

**Mayor Broome,
Louisiana Housing
Corporation
Launch "Housing
Heroes" Initiative**



Mayor-President
Sharon Weston Broome

BATON ROUGE, La. — In light of the dire need for quality, safe, affordable, and accessible housing following the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and Hurricanes Delta and Laura, Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome is joining the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Louisiana Housing Corporation (LHC) in activating Louisiana's Housing Heroes Initiative.

Housing Heroes is a statewide initiative that works to identify apartments and other rental housing that are move-in ready or have upcoming availability. A significant affordable housing shortage currently plagues Louisiana. Housing Heroes promotes an inclusive strategy to identify and assess readiness critical to the state's ongoing recovery.

"Throughout this year, Baton Rouge has faced historic adversity — from the coronavirus pandemic, to an active hurricane season — many of our residents are facing economic hardships," said Mayor Broome. "I am looking forward to working with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Louisiana Housing Corporation to address our community's needs for affordable housing."

Housing Heroes aims

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WEATHER

3 day Forecast BR Area

MON. 10/30
Sunny
High 50°.

TUE. 11/01
Mostly Sunny
High 54°.

WED. 11/02
Showers
High 61°.

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS



BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

The Weekly Press

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THURSDAY, DEC. 24-30, 2020

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FIRST AMAZON FULFILLMENT CENTER IN LA.

\$900B COVID Relief Bill Passed by Congress, Sent to Trump

WASHINGTON — Congress passed a \$900 billion pandemic relief package that would finally deliver long-sought cash to businesses and individuals and resources to vaccinate a nation confronting a frightening surge in COVID-19 cases and deaths.

Lawmakers tacked on a \$1.4 trillion catchall spending bill and thousands of pages of other end-of-session business in a massive bundle of bipartisan legislation as Capitol Hill prepared to close the books on the year. The bill approved Monday night went to President Donald Trump for his signature, which was expected in the coming days.

The relief package, unveiled Monday afternoon, sped through the House and Senate in a matter of hours. The Senate cleared the package by a 92-6 vote after the House approved it by another lopsided vote, 359-53. The tallies were a bipartisan coda to months of partisanship and politicking, a logjam that broke after President-elect Joe Biden urged his party to accept a compromise with top Republicans that is smaller than many Democrats would have liked.

The bill combines coronavirus-fighting funds with financial relief for individuals and businesses. It would establish a temporary \$300 per week supplemental jobless benefit and a \$600 direct stimulus payment to most Americans, along with a new round of subsidies for hard-hit businesses, restaurants and theaters and money for schools, health care providers and renters facing eviction.

The 5,593-page legislation — by far the longest bill ever — came together Sunday after months of battling, posturing and postelection negotiating that reined in a number of



The bill includes stimulus checks for many making below \$75,000 per year and roughly \$284 billion in small business loans. It also promises money for vaccine distribution.



Congress passed a \$900 billion pandemic relief package Monday night that would finally deliver long-sought cash to businesses and individuals.

Democratic demands as the end of the congressional session approached. Biden was eager for a deal to deliver long-awaited help to suffering people and a boost to the economy, even though it was less than half the size that Democrats wanted in the fall.

"This deal is not everything I want — not by a long shot," said Rules Committee Chairman Jim McGovern, D-Mass., a longstanding voice in the party's old-school liberal wing. "The choice before us is simple. It's about whether we help families or not. It's about

See **BILL**, on page 2

Trump Asks Congress to Amend Stimulus Package

WASHINGTON — On Tuesday, Trump has asked Congress to amend the COVID-19 stimulus package. One of his demands is that Congress raises the stimulus checks from \$600 to \$2,000.



President Donald Trump

Following months of delays, both the House and the Senate late Monday gave the green light to a \$900-billion COVID-19 relief package as part of a \$2.3-trillion government spending and economic relief

See **TRUMP**, on page 2

Tough Choices About Who's Next in Line for Vaccine

BATON ROUGE, La. — Even before the first week of coronavirus vaccines ended in Louisiana, Gov. John Bel Edwards' administration was inundated with requests from people, advocates and state officials asking for their favored groups of frontline workers or vulnerable populations to be next in line for the shots.

