

THE COMMITMENT

Newsletter of the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice



The Criminal Justice Solutions Organization

Volume 1, Issue 1

“COMMITTED TO JUSTICE FOR ALL”

FALL 2018 - WINTER 2019



NABCJ 2019 National Conference and Training Institute



The ultimate adventure, combining world-class thrill rides, live entertainment and one of North America's largest zoos



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Tampa Bay ~ West Shore District Welcomes

46th Annual Conference and Training Institute
National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice

Theme:

"NABCJ~Taking a Look at the Line of Justice: Is it Broken or Bent?"



Register Today www.nabcj.org

National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice

Call for Workshops

2019 National Conference and Training Institute

July 14-18, 2019

Grand Hyatt Hotel in Tampa, Florida

**NABCJ~Taking a Look at the Line of Justice:
Is it Broken or Bent?**

Enlighten and uplift us with your expertise

Workshop Focus Areas:

- Corrections
- Adult Probation/Parole
- Juvenile Probation/Parole
- Law Enforcement Policy
- Criminal Justice College Student Leadership Development
- Returning Citizens/ Re-entry Programs
- Mental Health

Submission Criteria: ([Workshop Application](#))

Workshop Title, Workshop Description Summary, Presenter(s) name, (including job title, email), Upload all Presenter Resume(s)/Bio(s), Areas of Focus

Notifications

Presenters are not exempt from Registration, Transportation and Hotel Costs; There is no monetary compensation; Presenters are responsible for handouts; Laptops are not provided; Complimentary LCD package provided to include projector screen, projector cart and cabling. *Workshop submission approval by February 18, 2019.*

***Request for extension considered upon request**

Workshop Proposal Submission by January 18, 2019*

For more information contact:

Workshop Chairs

Hazel Willis
hazelwillis@sbcglobal.net
713-705-2787

Maggie Williams
mj32007@gmail.com
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For more details of the NABCJ
46th Annual Conference Training Institute
[CLICK HERE](#)

THE COMMITMENT

Newsletter of the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCJ)



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Monday – Friday: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm EST

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Deja Rae Sowell • Dr. Cheyvonne Cyrus-Williams**

DISCLAIMER

The opinions and views expressed in the articles in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policy of the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice.

The Commitment features NABCJ events, services, and activities, Chapter Spotlights, Regional Highlights and Student Council accomplishments. We invite and encourage submission from members of original articles, book reviews, Memoria of NABCJ, NABCJ News, op-ed essays, research, and training. It may also include articles from non-members and/or reprints from other publications on specialized topics.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACKS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE
THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOLUTIONS ORGANIZATION
"COMMITTED TO JUSTICE FOR ALL"



**PRESIDENT'S
HOLIDAY MESSAGE**



Greetings NABCJ Members, Friends and Supporters,

2019 is upon us and it's a great time to plant seeds of change. We are embarking on our 46th Anniversary. We now have an opportunity to bring innovation, creativity and renewal to our solutions organization that is committed to justice for all.

During our successful 45th Annual Conference and Training Institute in Houston, Texas, we addressed key issues affecting our communities. NABCJ was instrumental in educating our community on the Power of the People to cast a VOTE. The power of that vote helped to effect changes in the nation's political landscape. This is EVOLUTIONARY!

We have an aggressive 2019 schedule that will help NABCJ continue to educate and develop strategic partnerships that is mutually beneficial to our partners and our community. We commence January 2019 with Justice Sunday™ in commemoration of the life, service and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with emphasis on our collaboration with our affiliate, the National Alliance of Faith and Justice (NAFJ). By recognizing 400 years of slavery in the United States, NABCJ and its stakeholders will educate our communities about the correlation between slavery and imprisonment. Additionally, January of each year is National Mentoring Month and we encourage each of our chapters and members to actively participate in mentoring a child, senior, veteran, support group, foster youth, and/or victim of abuse.

Our 2019 Annual Conference and Training Institute will be held in Tampa, Florida, July 14-18, 2019. The conference theme is "*NABCJ ~ Taking a Look at the Line of Justice: Is It Broken or Bent?*" Our Conference Planning Group is progressively working to develop a curriculum that will be an impactful learning experience to all conference attendees. We are excited to announce that Registration is open at <https://nabcj.org/conferences/46>. Don't miss this professional growth opportunity to enrich, enhance, educate and elevate your knowledge base and skill set.

As we close out 2018, let's take a moment to reflect on what was; what is now; and what is to come? Enjoy the holidays and fellowship with your families and friends. Cherish the memories of the passing of family and members who are no longer with us, as well as those who help to build, enhance and promote our organization. In all that we do, let us not forget to assist those who are less fortunate or in need of our services.

REMINDER: Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and our website: www.nabcj.org.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous 2019 New Year!

Yours in service,

Terri McGee

Terri McGee, National President
National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice



LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP BLACK HISTORY SPECIAL

\$850 until 02.28.19

BECOME A LIFE MEMBER

OF

The Criminal Justice Solutions Organization

“Committed to Justice for ALL”

[JOIN THE MOVEMENT](#)

NABCJ LEGISLATIVE STRATEGIST

KISHA BARNES

BREAKING NEWS

Criminal Justice Reform

The First Step Act (Senate Bill S. 3649)

Is now law! [What's Next?](#)



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACKS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE



The Criminal Justice Solutions Organization
"COMMITTED TO JUSTICE FOR ALL"

December 21, 2018

2018-2019 NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Honorable Senator Lindsey Graham
Honorable Senator Cory Booker
Honorable Senator Tim Scott
Honorable Senator Patrick Leahy
Honorable Senator Joni Ernst
Honorable Senator Jerry Moran
Honorable Senator Amy Klobuchar
Honorable Senator Christopher Coons

Dear Honorable Senators:

The National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCI) applauds the bipartisan effort to bring change to the nation's federal criminal justice laws.

