

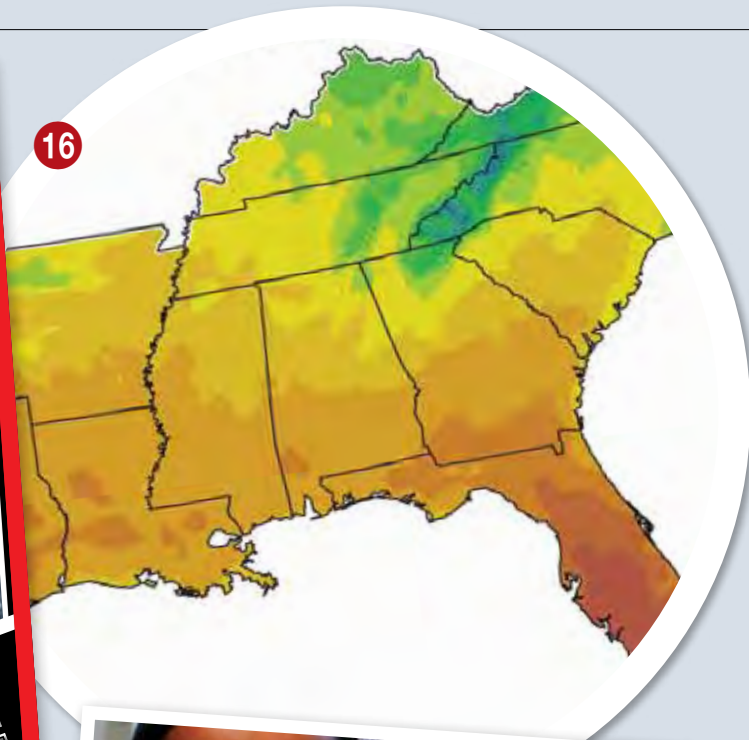
third quarter twenty-eleven . baton rouge area foundation

CURRENTS

Time for our close-up

A downtown renaissance draws
a national performing arts gathering

Climate shift | Inside crime | Pitch night | School that sparks



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*Baton Rouge
Area Foundation*



From the chair

People in Baton Rouge know the frequencies to their favorite radio stations. Songs and football talk offsets the frustration of being stuck in peak-hour traffic.

New roads are being built to move traffic a bit faster, but urban designers will tell you that the new capacity will fill up quickly enough. If we do nothing as a parish, the road ahead will be more difficult.

We have an excellent chance to correct our mistakes, to create a built environment that improves how we live in the parish.

More than two years ago, the Baton Rouge Area Foundation asked the Urban Land Institute to review the Horizon Plan on behalf of the city-parish. ULI concluded that a new plan was needed, and they drafted a scope for the work. Mayor Kip Holden and the Metro Council took over and sought out some of the best design minds in the country. They hired Fregonese Associates for \$2 million to write a long-term city plan for East Baton Rouge.

For two years, Fregonese Associates immersed themselves in studying how our parish works, understanding travel patterns, forecasting economic growth, poring over regulations that frame where and how neighborhoods are built. And they turned to the people of our city, listening attentively at community meetings to our dreams and aspirations for a future Baton Rouge.

Finally, in June, the planners from Portland unveiled a second draft of FuturEBR. Nearly completed, the plan provides a path for sensible development of the parish. For instance, it recommends mass transit only where there is demand for it at first, building a system that will attract not only those who need the service, but then also new riders who'll choose to get on board. The plan recommends a reconfiguring of our medical corridor – a tangle of congested streets serving Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, Baton Rouge General Medical Center and orbiting clinics—so that it will be easier for people to move quickly about the area. And when the time is right, the plan suggests a rail line, connecting New Orleans to Baton Rouge, with a major stop right there in this medical corridor. Together, these strategies are meant to bring balance to our mobility, letting people



choose the best way to reach their destination, relieving the pressure on our roads.