"It would be easier to talk about the groups that have not sent a request," the Democratic governor said.

Widespread agreement seemed to form around the decision to divvy up the first 200,000-plus vaccines for hospital employees, for emergency medical services workers and for those who live and work

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STATE & LOCAL

Aetna Better Health of Louisiana Selected to Participate in Primary Care First Program

NEW ORLEANS — Aetna Better Health® of Louisiana (ABH-LA), a CVS Health company, today announced it has been selected as one of three Medicaid health plans in the State of Louisiana to participate in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) Primary Care First (PCF) program.

Primary Care First is a voluntary, five-year alternative payment model aimed at reducing health care spending by preventing avoidable inpatient hospital admissions and improving quality and access to care for all beneficiaries. With a focus on supporting care for patients who have chronic conditions and serious illnesses, all payment options reward value and quality by offering an innovative payment structure to support delivery of advanced primary care. The model aims to reduce administrative burdens and empower primary care providers to spend more time caring for patients while reducing overall health care costs.

"Since its inception in 2015, Aetna Better Health has worked with our provider partners on value-based payment solutions that improve the health outcomes of the members we serve," said Aetna Better Health of Louisiana CEO Rick Born. "The Primary

Care First program provides another avenue to enhance our provider relationships and further transform the health care of our fellow Louisianians."

Five primary care functions make up the PCF model, including:

- Access and continuity
- Care management
- Comprehensiveness and coordination
- Patient and caregiver engagement
- Planned care and population health

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services selected ABH-LA to participate in the PCF program because of its continuum of value-based models and for its ability to meet providers in their preferred setting. The health plan also demonstrates an expertise to help providers implement and advance care and population management capabilities through various programs that improve the health outcomes of their patients.

Aetna Better Health of Louisiana currently serves approximately 140,000 Healthy Louisiana Medicaid members across the state.

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at nursing homes, state-run veterans' homes and other long-term care facilities.

Deciding who's chosen for the next phase of coronavirus vaccinations will be much trickier.

Edwards, who will determine the prioritization, has some time. It will be weeks before Louisiana has enough vaccine doses to cover the first group of eligible health care workers and long-term care facilities residents and employees for the two-shot regimen required for immunization.

But pressure on the governor about his impending choices already is growing.

"There are lot of individuals anxious to know when they or a loved one might be in line for a vaccination and which priority group will they be in," Edwards said Thursday. "We don't have all of that figured out yet."

The Louisiana Department of Health has received more than 50 requests — and counting — from individuals seeking a vaccine and advocacy groups, lobbyists and officials requesting prioritization for people. That doesn't count people making their pitches directly to the governor or others in his administration.

Emails and letters provided to The Associated Press by the health department show Cheniere Energy is seeking prioritization for employees of its liquefied natural gas facility, Southwest Airlines wants consideration for its workers and the head of the Chiropractic Association of Louisiana asked when chiropractors will be in line.

U.S. District Judge Nannette Jolivet Brown, chief judge of the New Orleans-based Eastern District court, wants the federal judiciary in the next phase of immunizations. Jim Simon, general manager of the American Sugar Cane League, requested priority

for essential agricultural workers, including sugar cane factory workers.

Mike Brown, president of the National Chicken Council, asked for chicken industry workers to be early in line, writing: "Prioritizing vaccinations for our workers will not only be important to help keep workers safe and healthy but will aid in keeping our food supply chain operating with minimal disruptions."

The American Diabetes Association wants prioritization for Louisiana's 434,000 diabetics who are at greater risk of death from COVID-19 complications.

Dr. Gary Clark, chief of neurology service at Texas Children's Hospital, received his first vaccine dose and made a pitch for his 89- and 90-year-old parents in Louisiana: "I fear that they could fall through the cracks but believe they should be high priority for vaccination. Do you have a program for elderly not in nursing homes to receive the immunization?"