Since 1980, the Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prison population exploded by 800% because of failed policies, harsh sentencing and mandatory minimums resulting in the United States having the highest incarceration rates anywhere in the world.

The *First Step Act* (S. 3649) Senate Bill represents a pivot from the punitive law-and-order stance of the 1980's to policies that include an overhaul of several sentencing laws, including decreasing the "three strikes" penalty for drug offenders from life behind bars to 25 years in prison. Additional highlights in the proposed legislation include expansion of rehabilitation and treatment programs for nonviolent drug dealers and users and early-release programs. The First Step Act also gives federal judges more discretion during sentencing and redresses an old discrepancy between prison terms for those possessing crack cocaine and powder cocaine.

The Senate Bill, S.3649, First Step Act, passed on a vote of 87 to 12, with 38 Republicans and all 49 members of the Democratic Caucus, approving it.

National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCI)

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Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 am -5:00 pm

NABCJ supports all efforts that effectively reduces mass incarceration and recidivism, supports public safety and eliminates practices that disproportionately impact marginalized and disenfranchised communities and people of color as it relates to fairness in federal crimes sentencing.

The National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice will continue to push for comprehensive reform and view the revised bipartisan prison sentencing legislation, S.3647 of the 115th Congress, as a modest First Step Act in the right direction in addressing one of the most pressing Civil Rights Issues of our time.

Sincerely,

Terri McGee

Terri McGee
National President
National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice

cc:

Honorable Senator Ted Cruz
Honorable Senator John Cornyn
Honorable Senator Thom Tillis
Honorable Senator Marco Rubio
Honorable Senator Bill Cassidy
Representative Doug Collins
Representative Hakeem Jeffries
Congressional Black Caucus Chair Congressman Cedric Richmond
Congressional Black Caucus Chair-Elect Congresswoman Karen Bass

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2018 STUDENT COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



LANGSTON UNIVERSITY NABCJ STUDENT CHAPTER IN THE HOMECOMING PARADE



Langston University NABCJ Student Chapter attending State conference with luncheon speaker **Regina Jackson** from Oakland California.



ANNUAL STUDENT RECEPTION





FROM THE DESK OF NABCJ DOMESTIC STRATEGIST ADDIE RICHBURG

When Sugar Was Not So Sweet

On February 11, 2016, Senators Tom Kaine (D-VA) and Mark Warner (D-VA) along with U.S. Representatives G.K. Butterfield (D-NC, then Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus), Bobby Scott (D-VA), and Don Beyer (D-VA) introduced the 400 Years of African American History Act. As stated by Senator Kane, “If Congress saw fit to create federal commissions to affirm that our English and Spanish roots matter, then Congress should also see fit to affirm that our country’s African roots matter.”

The bill establishes a commission to plan programs and activities across the country to recognize the arrival and influence of Africans and their descendants in America since 1619. The commission is charged with highlighting the resilience and contributions of African Americans, as well as acknowledging the painful impact that slavery and other atrocities have had on our nation. On January 8, 2018, the bill, Public Law 115-102 was signed into law by the President. On November 2, Former U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke announced the appointment of 14-members.

The 400-year history of African Americans is full of tragedies that have shaped the black experience in America and should be remembered as moral catastrophes. Among these is the issue of convict leasing and involuntary servitude. Beginning with this article, *When Sugar Was Not So Sweet*, during 2019, the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice has partnered with the National Alliance of Faith and Justice in presenting an enlightening look at a bitter past of history which continues to leave a bad taste in the mouths of the voices who continue to cry out from beneath the soil.

In a recent post on Facebook used by permission, award-winning author of “**Slavery By Another Name**,” Douglas Blackmon, offers a moving tribute to men enslaved as convicts labor, long forgotten in the Old Imperial (Sugar) Farm cemetery in Sugar Land, Texas where a gallant effort is underway to preserve a final resting place. Mr. Blackmon, a white son of the South who grew up in Mississippi during the uneasy integration of blacks and whites writes, “The broken bodies of those still unarmed men speak to us all. Their bones carry the signs of the whippings and beatings they endured, the disease and malnutrition they suffered, the utterly dehumanizing treatment they received from an American society that still viewed black men as closer to mules than as the fathers and brothers and sons and lovers who they truly were. The saddest part of it all is that while great attention is being drawn to these graves in Sugar and because of their very public discovery, there are undoubtedly thousands of similar such places where our ancestors either committed identical atrocities or were the victims of them.”

The Thirteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1865, prohibited slavery and involuntary servitude, but explicitly exempted those convicted of crime. In response, Southern state legislatures quickly passed “Black Codes” – new laws that explicitly applied only to black people and subjected them to criminal prosecution for “offenses” such as loitering, breaking curfew, vagrancy, having weapons, and not carrying proof of employment. Crafted to ensnare black people and return them to chains, all of whom could be leased for profit.

After the Civil War, the South was struggling to recover. Most prisons had been destroyed during the war. Previously, enslaved African Americans had been subjected to the punishment at the hands of their owners. With government ineffectiveness and an increase in both white and black lawlessness, the problem of where and how to house criminal offenders, regardless of how they became so, was significant.