The inner city needs a dose of reinvention too, and planners envision Government Street as our answer to New Orleans' Magazine Street. It would feature distinct sidewalks, on-street parking, calmer traffic, and then, naturally, more people moving into the surrounding neighborhoods – all with the goal of making the area a real destination, rather than just another traffic-jammed stretch you pass through on your way to someplace else.

You can read the entire plan, which runs for a few hundred pages, at FuturEBR.org. Certainly, skeptics will dismiss FuturEBR, some saying we can't afford it and others saying it will be soon forgotten like the last one.

At the Foundation, though, we are very encouraged the plan will be followed. A mayoral panel already has relied on FuturEBR to put forward a mass transit overhaul for our nearly bankrupt bus system. Expect the overhaul to be the basis of a tax vote late next year. At long last, with dedicated funding for mass transit, East Baton Rouge could finally count on

“The great thing in the world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving.”

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

buses that come every 15 minutes instead of 75.

Our local government is expected to pledge to follow the plan. But our future really depends on you and me. Our support will ensure that the necessary resources are dedicated for implementing FuturEBR. Following that, it's up to us to make sure that those responsible for spending our tax money stick to the vision we've crafted as a parish. Together, we must see to it that this plan doesn't sit on the shelf while our city twists itself into further gridlock.

Certainly, it's hard work. But it must be done, as our choices are narrow – a beautiful, forward-moving future, or one stalled in the slow lane.

Sincerely,



Matthew G. McKay

Baton Rouge Area Foundation

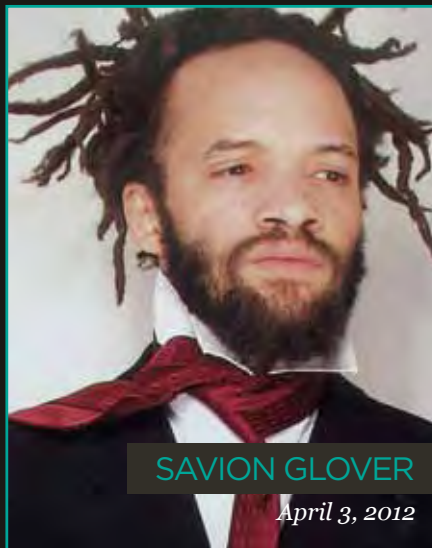
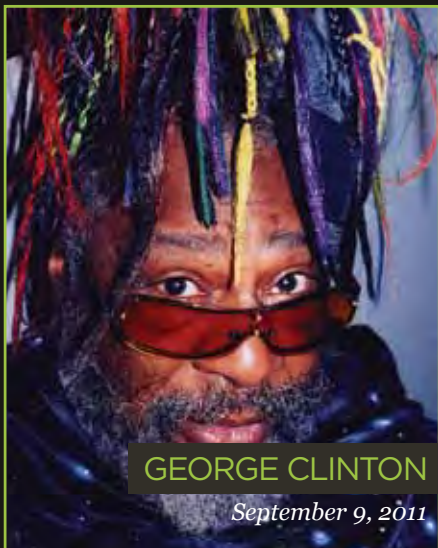
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The Baton Rouge Area Foundation is a community foundation that takes advantage of opportunities to improve the quality of life in South Louisiana. We do so by providing two essential functions. One, the Foundation connects philanthropists with capable nonprofits to make sure the needs of our communities are met. For example, our donors support the Shaw Center for the Arts and buy eyeglasses for needy children. Two, the Foundation invests in and manages pivotal projects to improve the region. Our Plan Baton Rouge initiative spearheaded the downtown revitalization plan and now is working to revive Old South Baton Rouge. For more information, contact Mukul Verma at mverma@braf.org.

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Baton Rouge Area Foundation

The Baton Rouge Area Foundation is among more than 700 community foundations across the country. We work to improve the quality of life for all people in the region. We do so in two ways.