In its first week with access to the Pfizer vaccine, Louisiana started immunizing employees at hospitals who regularly encounter COVID-19 patients and EMS workers. People in Louisiana nursing homes and other long-term care facilities are expected to begin receiving vaccinations after Christmas, with a second vaccine from Moderna.

To determine who's next in line, Edwards said he largely intends to follow recommendations of a panel of scientific experts that advises the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, when the advisory group sets its second phase guidance.

Edwards also said he will consider equity issues and vaccination priorities to help lessen the strain on Louisiana's hospitals, which are packed with COVID-19 patients.

Crestworth Elementary Steps Up To the Plate



Crestworth Elementary School Thanksgiving Food Drive 2020. Featured: Crestworth students, staff, Food Drive Committee; Ms. Alice Johnson and Miss Keycha Bates; Asst. Principal, Terrlyn Blunt; SU Alumni Home Chapter Board Members: Michelle Jones, President, Tiffany Veal, 1st VP, Ms. Terrlyn Blunt, 2nd VP, and Carlton Jones CASA Representative/ SU Alumni Federation.

How Some Local Students are Getting Through the Pandemic

In these uncertain times, plagued with challenges from the Corona Virus, one thing is still sure; Crestworth Elementary School is providing ways for students Pre-K thru 5th graders to grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

Crestworth Elementary School prides itself on the notion of teaching the whole child. Academics have always been of umber one importance at Crestworth; however, other avenues to increase basic life skills are also in place. One way is during November, students are building emotional stability and positive self-awareness through the Character Trait of the month experience; "Gratefulness." Students learned to be mindful and happy for the things they have and for the ability to do the things that they can do. This simple exercise gives the students a positive outlook and builds a better image of themselves and others. During a time like this, Crestworth recognizes that students and families need to feel that they matter and can make a difference in their world from where they are with what they have available to them. Crestworth students and staff were presented with the opportunity to focus on others' and decided to do what they could to help. Efforts for the Food Drive were coordinated by 5th Grade Teacher, Ms. Kenyall Williams, and supported by committee members, Ms. Alice Johnson and Miss Keycha Bates. Once students found that they would



Crestworth Elementary School Thanksgiving Food Drive 2020 collected and organized food from Donation Bins for donation to the Baton Rouge Food Bank. Three large empty bins reflect that food items were collected and sorted for pick-up.



28 Thanksgiving Baskets being prepared for CASA families through Crestworth Food Drive donations and partnership with SU Alumni Home Chapter

help children who may not have their parents by partnering with CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), they were even more eager to step forward.

Students and staff participated in the school's Food Drive and also enjoyed a little friendly competition among grades Pre-K through 5th grade to see which grade level would donate the most. The school's Student of the Year, Jiyah Tucker,

was among those ready to give a helping hand. Some of Crestworth's 100% Virtual Students stopped by to bring in their bags of donations for the Food Drive as well. Teachers and staff pitched in through giving, organizing, and decorating boxes. One teacher even donated turkeys. Mrs. Candice Meyers, Principal of Crestworth Elementary School, was

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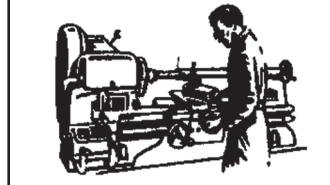
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bill on Monday. The bill, which is 5,593 pages long, will need President Donald Trump's signature be-

fore becoming law. The COVID-19 portion of the bill would provide direct payments and jobless aid to

struggling Americans and funds for small businesses, hospitals, schools and vaccine distribution, while the \$1.4-trillion government spending portion will be used to fund federal agencies through fiscal 2021.

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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

The Weekly Press

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whether we help small businesses and restaurants or not. It's about whether we boost (food stamp) benefits and strengthen anti-hunger programs or not. And whether we help those dealing with a job loss or not. To me, this is not a tough call."

