247 PRAISE RADIO
YOUR GLOBAL INSPIRATION STATION
LISTEN LIVE! WWW.247PRAISERADIO.COM

LET US HELP YOU REACH THOUSANDS IN THE 247 PRAISE RADIO COMMUNITY AND BEYOND

These special rates are exclusive to the BR Weekly Press advertising partner. The BR Weekly Press is an official representative and media partner of 247 Praise Radio.com

MILLIONS OF LISTENERS PER HOUR
NOMINATED
GOSPEL INTERNET RADIO STATION OF THE YEAR

Stellar Awards

Broadcast Rates

- 15 min \$25.00
- 30 min \$35.00
- 60 min \$43.75
- 4 broadcast per month \$100
- 4 broadcast per month \$140
- 4 broadcast per month \$175

CALL FOR MORE DETAILS **225.775.2002**

ALWAYS CRYSTAL CLEAR 24/7 NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE IN THE CITY, STATE, COUNTRY OR IN THE WORLD

BUSINESS

Louisiana governor hopefuls want to make the state more business – and worker – friendly

By: Piper Hutchinson
Louisiana Illuminator

After Louisiana was ranked as the second-to-worst state for business, candidates vying to be its next governor agree something must be done – but don't always concur on just what the answer is.

Five of the top contenders for governor spoke with the Illuminator about their plans to lift Louisiana from the bottom of such rankings.

Shawn Wilson, the Democratic-party endorsed candidate, said the question shouldn't just be about policies good for corporations but also good for workers. Stephen Waguespack, a Republican who led the lobbying organization that effectively sets business and labor policy in Louisiana, said the answer lies in getting government out of business.

But on several fronts – such as education and expanded broadband access – the candidates found consensus.

The rankings, put out annually by CNBC, rate states in 10 categories, which are weighted based on importance.

While Louisiana ranked relatively well in some categories – coming in seventh for the cost of doing business – it performed poorly on the four most important categories: workforce, infrastructure, economy and life, health and inclusion, which considered factors such as quality of life, worker protections, discrimination laws and, for the first time ever, reproductive rights.

Attorney General Jeff Landry, the Louisiana Republican Party-endorsed candidate, was unavailable for an interview for this article.

Wilson said Louisiana's output on the workforce front is still recovering, both from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and cuts to higher education made during Gov. Bobby Jindal's tenure, when support for public colleges and



After Louisiana was ranked as the second-to-worst state for business, candidates vying to be its next governor agree something must be done – but don't always concur on just what the answer is.

universities was shifted from the state to the student.

State Rep. Richard Nelson, R-Mandeville, believes workforce development has to start early, which is why he supports universal pre-K and emphasizing literacy in early childhood. He said he believes these investments will give young people the boost they need to pursue a post-secondary education that will lead to well-paying jobs.

"We really need to expand that, I think, to really close the kind of generational gaps that's caused by poverty in the state," Nelson said.

Nelson said he also supports dramatically increasing state support for the community and technical college system.

"It's a very minimal amount of money to, you know, really fund it and have basically a minimal tuition so that the students have some skin in the game, but it's not a barrier to entry," Nelson said.

State Treasurer John Schroder, a Republican from Covington, agreed with Nel-

son's assessment that education has to start early.

"Once these kids get into the pipeline and they're behind, they stay behind, they very rarely catch up," Schroder said. "So we need to start initially with early entry into the education system."

State Sen. Sharon Hewitt, R-Slidell, said the top concern she hears from business leaders and site selectors is a lack of an educated workforce.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 25% of Louisianians over the age of 25 have at least a four-year college degree, which can pose a problem when the state looks to recruit companies.

Hewitt touted a bill she sponsored in 2022 that would allow TOPS scholarship candidates to substitute computer coding for their foreign language requirement. Hewitt said focusing on science, technology, engineering and math education is key.

"We need to kind of reimagine how we deliver education at the high school and the two-year and the four-year

programs because the needs of our employers are changing so quickly," Hewitt said.