Initially, some states paid private contractors to house and feed the imprisoned. Within a few years states realized they could lease the imprisoned (called convicts) to local planters or industrialists who would pay minimal rates for the workers and be responsible for their housing and feeding – thereby eliminating costs and increasing revenue.

Soon through inhumane principles of supply and demand, markets for convict laborers develop, with entrepreneurs buying and selling convict labor leases. Convict laborers were often dismally treated, but the convict lease system was highly profitable for the states and the employers. Among enterprises, convict laborers toiled in plantations, factories, coal mines, quarries, timber yards and railroads. In Alabama mines, they were forced to dig eight tons of coal a day. In a Georgia brick factory², they turned red clay into scores of hot rectangles.

In Texas, they built the state capitol building in Austin, part of the Texas State Railroad and the Fort Bend County Courthouse, where a legal battle over what to do with the remains of the “Sugar Land 95” is now being waged. In Sugar Land, many were sent to sugar plantations, where conditions were so horrific the region was called the “Hell Hole on the Brazos.” Prisoners were worked so hard their muscles were wrenched from the bone. They suffered regular beatings, infections from chains that cut into flesh, mosquito-borne illnesses. Prison records show relatively young people succumbing to edema, heart failure and symptoms that indicate sun stroke and extreme dehydration.³ “It was explicitly established to recreate something as close to slavery as possible but using the criminal justice system,” says Douglas Blackmon. In Texas, inmates sought to escape being sent to prison camps on farms across the state by “slicing their heel strings, hacking off their hands, or gouging out their eyes,” according to accounts cited in Blackmon’s book.

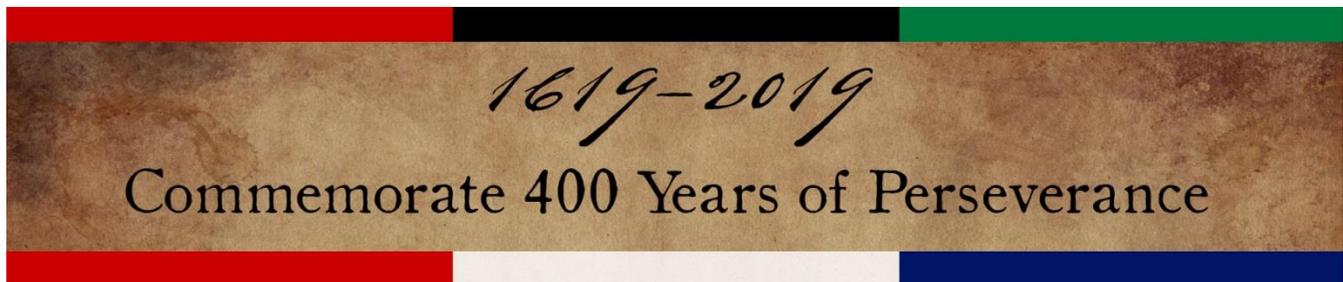
Featuring images graphically engrained in our memory, the movie, *12 Years A Slave*, offers a compelling cinematic look at the consequences of convict leasing through adaptation of the 1953 narrative of Solomon Northrup. Northrup, a New York state free-born African American man was kidnapped in Washington, DC by two conmen in 1841 and sold into slavery where he found himself pushed around the clock to gather and process the highly perishable sugar cane before it rotted.

While we are faced with today’s daily distasteful challenges, the painful reality is that we will never know the identities of those who are buried beneath thousands of tons of coal, timber, sugar, or at the roots of acres of cane fields. The bodies, already broken at burial, are still being discovered in unmarked cemeteries throughout the country. Finally released from prison and forever permitted the opportunity to rest from brutal labor, they remain threatened by demands for the grounds in which they lay in the name of progress. Having just met in Houston in 2018 with plans to meet in Tampa, Florida in July 2019, another sugar plantation site, **NABCJ** (National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice) and **NAFJ** (National Alliance of Faith and Justice) will further recognize this history throughout the year. Research indicates today that too much sugar can be bad for our health, but history also tells us that the cravings and profits there from were also a leading cause of death.

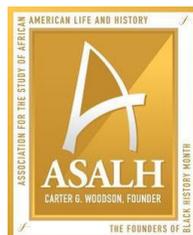
¹ Available Public Broadcasting System

² <https://www.myaic.com/lifestyles/life-with-gracie-this-formslavery-was-actually> legal/

³ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/27/opinion/sugar-land-texas-graves-slavery.html>



The **National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCJ)** in partnership with the **National Alliance of Faith and Justice (NAFJ)** has collectively agreed to support and collaborate with the **Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) Commemoration of 400 Years of Perseverance** honoring the ancestors and 400 years of resilience. In this study and journey the **National President of NABCJ, Terri McGee**, is requesting that all regions and chapters create and/or sponsor or co-sponsor a 400th Commemorative event in your respective community, region or state and place it on the **ASALH National Calendar of Events** located at <https://asalh.org/400-years/400event/>. ASALH serves as both a resource and clearinghouse for events recognizing the arrival of Africans in the Virginia Colony over 400 years ago. For specific questions, please email: 400@asalh.org or contact us directly at office@nabcj.org or 919.683.1801.