Congress also approved a one-week stopgap spending bill to avert a partial government shutdown at midnight and give Trump time to sign the sweeping legislation.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, a key negotiator, said on CNBC on Monday morning that the direct payments would begin arriving in bank accounts next week.

Democrats promised more aid to come once Biden takes office, but Republicans were signaling a wait-and-see approach.

The measure would fund the government through September, wrapping a year's worth of action on annual spending bills into a single package that never saw Senate committee or floor debate. Similarly, a \$328 billion tax title — including \$164 billion for the \$600 stimulus checks — never saw prior legislative action until being bundled into the end-of-session grab bag.

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Longtime Southern University Baton Rouge Faculty Member, Administrator William Moore Died on Wednesday, Dec. 10.

"We extend our genuine condolences to the family of Dr. William Moore, who gave selflessly to Southern University for more than three decades," said Ray L. Belton, president-chancellor. "As he served in a variety of positions that not only reached students but also his fellow faculty and staff members, he was rightfully well-known and revered for his commitment. His impact was strong here on this campus and beyond, and will be evident for years to come."

Moore joined the chemistry faculty at Southern in the late 1960s, and achieved the rank of full professor within five years. In this position, he established a strong undergraduate research program, which contributed to many of his students going on to obtain medical or doctoral degrees. He became the first president of the faculty senate in 1973, advocating for his fellow faculty members.

Moore left Southern in 1982 to



Dr. William Moore

pursue other positions in higher education, these include academic vice president, Distinguished Professor of Chemistry, and director of Title III programs at Prairie View A&M University in Texas. In 1985, he served as academic vice president (chief academic officer) at Texas

Southern University in Houston.

A Southern University alumnus, Moore returned to his alma mater in 1989 to serve as vice chancellor for academic affairs.

According to Purdue University — where Moore was the first African American to obtain a Ph.D. in the university's chemistry department in 1967 — Moore's impact has been felt nationally in numerous ways:

In 1975, Moore took a one-year leave to assist 34 Historically Black Colleges and Universities in developing programs in interdisciplinary studies.

In 1981, Moore was appointed chairman of the General Research Support Review Committee at The National Institutes of Health.

In 1986, he was selected as one of five editors of the first proceedings of the White House Conference on Science and Technology for Minorities.

In 2001, he was one of 50

Americans invited to participate in a Project Kaleidoscope Change Agents Roundtable on the use of technology to improve instruction of science, mathematics, and engineering.

Moore also received many recognitions for his work, including some from his two alma maters. In 2006, the Purdue Board of Trustees approved the William E. Moore Distinguished Professor of Earth and Atmospheric Science and Chemistry. In 2004, Moore was named one of Purdue Chemistry's outstanding alumni. In 2014, the Southern University Alumni Federation honored Moore at its biennial meeting in Houston for his distinguished commitment and service.

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Southern University's Accreditation Reaffirmed by SACSCOC



The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges recently reaffirmed accreditation for Southern University and A&M College for the next 10 years. The accrediting body announced the decision at its annual meeting on Dec. 8.

"As you are aware, this decennial review provides for the continual accreditation of SUBR for the next 10 years and speaks to the diligence of many who comprise the Southern University higher education community," said Ray L. Belton, chancellor of Southern University Baton Rouge and president of the Southern University System, in a statement to stakeholders. "It is keeping with this affirmation of our institution that I take this opportunity to acknowledge you

for your support and the contributions you individually invested in achieving this feat. Southern University has truly benefitted from your service, therein, please accept this statement of gratitude for your unselfish commitment."

As part of the reaffirmation process, institutions must submit a compliance report and quality enhancement plan (QEP)

for student learning. Southern's plan, "JAGS: Journey to Achieve Greater Success," focuses on improving retention of students through intervention during the first-year experience of undergraduate students. The plan incorporates planned curriculum revisions in gateway courses in three select disciplines and a more coordinated academic enrichment effort in support of first-year students.