First, we connect philanthropists with exceptional nonprofits to make sure the needs of our neighbors are met. Our donors, for instance, fund safe havens for abused women and children, provide vaccinations to prevent cancer and pay for teacher supplies. Last year, we provided thousands of grants worth \$18.3 million.

Second, the Foundation invests in and manages pivotal projects. Working with partners, we have revitalized downtown Baton Rouge, are rebuilding neighborhoods between downtown and LSU, supporting the improvement of public education through experimental schools and much more.

Who we serve: We conduct projects and provide grants across South Louisiana—East and West Baton Rouge, East and West Feliciana, Ascension, Livingston, Pointe Coupee and Iberville. The Foundation works in St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Washington and St. Helena parishes through the Northshore Community Foundation, a support organization that operates independently from a home base in Covington. The Foundation also supports the Community Foundation of Southwest Louisiana. Based in Lake Charles, that foundation serves Calcasieu, Beauregard, Allen, Cameron and Jefferson Davis parishes.

How we work: The Foundation is funded in several ways. One key way is through generous people who choose to start donor-advised funds to provide grants to nonprofit groups and community projects. Philanthropists can start a tax-deductible charitable

fund for \$10,000. To learn more about charitable funds, call Helen Lowery at 225.387.6126.

The Foundation also is funded through earnings on unrestricted assets, which were donated by philanthropists and grow over time.

Among Foundation assets is the Wilbur Marvin Foundation, which is comprised of real estate left by the late Wilbur Marvin. Those real estate assets include the Hilton Capitol Center Hotel in Baton Rouge, as well as shopping centers in Louisiana, Florida and Texas. The real estate assets are managed by Commercial Properties Realty Trust.

What's our size: At year-end 2010, the Foundation had estimated assets of \$640 million, making it among the top-20 largest community foundations in the country. Donors of the Foundation have provided the assets over 47 years. Since 1964, the Foundation has issued more than \$250 million in grants to support our community. Also, the Foundation has contracted with for-profit organizations to provide social benefits to the region, such as guidance on health care reform and direction on whether to build a new airport or invest in our existing ones.

More information is available at BRAf.org or by calling Mukul Verma at 225.387.6126.



Coming soon to the Shaw Center for the Arts is a marquee entrance on North Boulevard to give a venue of the Hartley/Vey Theatre its own identity.

Manship upgrade

They were barely noticed. But with improvements, including \$450,000 from the Rick Hartley and David Vey Fund at the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, the black box venues at the Manship Theatre are ready for their arrival.

Rebranded as the Hartley/Vey Theatres at the Shaw Center for the Arts, the venues had improved lighting and studio sound installed last year. With additional improvements this year, the theaters will stand on their own, allowing for more performances.

Each of the venues will have marquee entrances, with the larger theater's door opening onto the new North Boulevard town square, allowing for more music, comedy, cabaret and dance to be booked there. The smaller venue will be combined with the bigger one for larger events, while also serving as a practice stage. A reconfigured, full-service bar will serve all the theaters.

"The current phase of renovations will make these spaces thrive as individual performance venues, giving downtown Baton Rouge a more varied and dynamic arts scene for all ages," says Renée Chatelain, executive director of the Manship Theatre and the

Shaw Center for the Arts. "Programming in these spaces will include concerts by regional and local touring bands, cabaret shows, big band dance shows, contemporary dance concerts, film and comedy nights."

BP grants made

The Gulf Coast Restoration and Protection Foundation completed a second round of grants to workers affected by the deepwater drilling moratorium in the Gulf of Mexico last year.

A supporting nonprofit of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, the GCRPF granted \$5.5 million in the

35

Percentage of people without a high school diploma who are not in the labor force, compared to 10% for those with a college degree.

second round to 391 who directly support deepwater rigs, such as boat captains and crews. More than 1,100 people started grant applications, but less than 40% completed the process. The average second-round grant was \$14,257.