NABCJ CHAPTERS IN THE NEWS

RICHMOND NABCJ CHAPTER ADOPTS SUMMER HILL PRE-SCHOOL

On August 21st, President Burgess and members Darlene Frye, Priscilla Copeland and Michelle Hicks of the Richmond Chapter NABCJ performed Community Service at the chapter's adopted school. In addition, school supplies and library books were donated to assist the students with having a successful school year. The Chapter will be going inside the classrooms throughout the year to assist with reading to the students and providing mentorship.



JOB WELL DONE!



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The National Board of Directors of the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice along with the Richmond NABCJ Chapter **CONGRATULATES** Lead Warden *Eddie L. Pearson*, NABCJ Life Member, on his retirement from the Virginia Department of Corrections after 45-years of dedicated and committed service.

Continued on page 14



National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice
Annual Conference & Training Institute

DR. BENNETT J. COOPER
Awards Gala

The Criminal Justice Solutions Organization
"COMMITTED TO JUSTICE FOR ALL"

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Is the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice Moot?

By



Esther Bates

Oklahoma Department of Corrections
Correctional Case Manager III (CCM) retired

I had been looking for a medium to present a forum about why law enforcement professionals, in particular, women and persons of color in law enforcement, should join the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCJ).

A colleague and I were discussing the current slump in membership and lack luster attendance within NABCJ events and within other professional organizations. What stood out during the conversation were perceptions and expectations new and potential members have about the merits of joining NABCJ.

Coming from the Baby Boomer Era, of "...ask not what your country can do for you, but rather ask what you can do for your country..." I was surprised that my colleague, enlightened me by pointing out, younger employees view organizations like NABCJ as purely as a means to enhance their promotional aspirations. Though this concept is not without merit, since NABCJ and like organizations are certainly an excellent vehicle to "get your name out there", NABCJ offers so much more.

One of my first experiences as a NABCJ member was being afforded training with the Federal Bureau of Prisons during a 1989 Joint Conference in Dallas Texas. That experience and many like it opened the door to decades of invaluable training in International and Domestic Terrorism, Federal Rico Laws and Application, Sovereign Citizen Threat and Tactics, White Supremacy and Motorcycle Gang Criminal Enterprises, Occult, New Age, and Fringe Cult information and activities and training in Native American/US Marshall Jurisdictions. NABCJ (and like organizations) give unique access to International, National, State and local law enforcement entities, Attorney Generals, Judges, Advocates, Investigators, Forensic Specialist as well as other professional development opportunities.

Through my NABCJ membership I gained invaluable experience, gained access to resources and expertise in every aspect of the Judicial Court System. I gained

a wide range of exposure to Law Enforcement from Municipal, State, Federal and Interpol International justice system.

I was fortunate enough to be employed by Oklahoma's DOC during a time when the Agency was engaging in many groundbreaking innovations. Diverse mentorship in every aspect of the Department was encouraged, pundits of every gender, race and ethnic background availed themselves to new recruits, the Department supported and encouraged training of all kind, internships and scholarships were promoted. Leadership was receptive and tolerant of talent, input and innovation. NABCJ showed me how to navigate it all. NABCJ gave me the courage, leadership and support to excel and more importantly to fail. I had numbers to call, mentors to laugh and cry with, comrades in arms to listen, advise, and share the best of themselves, unreservedly.

During the proverbial burnout stages of year(s) 5, 7 and every year after 15, it was my NABCJ family that pulled my through the abyss; refreshing my professional perspective with new challenges and updating my professional repertoire via conferences where I could learn but was heartened with being surrounded by unique, bright and tenacious women and persons of color who had "been there and done that" or who were like me, navigating their career paths and needed "safe zone" to just be me.

I also like that NABCJ promotes community service; it's members have and continue to give back and lift up the disenfranchised and less fortunate through volunteering, charities, neighborhood and national drives, and activism in causes of civil liberties, {to name a few); with the current social devolution of our communities and fractured and antagonistic relationships with our governmental and civil authorities NABCJ can and should be one of the many beacons our communities can seek guidance, sanctuary and relief.

NABCJ availed me access to career paths and genres I didn't know existed. The organization broadened my horizons, enhanced my potential(s) and assisted me building a 31-year fulfilling and satisfying career.

I encourage past members to renew their memberships and continue serving and advocating in their communities. I encourage new members to consider joining NABCJ because it will enhance their professional career and personal lives in ways they cannot yet see. I urge current members to stay the course. But most of all I encourage everyone to join NABCJ or any of the other progressive professional organizations. We are in a historic precipice in time and knowledge, compassion and action are and will be a premium right now.

SUPPORT NABCJ

National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice

\$\$\$\$\$\$ FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN \$\$\$\$\$\$

A SMART AND BETTER WAY TO RAISE MONEY

SUSTAINING NABCJ IN THE 21ST CENTURY

In today's economy, non-profits, religious groups, caused based corporations, charities, and civic groups and clubs like NABCJ are struggling to raise funds and generate revenue. Our members and supporters' discretionary income is shrinking, and that is our main resource. Now the *National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice* raises money and offers life-enhancing and money-saving services and products to our members and supporters. We understand that you have essential financial obligations and as much as you want to support us, each dollar can only go so far. Now there's a way for you to stretch your dollar and support us without sacrifice. We have an alternative option, an innovative solution to fundraising that doesn't totally rely on members' and supporter's donations—in fact, it will likely save them money on essential products and services they are already using!