"The QEP activities are in line with the Southern University and A&M College Strategic Plan,

See SOUTHERN, on page 5

CRESTWORTH from page 2

full of joy and pride at the success of the food drive and of the continued unity of the scholars and staff, noted in her words, "Job well done, Crestworth! Job well done!" The school has been a light in the Scottlandville community for years; this year, the students partnered with Southern University, through the SU Alumni Home Chapter by providing food items to build 28 Thanksgiving Food Baskets for CASA.

Crestworth students and staff gave further by gathered food items for donations to the Baton Rouge Food Bank, providing 240 lbs. of food, which is the equivalent of 200 meals, per the Food Bank Food Acquisitions Coordinator, Meghan Russell. Ms. Terrlyn Blunt, Assistant Principal, stated, "It was a unified effort school-wide that spanned through the community."

An invitation to participate with community partners again next year has been extended. Crestview will accept that invitation every year, every time!

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RELIGION

Another Christmas Tree in the Bag

DR. JAMES L. SNYDER

It's hard to believe, but another Christmas has come and gone. It comes so slow but leaves so fast. I guess I'll never understand that. This Christmas was probably the most unusual that I have ever experienced.

The day after Christmas, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I were sitting around the Christmas tree drinking our morning cup of coffee. Looking at the tree brought back a lot of memories for both of us. My memories are vaguer than hers, but after all, it's the memory the counts.

Leading up to Christmas in our house was quite interesting. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage puts everything together, and she has a plan for everything.

I remember one year trying to help her, and I just got in her way. Not only that, but I dropped a couple of Christmas tree ornaments, and they broke. To this day, I've



never made up for that one.

As we were sitting around the Christmas tree, I remembered a Christmas when I was rather young. This would have been hundreds of years ago, I'm sure. That Christmas, my father got me a Daisy Red Ryder BB gun for my present. Those were the days when such a thing as that happened.

I must confess that I had my BB gun confiscated during the first

couple of days after Christmas. For some reason, I'm still not sure about it today, I was not supposed to shoot any windows in the house. I think, if I remember correctly, there were three windows I shot during that episode.

Not only did I have my BB gun confiscated, but there was a Christmas spanking that went along with that. I can almost feel the spanking today.

I chuckled as I told my wife the story of my BB gun.

As much as I tried, I never got a similar story from my wife. Of course, she knows if I had that kind of information that I could use it to my advantage.

What I have discovered about wives is that they talk a lot but know when not to talk. As far as husbands are concerned, they don't talk that much, but they never know when not to talk.

Admiring our Christmas tree for this year was a very special time. In a week or so, that tree would be taken down, the ornaments packed away, and the tree put back up into the attic where we stored it. While it was up, though, it was wonderful to think about all of the activities

that happened around that tree.

Of course, down through the years, we have replaced that tree several times. But it's the thought that really matters. All the wonderful stories that come from that tree certainly bring cheer to our hearts. We spent some time talking about the gifts we gave and the gifts we got.

As we were reminiscing, I remembered a verse of Scripture that has encouraged me.

"I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

It's not what you get that really matters, but what you give and the reason behind that giving.

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, Ocala, FL 34472, where he lives with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Call him at 352-216-3025 or e-mail jamesnyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com.

Receiving Good Things We Don't Deserve

BY CREFFLO DOLLAR

Most of us can remember times when we received an extra-special birthday or Christmas gift that we knew we didn't deserve. The gift was given not because of anything we did or because of our good behavior; it was given simply because of the giver's love for us. God is like that when it comes to giving good things to those who trust in Him. He loves us more than anything, and He wants very much to show us His grace.

Grace is unmerited, undeserved favor. The world doesn't understand it, and therefore operates under a "do good, get good" mindset. Living this way is exhausting and burdensome; God wants more for us than simply toiling endlessly to earn acceptance from others. "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me — watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly" (Matthew 11:28-30, MSG). When religion tells us there are multiple requirements to fill before we can please

God, God tells us He's already pleased with us.