Waguespack agreed that the state's workforce is not meeting the needs of job creators. He floated the idea of partnering with companies to revamp employment training in high schools and recommended universities focus on addressing the needs of its regional economy.

Waguespack also wants to set up regional centers where people can go to be connected to resources to aid them in getting additional professional credentials.

"It's the government's duty to bend to the people's needs, not force the people to bend to the government's bureaucracy," Waguespack said.

"As Governor, we will nurture our homegrown talent – because when we have a safe Louisiana that supports local talent, we will have a growing economy that naturally attracts new businesses," Landry said in a statement shared through his press secretary.

APPEAL from page 3

protracted, with the incorporation proposal facing numerous obstacles. Mayor-President Broome and other opponents filed a lawsuit to prevent the incorporation, arguing that it would result in an estimated annual revenue loss of \$48.3 million for the city-parish, primarily from sales taxes

collected in St. George. They claimed that this would impair city-parish services and lead to layoffs.

In May 2022, retired 22nd Judicial District Judge Martin Coody ruled that St. George would be unable to operate with a balanced budget, estimating that the city's creation would cost the Baton Rouge government \$48 million for city services, rendering incorporation "un-

reasonable."

Attorneys representing St. George promptly appealed the ruling, asserting that the law allowing challenges to incorporation votes sets ambiguous and undefined standards like "reasonableness," making it unconstitutional. They also argued that Broome and Metro Council leader Lamont Cole lacked standing to challenge the incorporation and that Coody's ruling was flawed

due to allegedly erroneous expert testimony regarding each city's finances.

While the three-judge panel largely rejected St. George's arguments, they did concur with the contention that Broome lacked standing under the state constitution to initiate the lawsuit. As a result, Lamont Cole remains as the sole remaining plaintiff as the case progresses to the Louisiana Supreme Court.

SUITS • HATS • SHOES • SHIRTS • FASHION ACCESSORIES

EVERYDAY SALE

Visit The Syle Master
"Mr. Super Cool
Keith B. O'Connor"

6180 Airline Hwy
Baton Rouge, La. 70805
225.357.5796

SUPER COOL fashions
A BRAND OF STYLE AND SOPHISTICATION

Classifieds

Sell your stuff, advertise jobs or a place to rent. **You can do it ALL here!**

PLACE AN AD

For legals, please call the Classified Department at (225) 225.775.2002 or email brweeklypress@yahoo.com

SELL YOUR CAR - 1 month for \$80

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS - 1 month for \$150

ADVERTISE ON 247praiseradio.com

FIND IT ALL IN THE CLASSIFIEDS • 225.775.2002

CLASSIFIEDS

CLASSIFIEDS

CLASSIFIEDS

CLASSIFIEDS

CLASSIFIEDS

CLASSIFIEDS

Student Writers, Photographers and Graphic Designers WANTED

Hey students! Are you interested in photography, writing or graphic design? The BR Weekly Press Newspaper wants you to join their team! You'll get to work with professionals, create cool content and gain valuable experience. It's a great opportunity for internships and to build your portfolio.

If you're interested, call **225-775-2002** or email your resume to **ivory@brweeklypress.com**. Let's create something awesome together!



PANDEMIC AND HURRICANE RECOVERY SPECIALS CALL TO RESERVE YOUR SPACE IN THE BRWEEKLYPRESS BUSINESS DIRECTORY 225.775.2002 TODAY!

Baton Rouge Unveils Zydeco as Official Name for New Professional Hockey Team

"The Baton Rouge Zydeco team will be more than just a hockey team; it will be a symbol of camaraderie that brings people from all walks of life together," said Broome.