Through our partnership with LINX2FUNDS, NABCJ receives a one-time bonus and/or regular monthly residual revenue depending on the specific products and/or services our supporters choose. Our supporters purchase products/services they already use or choose to use and support NABCJ at the same time. NABCJ offers life-enhancing healthcare, nutrition and wellness products, business services, as well as a wide variety of money-saving services currently being used every day. This includes but is not limited to: commercial and residential energy, credit monitoring, credit restoration, Internet, entertainment, identity protection, digital marketing, mobile marketing, payment processing, residential and commercial security products, TeeVee On Demand Television, Telemed healthcare, and much more. The wellness products help you to live a better life. The essential everyday products and services bring you savings for services you are using and also support NABCJ without you ever writing a check to us. Now, when you purchase these products and services through NABCJ, we earn money and you gain access to exclusive savings and rewards.

It's easier than ever to support NABCJ, save money, build your legacy and live a better and healthier life! When you think of the support you could provide every time you pay a monthly bill, or purchase health and nutrition products, it's truly amazing. NABCJ Representative ID Number (RIN) is: L1186699. To learn more, please visit our special web page at: <https://erewards.shop/L1186699P>

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It's your one-stop shop for a variety of natural products to help you achieve optimal health, reduce & stabilize blood sugar levels, and shed a few pounds. eRewards.shop features CaptaVida Glucose Support & Weight Loss Formula, OXZGEN Health & Beauty products, and an assortment of other products.

eRewards.shop rewards you every time you make a purchase with (1) Daily Dimes Reward Point for every dollar you spend. Rewards points are redeemable for eGift Cards to your favorite restaurants and merchants, and as credit towards future eRewards.shop purchases on the items you love!

Let NABCJ offer you quality products and services—most of which you're already paying for every month. At the same time, you can easily provide NABCJ with much needed support. We look forward to sharing more information with you on this innovative program that will help you and NABCJ. If you know of other tax exempt 501c3 not for profits, "caused based" for profit organizations seeking to secure new financial resources to fulfill their own mission, religious organizations, schools and colleges, civic groups and clubs, charities, fraternal organizations, and/or youth sports groups, that are looking for a better way to raise funds, please refer them to NABCJ at office@nabcj.org or 919.683.1801, so NABCJ can partner with them and offer them this opportunity which is FREE to them to join.

NABCJ CHAPTERS IN THE NEWS

(Continued from page 10)

OHIO NABCJ



The **Ohio NABCJ Executive Board** and National President, **Terri McGee** applaud and congratulate the 2018 **Reginald H. Wilkinson Second Chance Scholarship Winners**, **Monroe Welborne**, student at Franklin University and **Malika Kidd**, student at Cleveland State University, two (2) restored citizens who both served 14-year sentences in the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections. They both received \$1000 to assist in furthering their educational goals.

COMMITTED TO JUSTICE FOR ALL

SOUTH CAROLINA NABCJ



SC NABCJ Chapter held their **25th Annual Training Conference** on Friday, December 07, 2018 at the Brookland Banquet and Conference Center in West Columbia, SC, addressing the theme, **“Valuing Difference While Promoting Criminal Justice Reform.”** Training topics included Recognizing Pitfalls of Social Media, Learning to Lead, and Human Trafficking.

Specific training areas included: Addiction, Incarceration and Need for Treatment and Ongoing Recovery Support; Effective Strategies in Addressing Trauma in Children of Incarcerated *; From Mass to Magnet: 5-Secrets to Attract and Keep Lasting Love; Implementing Family Values to Expanding Our Legacy in the 21st Century; Learning to Lead While following the Leader; Infant/Maternal Mortality; Mindfulness Based Wellness and Resiliency for Corrections Professionals; Harnessing Your Body’s Adaptive Response to Stress through Mindfulness and Yoga; Understanding Domestic Violence and Its Most Lethal Assault.

Educational Scholarships in terms of financial assistance were provided to qualified applicants demonstrating academic excellence and financial need. SC NABCJ also presented the Annual Distinguished Service, Community Service and Outstanding Student Awards to deserving recipients.



Continued on page 17



REGIONAL REPS CORNER

SOUTH REGION

Information gathered from researchers
Compiled and Submitted by South Regional Representative
Mary Bobb Singleton

Louisiana Votes In Unanimous Jury

Congratulations Louisiana! On November 6, 2018, you voted in Amendment 2, abolishing what was considered a Jim Crow law that made Louisiana one of two states (Louisiana and Oregon) allowing non-unanimous juries in felony trials. This means that effective January 1, 2019, prosecutors will need the approval of all 12 jurors for a felony conviction. The bill was carried through the legislature to put the unanimous jury proposal on the November ballot by New Orleans Senator J. P. Morrell.

But, in a state where extraordinary Black events are held (Essence Festival, Bayou Classic, Jazz Festival and The National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice Annual Conference and Training Institute) and prestigious Historically Black Colleges and Universities are located (Dillard University, Grambling State University, Southern Universities and Xavier University), why a law which is viewed as racist had been allowed to thrive in Louisiana for such a long period of time? To understand the longevity of this miscarriage of justice, we have to look at Jim Crow's hold on the State of Louisiana.

The following information was obtained from the LSU Press Blog researching Louisiana Jury Rule giving insight on the non-unanimous jury:

"Ed Tarpley has been practicing law in Louisiana for nearly 40 years - six spent as District Attorney in Grant Parish. But, it wasn't until recently that he learned how Louisiana adopted a jury rule unlike any other in the country.