We may not accept that we can receive good things we didn't earn from God if we don't know His nature. Many people grew up in churches that preached a message of punishment for failure to do the right things. Jesus Christ took all our punishment on Himself when He went on the cross. God is no longer angry; He is instead offering us the olive branch of forgiveness. "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins" (Romans 3:23, 24, NLT).

The Gospel of Grace is the complete opposite of what most of us have learned in church. When the Old Testament Law of Moses was given to the people, its many rules and regulations were impossible to keep; the result was guilt and fear. Jesus replaced the law

See RECEIVING, on page 5



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Phone: 225-775-9756
Web Address: saintjohnbc.org

Dr. Donald Ruth, Pastor

Worship Times:

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Sunday Worship Experience: 11:00 AM
Uplift Training: Thursdays 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

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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

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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.

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

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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

BUSINESS

Gov. Edwards Announces First Amazon Fulfillment Center in Louisiana

BATON ROUGE — Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards and Amazon announced the company will open its first Louisiana fulfillment center in the Lafayette Parish city of Carencro. The company will make a \$100 million capital investment and create 500 direct jobs with an annual payroll of more than \$16 million. Louisiana Economic Development estimates the project also will result in 982 new indirect jobs, for a total of more than 1,400 jobs in Acadiana and surrounding regions.

Located on the former Evangeline Downs site in Carencro, the fulfillment center will be near the junction of Interstates 10 and 49 and provide optimal access to Louisiana markets. In the new 1 million-square-foot fulfillment center, Amazon associates will pick, pack and ship bulky or larger-sized items, such as patio furniture, outdoor equipment and rugs.

"You don't become the world's largest online retailer without making a series of well-reasoned strategic investments, and Amazon's selection of Carencro for its new fulfillment center is a testament to this," Gov. Edwards said. "This 1



Amazon's new one million square-foot site in Carencro, Louisiana (Photo: Business Wire)

million-square-foot fulfillment center will not only prove to be a tremendous asset for all of Louisiana, but the project also will create 500

full-time jobs on-site, and spur the growth of other jobs in Acadiana. I am proud to welcome this new fulfillment center to Louisiana, and I look forward to Amazon's continued investment in our great state."

The new fulfillment center is the latest Louisiana investment by Amazon, which already had invested more than \$250 million in the state since 2010. In addition to seven Whole Foods Market locations in Louisiana, Amazon operates delivery stations in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. The company also operates an Amazon Air logistics gateway at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. Across Louisiana, Amazon currently employs over 1,500 full- and part-time workers.

"We are thrilled to be opening our first fulfillment center in the great state of Louisiana," said Alicia Boler Davis, Amazon's vice president of global customer fulfillment. "We are grateful for the strong support we've received from local and state leaders as we expand our footprint in Louisiana. Every day

at Amazon, incredible employees come together to deliver magical experiences for customers and we look forward to creating over 500 new full-time jobs for the local community, with industry-leading pay and comprehensive benefits starting on day one."

In 2020, Amazon ranked Louisiana No. 5 among all states for the fastest annual growth among its digital entrepreneur partners. More than 14,500 small and medium-sized businesses in the state participate in Amazon's fulfillment network. From June 2019 through May 2020, those Louisiana entrepreneurs recorded a 49 percent growth in year-over-year sales.

"Carencro is extremely honored and equally blessed to have been chosen for Amazon's first Louisiana-based fulfillment center," Mayor Glenn Brasseaux said. "The economic impact of this facility cannot be overstated in terms of capital investment, job creation with respectable wages and benefits, and the increased interest in residential housing development."

In July 2020, LED and its economic development partners began formal discussions with Amazon about a potential fulfillment center. To secure the project in Carencro, the State of Louisiana offered Amazon a competitive incentive package that includes the comprehensive solutions of LED FastStart® — the nation's No. 1 state workforce program for the past 11 years. Additionally, Amazon will be eligible for a performance-based grant of \$3 million, payable over two years, to offset facility infrastructure costs.