By Stacey Newman
BR Weekly Press Staff

BATON ROUGE, La. — In a press conference held on Thursday, city officials revealed the name and logo of Baton Rouge's upcoming professional hockey team. The team will be known as the "Zydeco," a tribute to Louisiana's rich cultural heritage. The Zydeco logo features the iconic Interstate 10 Mississippi River Bridge set against a backdrop of navy

blue lettering representing the team's name. A red hockey stick cleverly underlines the name, paying homage to Baton Rouge's cherished nickname. Team owner, Barry Soskin, emphasized that the name choice is a celebration of the vibrant history and traditions that have deeply influenced the local community. Drawing from the distinctive Zydeco music, which fuses elements of blues, rhythm and blues, and Creole music dating back to the early 20th Century, the name was selected from a pool of 8,854

submissions received during the team's two-week naming contest, according to Soskin. "While we received an overwhelming number of applications, Zydeco stood out for its cultural significance and connection to our Louisiana roots," stated Soskin, who resides in Chicago. "Some of the names were intriguing, even unfamiliar to me, but Zydeco truly captures the spirit of Baton Rouge." As Louisiana's sole professional hockey team, the Zydeco is expected to attract not only local fans but also

enthusiasts from across the state. Raising Cane's River Center General Manager, Wayne Hodes, highlighted the potential economic impact the team could bring to the city. "While enhancing the local quality of life, the Zydeco games will also be a weekend event, drawing visitors to our town, contributing to local businesses and restaurants," said Hodes. The Zydeco's inaugural season kicks off on Oct. 26, with a series of three consecutive games during LSU football's bye week. With a total

of 28 home games throughout the season, concluding on April 13, fans can secure their seats with season tickets starting at \$336, as announced by Soskin. Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome expressed her excitement for the upcoming season, noting the profound impact the Zydeco team will have on Baton Rouge's sense of unity and pride. The games will be hosted at the River Center downtown, showcasing the city's ongoing efforts to attract larger events to the venue.

REDSTICK RISING

Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome

Baton Rouge,

As Mayor-President of our wonderful City and Parish, I am proud to see the efforts of so many who are working to build a better and stronger community for the next generation. Young people are increasingly discovering the energy and opportunity available in our thriving community.

For Baton Rouge to continue its growth, we must focus on addressing the challenges many young people face in this community. Disinvestment in many neighborhoods, exasperated by the recent pandemic, spurred a rise in violence across the nation. Baton Rouge responded immediately, unwilling to stand by, while many of our young people fell victim to a vicious cycle. It was this resolve that spurred **Summer of Hope**.

Summer of Hope is an intensive community campaign led by residents and neighborhoods in Baton Rouge during the summer months. The mission is to restore hope in neighborhoods most affected by gun violence. The action plan involves eight weeks of events focused on creating positive, unifying moments for neighborhoods while offering resources and building community-based relationships with the individuals most impacted by violence.

Summer of Hope utilizes a data-driven approach to create maximum impact in the neighborhoods most in need. During the inaugural campaign in 2022, there was a correlation between the number of events and a decline in homicides-with, a 20 percent average reduction in homicides compared to the same time period the previous year,

Summer of Hope expands upon the larger community safety work of my Safe Hopeful Healthy BR program, where partners build relationships and facilitate violence intervention in schools, hospitals, and neighborhoods. We are empowering residents to lead the work to help families and build resilient communities.

Complimenting this work is the Mayor's Youth Workforce Experience. Every summer, hundreds of youth, ages 14 to 24, have an opportunity to work with local businesses and even City-Parish government. The program partners with dozens of companies, non-profits and public Sector employers, giving participants a first-hand experience with a variety of careers. The youth learn industry specific skills while gaining professional experience and networking opportunities. In short, the program aims to inspire young people to invest in their career paths here in Baton Rouge.

Focusing on our youth and disinvested communities are essential for continued success in Baton Rouge. Our future depends on the opportunities and perception of our next generation. That's why we must ensure our community offers a vision they want to share.

Sincerely

Mayor-President
Sharon Weston Broome



MAYOR-PRESIDENT
SHARON WESTON BROOME