"The overwhelming majority of lawyers in Louisiana were unaware of the origins of the law," Tarpley says.

To get to the beginning, you have to go back to the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 - when Louisiana juries were required to deliver a unanimous verdict.

"As soon as Louisiana became part of the United States the laws of the United States applied - specifically the criminal laws of the country," Tarpley says. "So we had unanimous juries from the early days of our state."

Then the Civil War - and the Reconstruction period followed in 1865. As Southern states worked to rebuild their governments to include newly freed slaves, white

southern Democrats - known as "Redeemers" - were working to do the opposite.

Thomas Aiello is an Associate Professor of History and African American studies at Valdosta State University in Georgia, and author of Jim Crow's Last Stand: Non-unanimous Criminal Jury Verdicts in Louisiana. "After Reconstruction was over, the white population in the state tried to re-impose some kind of version of white control over the system which they felt they had lost ever since the loss of the Civil War," Aiello says.

One of the ways Redeemers regained control was through a system known as 'convict leasing.' No longer able to keep slaves under the 13th Amendment, the convict lease system allowed the state to rent out its prisoners to people or companies who needed labor.

"The goal of course was to create enough free labor that the railroads, plantation owners and other groups like that could get a version of their free labor back," says Aiello. "But the only way to make that work is to make sure that you have enough convicts."

Out of that system came Louisiana's non-unanimous jury rule.

One of the ways to make sure that you can get more convictions is to lower the jury requirement," says Aiello. So in 1880, the state legislature said juries no longer needed to reach a unanimous decision.

The new law required only 9 of 12 jurors to convict someone of a crime. It eventually became part of Louisiana's Constitution in 1898 - during a convention where the stated purpose was "to establish the supremacy of the white race in the state." Since then, says Tarpley, the law has remained in the state's constitution.

"All of this took place in the post-Reconstruction era and it was one of the earliest examples of the Jim Crow laws that as the years went by begin to be instituted throughout the South," Tarpley says.

After facing a legal challenge, Louisiana's law was backed by a Supreme Court ruling in 1972 that said non-unanimous juries did not violate the constitutional right to due process.

In 1973, Louisiana's current constitution was drafted with a slight change to the jury rule - now, 10 of 12 jurors had to agree. That change put Louisiana in line with Oregon - the only other state in America with a non-unanimous jury law. But Tarpley says the system in Louisiana diminishes our constitutional rights - so he's been working to repeal the law.

"We have a system which means that every vote on the jury is not equally counted," Tarpley says. "Once the jury gets to 10 votes, well then whoever the dissenting jurors are, their voices are simply not considered."

The purpose of the jury, Tarpley says, is to ensure the state has proven its case beyond a reasonable doubt. "And in Louisiana, if we have one or two people on the jury that still have doubt, then they have not done that," he says.

This year, the Louisiana legislature agreed with Tarpley - and on November 6th, voters will decide whether non-unanimous verdicts should continue to be allowed in the state." (Reporter Wallis Watkins explains the history of Louisiana's non-unanimous jury rule)

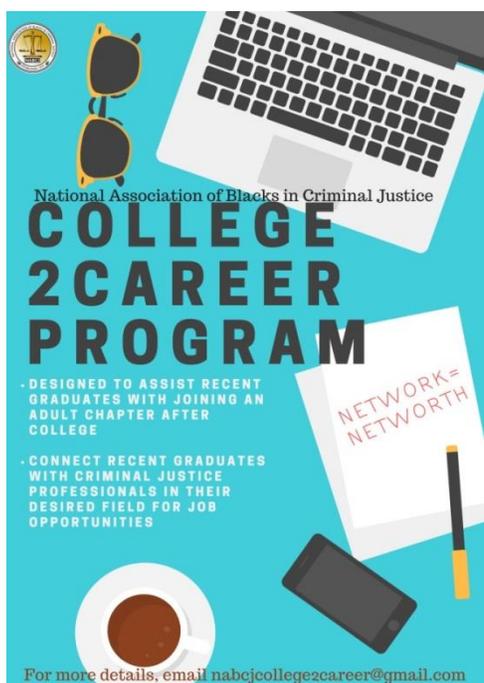
Early civil rights activists denounced the new non-unanimous jury law as a "Jim Crow Jury" system, designed to restore white supremacy in the state after Reconstruction was sabotaged. The system ensured that no black jurors could obstruct the [increasing criminalization of African Americans](#), which was a

[budding enterprise](#) at the turn of the 20th century. Other states entertained adopting a similar non-unanimous jury system, but it was only Louisiana that actually did. (Oregon [passed its non-unanimous jury law in 1934](#)). The "Jim Crow Jury" system endured in Louisiana throughout the entire 20th century, helping to establish the state as the [incarceration](#) and [wrongful conviction](#) capital of the world (Brentin Mock, staff writer, CityLab and previous justice editor at Grist).

Advocates had sued the state unsuccessfully trying to get the split jury law overturned as unconstitutional. The most recent attempt was in 2017, involving a murder in Treme for which the accused was convicted in 10-2 verdict. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the case. (Excerpts from The Times-Picayune, New Orleans, LA, written by Julia O'Donoghue, and Heather Nolan)

In summarizing the justification for the extended period of the non-unanimous jury verdict would appear to be to increased prison population, maintain cheap labor, clear up the court dockets, and provide a tool to bargain with defendants to plea bargain their cases.