"Today's announcement is a big win for Carencro, Lafayette Parish and our Acadiana people," said President and CEO Gregg Gotheaux of the Lafayette Economic Development Authority. "Amazon's decision to locate Louisiana's first fulfillment center here validates that our community is attractive to companies across sectors because of our work ethic, creativity and pro-business attitude. As our economy continues to recover from impacts of the pandemic and the energy downturn, this project highlights the importance of our diversification efforts to help stabilize the region's economy."

Amazon anticipates a completion of the fulfillment center in Carencro by the end of 2021. Hiring of new employees is expected to begin one to three months prior to the launch of operations.

"I'm so thankful to Mayor Brasseaux, LEDA, Amazon and all of the others who were involved in making this extraordinary project possible," said Mayor-President Josh Guillory of Lafayette. "Anytime we can bring business and jobs to Lafayette Parish, everyone wins. We have all worked hard and will continue to put every resource forward to attract more businesses like this one to Lafayette."

HOUSING from page 1

to provide affordable housing opportunities for approximately 2,000 households — 579 to individuals and families transitioning from non-congregate shelters and 1,549 for renters and homeowners impacted by Hurricanes Delta and Laura.

"The ramifications of COVID-19 and Hurricanes Laura and Delta have added to our state's existing affordable housing crisis," said LHC Executive Director E. Keith Cunningham, Jr. "By addressing the housing needs of individuals and families, our landlords and property owners ensure the viability of Louisiana's communities for years to come."

In May 2020, the LHC and Louisiana's Continuums of Care providers launched a non-congregate shelter initiative to

temporarily house more than 1,200 homeless individuals in hotels across the State. Data from the most recent non-congregate shelter census indicates that 551 individuals and families still need access to permanent supportive housing.

Also contributing to the need for more affordable housing are the severe impacts of Hurricanes Laura and Delta. In November, the State reported 18,213 evacuees from Hurricane Laura across Louisiana and Texas. As of December 4, 2020, 1,549 Louisianans remained in shelters — 1,499 from Hurricane Laura, 104 from Hurricane Delta, and 36 from Hurricane Zeta. To date, 26 of the Louisiana's 64 parishes have been declared federal disaster areas.

Housing Heroes will utilize outreach tools such as the media, statewide associations, chambers of commerce, and state and local governments to appeal to single

and multifamily landlords with available affordable rental units. These units may include apartments, single-family homes, and mobile homes. To post or update any available vacancies, landlords and property owners can visit www.LAHousingSearch.org or dial 1-877-428-8844 (toll-free).

Assistance may also be available for some property owners who participate in the initiative. The Multifamily Lease and Repair Program (MLRP) allows FEMA to enter into an agreement to cover the cost of repairs and improvements to existing multifamily rental properties for the purpose of providing temporary housing for households displaced due to Hurricane Laura. For more information about the MLRP, interested parties may contact Marvin R. Jennings at marvin.r.jennings@fema.dhs.gov or John Clemons at john.clemons@fema.dhs.gov

RECEIVING from page 4

with grace, and shifted the focus from following the rules through self-effort to simply believing in God's favor toward us.

Before Jesus' death, salvation rested on performance. When the rich young ruler asked Jesus how to get into heaven, Jesus' answer was based on the law. "And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good

Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?...Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother" (Luke 18:18, 20). After Jesus' resurrection, everything changed. This was evidenced by the answer Paul and Silas gave to the jailer when he asked them the same question. "And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30, 31).

The world is still stuck in the law, but we don't have to be. Accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior, and trusting in His love and forgiveness, positions us to receive good gifts that we don't deserve. This allows Him to reveal His grace to us.

SOUTHERN from page 3

IMAGINE 20K: 2018 – 2030, and reinforces our commitment to providing a high-quality aca-

demic experience for all students so that they can succeed," Belton said.

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the only system of Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the nation — is up for its next reaffirmation of accreditation in 2030.

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May the holiday season fill your home with joy, your heart with love, and your life with laughter.

Happy Holidays

BETTER TOGETHER

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