In the first round last year, the GCRPF provided \$5.5 million in grants to workers on the deepwater rigs.

After the moratorium was imposed by the federal government last year, BP donated \$100 million to provide the grants. At the time, it was expected

that thousands of workers would be laid off due to the drilling halt, which was imposed after the Gulf of Mexico Deepwater Horizon well blowout. But most drilling companies and support firms kept their employees, who were put to work in other ways, such as upgrading and maintaining rigs.

After expenses and grants, the GCRPF has about \$84 million available. Under the donation agreement with BP, the money will be deposited into a charitable fund at the Baton Rouge Area Foundation for grants to benefit the people and wildlife of the Gulf Coast.

DPW: beauty reduced

Notice the renderings here for the ramps where I-10 meets Dalrymple Drive at our city's lakes, where thousands gather weekly for recreation. Put an X through most of the plan, for local government says there isn't enough money for the project.

Baton Rouge Green was managing the re-making of the exit along with other beautification projects, which made up a tiny sum of the hundreds of millions the parish is spending on roads, such as the concrete expressway that is now Perkins Road with sidewalks.

Last year, the nonprofit picked a design by LSU students Andrea Galinsky and Mary Martinich for land around the Dalrymple exits, which are a gateway to LSU and City Park. The sweeping westbound exit would have been planted with Japanese black pine and blue sedge, a grass that requires little maintenance. Along the lakes, the designers proposed Louisiana iris, cattails, button bush and other plants. Lighting under the bridge would reflect the health of the lake.



But Baton Rouge Green is no longer managing beautification projects, which are now under control of the parish Department of Public Works. Greg Bivin of DPW says there isn't enough money to implement the design, so only some of the lights under the bridge—favored by Mayor Kip Holden—will be put in place. “The mayor seemed to like the lighting better, it was easier to maintain.”

The project has not been bid, and there is no schedule to get it under way. The students apparently were too ambitious in dollars for the city-parish. “We gave the students a \$50,000 budget and the project was considerably more than that, so we value-engineered it down,” Bivin said. He didn't have an estimate on how much the LSU design would cost, but said it was several times the amount.

So for now, the area used by thousands—and a reflection of the city to visitors—will remain mostly unchanged.

8,167

Number of clean-economy jobs in Baton Rouge, ranking the metro area No. 63 out of 100 largest metro areas with such jobs. A Brooks Institution report says the Baton Rouge metro area has grown by 1,472 clean-economy jobs since 2003, rising by a rate of nearly 3% per year. Nationwide, the green economy employs about 2.7 million workers, about 2% of all jobs. The growth rate nationwide for green jobs was 3.4% per year since 2003.

New housing in OSBR

Development continues in Old South Baton Rouge, the neighborhoods between LSU and downtown that are targeted by a Foundation recovery project. The Michaels Organization, a nonprofit developer, wants to build a 152-unit apartment complex with a courtyard and greenspace where a small school now stands.

The site is 6.5 acres at the corner of West McKinley and Vermont streets, a block from Nicholson Drive. At the location, Charity Christian Academy now stands. To build the project, the developer would need a rezoning from single family housing to small planned unit development. Moreno Properties, which has bought and razed homes on Nicholson Drive across from and around Magnolia Mound Plantation, is said to be partnering on the project with The Michaels Organization.

If built, the project would add to the growing housing base in OSBR, where two condo developments on Nicholson and two apartment projects on Highland Road have been constructed in the past decade.

Children's museum gets pledges

Organizers of a children's museum proposed at City Park have raised more than \$4.5 million—\$3 million from the local parks system and the rest from private donations, including some from charitable funds located at the Baton Rouge Area Foundation.

They need \$6 million for the 30,000-square-foot building and \$4.5 million for the exhibits. The museum leaders will target business sponsors to pay for exhibits. If fund-raising goals are met, construction could begin next year.