Today the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCJ), along with other Black Organizations, must take a look at antiquated laws put in place before the Civil Rights Movement which affects African Americans, and call for changes. "Today Every Revisions of Antiquated Laws Matters" and should be a requirement for politician's political platform to serve their four year term of office.



National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice

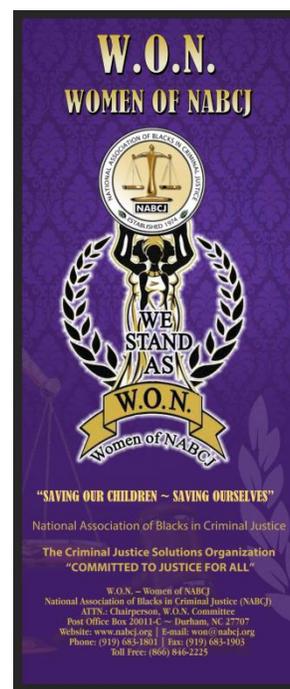
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NABCJ CHAPTERS IN THE NEWS

(Continued from page 14)

HIGH DESERT VICTORVILLE-COMPTON NABCJ

Submitted by
Isaac Asberry, Chapter President
Alpha Omega Curry, Ph.D., Southwest Regional Representative

Congratulations to NABCJ Life Member, **Ron L. Dowell**, Certificate Graduate of the UCLA Extension Writers' Program, who has been selected as **2018 PEN Center USA Emerging Voices Fellow**. The Emerging Voices Fellowship provides new writers who are isolated from the literary establishment with the tools, skills, and knowledge they need to launch a professional writing career. Ron is also the founder and CEO of Compton4Cops, and author of **Compton 4 Cops: Community Based Crime Fighting in Disadvantaged Racially and Ethnically Diverse Urban Communities** and **Professor Roach**, published in Oyster River Pages. He is current working on **Stones Refused**, a collection of stories that show how people find hope and even joy in lives where basic needs are sometimes hard to meet.



A **HUGE SHOUT-OUT** and **THANK YOU** to NABCJ Member **Jacqueline Venters**, Founder and Executive Director of **Inner City Child Development and Youth** for her dedicated and committed volunteer service in the community.



2018 NABCJ CONFERENCE GALLERIA



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SPECIAL EVENT

46TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND TRAINING INSTITUTE

PLACE: GRAND HYATT TAMPA BAY, TAMPA, FLORIDA

TIME: SUNDAY THRU THURSDAY

DATE: JULY 14-18, 2019

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT: SATURDAY, JULY 13, 2019

LEARN MORE AT: [HTTPS://NABCJ.ORG/CONFERENCES/46](https://nabcj.org/conferences/46)

SPECIAL EVENT

W.O.N. (WOMEN OF NABCJ) PRESENTS "YEAR OF THE WOMAN" LUNCHEON SYMPOSIUM

PLACE: CLEARWATER, FLORIDA

TIME: 8:00AM TO 12:00PM, WEDNESDAY

DATE: JULY 17, 2019

SYMPOSIUM INCLUDES TRANSPORTATION AND TOUR OF INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS OF THE TRUTH ABOUT DRUGS, THE WAY TO HAPPINESS AND YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. SEATING IS LIMITED. PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED. TO RESERVE A SEAT, TEXT: 323.807.1621.

SPECIAL EVENT

ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE CONGRESS

PLACE: WASHINGTON, DC

TIME: WEDNESDAY THRU SUNDAY

DATE: SEPTEMBER 2019

HOSTED BY: CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS FOUNDATION

SPECIAL EVENT

SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE AND TRAINING INSTITUTE

SAVE-THE-DATE: NOVEMBER 2019

PLACE: LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

TIME: TBA

DATE: NOVEMBER 12-15, 2019 (TENTATIVE)*

NABCJ SOUTHWEST REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE STATES OF ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA, COLORADO, NEVADA, HAWAII, NEW MEXICO, AND UTAH WILL HOST A TRAINING INSTITUTE AND CONFERENCE FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSIONALS, PARAPROFESSIONALS, STUDENTS, LAW ENFORCEMENT, MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIANS AND PRACTITIONERS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS. THIS EVENT WILL BE IN COLLABORATION WITH GREATER LOS ANGELES MLK DAY TO SEASON OF SERVICE COALITION. YOU'RE INVITED TO ATTEND.

*NOVEMBER 12TH AND NOVEMBER 15TH - TRAVEL DATES



ANNOUNCEMENT

TIME SENSITIVE

All articles for inclusion in the **SUMMER 2019 Edition** of **THE COMMITMENT** are to be submitted camera ready in **pdf** and/or **jpg** format via e-mail: office@nabcj.org or mail: NABCJ, Post Office Box 20011-C, Durham, NC 27707.

SUBMISSION DUE DATE:

11:59 PM, FRIDAY, MAY 31, 2019

NABCJ Officers, including Regional Representatives, Standing and Ad Hoc Committee Chairs, Chapter Presidents, Members, Students and Advisors are encouraged to submit articles, events and/or activities. Submissions by non-members and/or criminal justice, law enforcement and corrections officials, as well as invited guest editorials supporting the mission and objectives of NABCJ will also be considered.

SUPPORT RESOURCES



NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund

National Headquarters

212.965.2200

Washington, DC Office

202.682.1300

Website: <https://www.naacpldf.org>

National Center for Elder Abuse

Website: <https://ncea.acf.gov>

<https://elderjustice.a1.gov>

“All people regardless of age or ability deserve justice.”