Leaders of the project and BREC representatives also have chosen Portico Group to design the museum for a hilltop overlooking Dalrymple Drive and City Park Golf Course. Portico, of Portland, Ore.,



A children's museum with a view.

has already worked in Baton Rouge, having designed the LSU AgCenter's Burden Research Center. Kid's Quest Children's Museum in Bellevue, Wash., and Kidspace Museum in Pasadena, Calif., are Portico designed.

Knock Knock has 20 of 30 founding members to help pay for the building with donations of \$50,000 or more. Founding members will be prominently recognized at the museum.

"The prospect of a children's museum in Baton Rouge that engages youth in learning, creativity, the arts, play and cultural exposure is very exciting," say founding members Catherine and Matthew Saurage in a release from Knock Knock. "This requires a lot of work and the support of visionary leaders, private and public entities and the genuine passion of a handful of individuals to keep this project moving forward. We applaud the progress made to date and are pleased to demonstrate our support with a financial pledge."

Other founding members are Albemarle Corp. & Foundation, All Star Automotive Group, Amedisys, a Friend of Knock Knock, Baton Rouge Coca-Cola Bottling Co., The Boo Grigsby Foundation, BREC, Capital Area United Way, The City of Baton Rouge, Credit Bureau of Baton Rouge Foundation, The Douglas L. Gordon Family, The Irene W. and C.B. Pennington Foundation, The Johnson Family, Lamar Advertising Co., Lee Michaels Fine Jewelry, Richard Manship, The McMains Foundation, The Mary Charlotte and Lloyd Collette Fund, Mary Kay and Terrell Brown and Kate and Tee Brown, and Kathy and Mike Worley.

The Credit Bureau of Baton Rouge Foundation, All Star Automotive and the Mary Charlotte and Lloyd Collette Fund are housed at the Baton Rouge Area Foundation.



Blake Williams, 11, cares for sunflowers in Old South Baton Rouge, where three organizations and residents planted three abandoned lots in a pilot project. The flowers were harvested in July and sold at the Red Stick Farmer's Market. Planting abandoned lots improves the look of neighborhoods and provides a revenue source and teaching opportunities.

Bloom in OSBR

In a pilot program this April, three vacant lots in Old South Baton Rouge were transformed through colorful sunflower plantings. This community revitalization tool was implemented in a partnership of the Center for Planning Excellence, the East Baton Rouge Redevelopment Authority and Baton Rouge Green.

The GROW Sunflower Project aims to enhance community engagement, to put vacant land in use and to beautify the streetscape. The three lots are near the Lincoln Theater: one fronts Myrtle Walk at Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive and the other two are along South Street at Iberville and 14th streets.



Vacant lots in Baton Rouge are often plagued by environmental issues such as the presence of trash and illegal dumping of noxious toxins, and community issues such as unwanted uses of property and lowered property values. The sunflower plantings revitalize these empty spaces through low-cost, high-impact beautification, and have the potential for ridding soil of contaminants.

The program builds on the momentum of the three organizations' ongoing work in OSBR. CPEX has done environmental remediation, homeowner rehabilitation projects and commercial façade matching grant programs. Baton Rouge Green has planted hundreds of trees in public spaces and at dozens of homes in OSBR through its NeighborWoods planting and education program. The RDA recently acquired a dozen lots in OSBR and is working toward the revitalization of the Lincoln Theater, located at Myrtle Walk and Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive.

Home at last

All the scattered services for the homeless in Baton Rouge will be drawn together in one place. In September, a one-stop center will offer the homeless basic services, such as a place to shower, wash clothes and use a computer. It also will guide the homeless to available services, provide medical care and legal services, and screen for mental problems and substance abuse. Built with federal credits and some assistance from the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, the \$8 mil-

lion facility on Convention Street in Mid City will have 36 single-unit apartments as well. Leading the project was the Capital Area Alliance for the Homeless, St. Vincent de Paul and the nonprofit developer Gulf Coast Housing Partnership.