National Child Abuse Hotline

1.800.4-A.CHILD (TDD)

1.800.422.4453

Website: www.childhelp.org

24-hours, 7-days (365 days/year)

Provides help for children, adult survivors of abuse and parents

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1.800.799.7233

1.800.787.3224 TTY

Website: www.thehotline.org

24-hours, 7-days (365 days/year)

Provides help for relationship abuse as well as help to victims and survivors of domestic violence

National Federal Employee Assistance Program

OPM (Office of Personnel Management)

800.222.0364

888.262.7848 TTY

VOLUNTARY ~ CONFIDENTIAL

Provides help for employees and family members facing challenges that impact work etc performance outcome.

National Hotline for Elder Abuse

US Helpline and Hotlines for Suspected Elder Abuse and Neglect

1.800.677.1116

Website: <https://victimconnect.org>

Monday through Friday: 9:00am – 8:00pm EST

National Human Trafficking Hotline

1.888.373.7888

Website: www.HumanTraffickingHotline.org

FREE ~ CONFIDENTIAL ~

24-hours, 7-days (365 days/year)

Get help ~ find services ~ report a tip ~

Learn about your options

National Substance Abuse Helpline

1.800.662.HELP

1.800.662.4357

Website: www.samhsa.gov

FREE ~ CONFIDENTIAL ~

24-hours, 7-days (365 days/year)

Provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups and community based organizations

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1.800.273.8255

Website: www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

FREE ~ CONFIDENTIAL ~

24-hours, 7-days (365 days/year)

Provides support for people in distress, intervention, prevention and crisis resources

National Veterans Crisis Hotline

1.800.273.8255 Press 1

Website: www.veteranscrisisline.net

Veterans Free Mental Health/Depression Hotline

877.997.8990 ~ 888.505.0409

Website: www.nowmentalhealth.com

USA JOBS – The Federal Government

Website: <https://www.usajobs.gov>

USAJOBS serves as a **Help Center** for individuals seeking employment in the federal sector, that includes individuals with a disability, veterans, students and graduates.

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**CALL FOR NABCJ NATIONAL AWARD
NOMINATIONS
DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION:
15TH MARCH 2019**

CHAIRMAN'S AWARD: This award is given to the individual who has demonstrated leadership, dedication and contributions to NABCJ at the chapter or regional level.

CHAIRMAN EMERITUS AWARD: This award is given to an individual who has demonstrated sustained commitment and unselfish dedication to the advancement of the goals and objectives of NABCJ by ensuring representation of minorities as policy makers, and developers of Criminal Justice Programs and Research.

JONATHAN JASPER WRIGHT AWARD: This award is for leadership at the regional and state level in the area of criminal justice. The award is presented to an individual who has affected change in policy or is serving as a conduit of change. The award is named after the first African American elected to the bench of the Supreme Court of South Carolina.

MARY CHURCH TERRELL AWARD: This award is for activism and positive change in the field of criminal justice at the city and state level. This award is awarded to the individual who has initiated positive change on a local level through establishing relationships and programs in cooperation with courts, assemblies, churches and councils. The award is named after the freedom fighter, community leader, and church reformer whose efforts helped pave the way for full citizenship for African Americans in this country.

MEDGAR EVERS AWARD: This award is given to the individual who has demonstrated unselfish ideals of fair play by developing, policies, enforcing regulations and ensuring that all persons including those who are institutionalized receive equal justice under the law. This award is named after the slain civil rights leader whose struggles for equal justice ended with his making the ultimate and supreme sacrifice.

OWENS-BELL AWARD: This award is given to the individual for outstanding chapter development and leadership by organizing a new chapter, increasing the membership of a current chapter or creating mechanisms for the recruitment of members, and the development of chapter programs and activities. The award is named after Dr. Charles Owens and Jimmie Bell, two of NABCJ's Founders.

WILLIAM H. HASTIE AWARD: This award is for national leadership in the field of criminal justice and presented to the individual who has affected change in policy, or has excelled in a leadership role nationally in the criminal justice area. The award is named after the first African American appointed to the bench in 1937 by President Franklin Roosevelt.

[Click Here](#) to Download the Awards Nomination Form.



Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Award

[Apply for the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship \(Click here\)](#)

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: 31ST MARCH 2019

Applications are now open to apply for the 2019 Thurgood Marshall Scholarship. The National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCJ) will award a scholarship to an individual who demonstrates academic excellence and financial need. This scholarship award is presented annually at NABCJ's Annual Conference and Training Institute. The scholarship recipient is encouraged to attend the National Conference usually held in July. The purpose of the Scholarship is to offer deserving students financial assistance in continuing their education in the criminal justice field.

The scholarship is awarded to the best candidate who is in good scholastic standing and plans to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal justice or a closely related Criminal Justice field. The amount of the scholarship is \$2,000.00.



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 Other (Specify) _____
3. Are you a member of ACA Yes No
4. When did you last attend a NABCJ Conference? _____
5. Have you attended a NABCJ Conference? Yes No
6. Are you a member of a NABCJ Chapter? Yes No. If yes, which Chapter _____
7. Are you currently a student? Yes No. If yes, what University? _____
Major _____ Expected Year of Graduation _____

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Type of Membership: Active-\$50 *Full-time Student-\$15 * See Note at Bottom of Page

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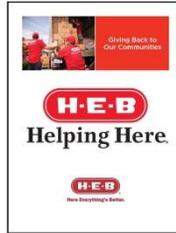
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