Cook like a Viking

The first of its kind, a Viking Cooking School Outdoors will open at the Hilton Capitol Center, the downtown hotel rehabbed by the real estate developer of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation.

The school is a partnership of Colonnade Hospitality, the hotel's manager, and Viking Culinary Corp., which operates 18 cooking schools for enthusiasts across the country.

The new outdoor grilling concept will be on the pool deck overlooking the Mississippi River. In an outdoor pavilion, the school will offer classes for up to 30 students at a time. It will be available for private events.

“What an incredible way to learn how to smoke, grill and even bake while enjoying the beautiful views of the river,” says Tina Rance of Colonnade Hospitality. “It’s the perfect getaway weekend with cooking classes, the hotel’s spa, and all that downtown Baton Rouge has to offer.”

The school should be open by mid-September, to meet the demand for football season.



Come together



Working with the City of Mandeville, the Northshore Community Foundation led a master planning project for a town center in Old Mandeville. The design was created by Duany Plater-Zyberk, the same firm that provided the downtown Baton Rouge revival strategy 11 years ago. Seen here is a proposed dock and outdoor gathering place at the town center.

Moving people

It doesn't matter that wait times are a frustrating 75 minutes for a bus in Baton Rouge. That's because, come fall, buses may not show up at all for riders. The system is running out of money.

A blue ribbon panel has offered a mass transit plan, but it will only be implemented if taxpayers approve a dedicated stream of funding.

Called upon by Mayor Kip Holden to offer a remedy, the 17-member panel recommended more buses and three more transfer stations to reduce wait times to 15 minutes from 75 minutes. New benches and shelters, as well as technology to let riders track the location of buses, would improve service. Three express lines—downtown to LSU, Florida from Airline to downtown, and Plank Road with airport service—would boost demand.

As recommended, the improved service would require a \$30 million annual budget, with about two-thirds of the total in new local taxes—0.25 cents of sales tax, 4 mills of property tax—collected by a new taxing district approved by voters who live within its lines. The district would be drawn mostly to include the city, where there is need and demand for service. Outlying areas of Zachary, Central and southeast

Baton Rouge could opt-in down the road.

Meanwhile, the \$3 million the Metro Council now spends for bus operations each year should be allocated to improving pedestrian connections to the transit system. The panel recommends considerable public outreach before asking the voters to approve taxes in fall 2012. Holden has to take the next step. •

A blue ribbon panel has offered a mass transit plan, but it will only be implemented if taxpayers approve a dedicated stream of funding.

Games without frontiers

The mission: Build a contraption that will snare ping pong balls during a five-minute battle. You have just five days to create this device, but first must learn about voltage, servo motors and an open source prototyping platform named “arduino.”

You and your teammates are middle- and high-school students, and your competition includes some of your teachers. The setting for your showdown is a makeshift arena at Episcopal School.

Under this scenario, the team of Elizabeth Andreeff, Darby Huye and Aidan Reilly zagged. Knowing the limits of their robot, the trio schemed to win the design competition instead. What emerged from their minds was “Swine Flew,” a robot pig festooned with pink fuzz, colored feathers, pictures of sweet corn and a duct tape arm for snagging those ping pong balls.

The gambit worked; the team shared victory in the design category. A common lesson came to them as well. “We learned to work as a team,” Huye said.

Over three weeks in the summer, more than 36 schoolchildren and teachers learned how to work together, as well as other lessons that were not as apparent. Instructing them were tech wizards from NuVu, which Episcopal recruited because the young nonprofit teaches using the studio model, which is popular among architecture schools.

While other robot-building programs offer lock-step training, NuVu is more free form. The instructors offer bits of knowledge as needed, then send the students off to start building whatever they can dream up, said Jewel Reuter, Episcopal’s dean of curriculum and instruction.



Katherine Andreeff, center, adjusts the pick-up arm on the robot, Swine Flew, as she participates in a NuVu studio program at Episcopal School. NuVu provides students the opportunity to work collaboratively with academic and professional experts to solve real-world problems in an intensive and fun studio environment.



Aidan Reilly, 11, tests a robot’s circuit as he participates in a NuVu studio program at Episcopal School.

By the end of the week, the participants had built game-playing robots, but the real goal was to teach them to think creatively, which is necessary to navigate life. They also gained specific skills, including how to present.

Episcopal expects to incorporate NuVu in its curriculum for the upcoming school year. •



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On the ground

Is BR climate ready?

Local efforts to plan for climate change are beginning to surface as major metro areas take a second look at everything from landscaping to infrastructure.

By Jeremy Alford

If you want to be a city planner when you grow up, then you might want to create a new curriculum that brings into account meteorology, climatology and geography. It's the wave of the future, if you believe *The New York Times*. Reporter Leslie Kaufman kicked off a series in May detailing how

business will need to be adapted and new transportation options created as well.

Just consider the lead sentences from the first story in *The Times*' climate change series: "The Windy City is preparing for a heat wave—a permanent one. Climate scientists have told city planners that based

*"You don't need a weatherman to
know which way the wind blows."*

—Bob Dylan, Subterranean Homesick Blues, circa 1965

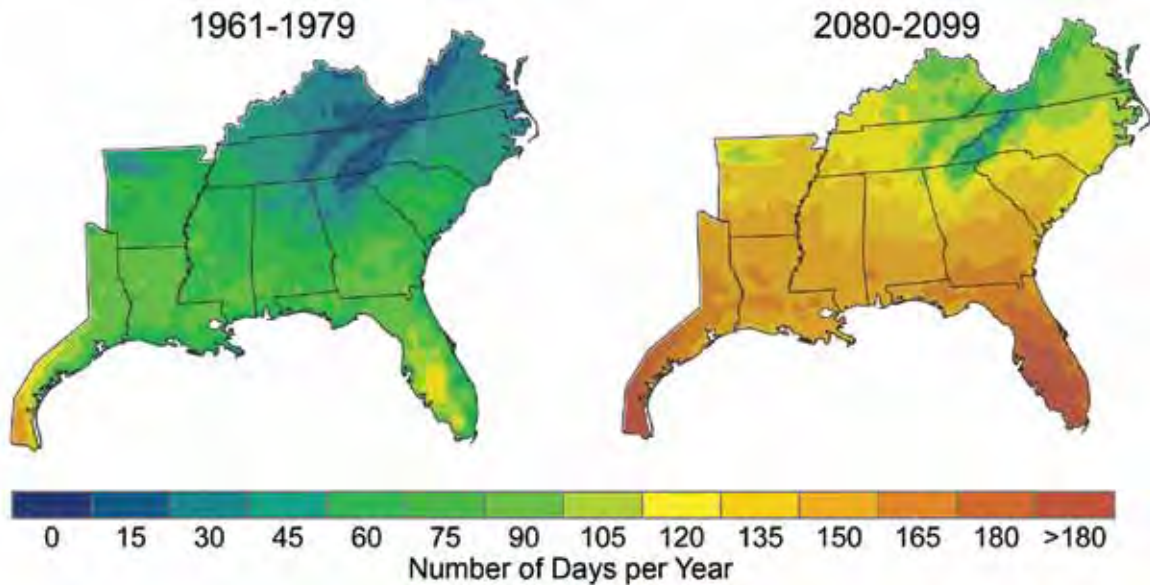
cities around the nation are preparing for climate change.

Kaufman depicts an environment where city planners have to adjust to rainfall changes by updating sewer systems, recreate bridges to withstand greater heat and plant different flora to match the shifting climate. As oil prices rise and cheap imports are more difficult to secure, the face of local commercial busi-

ness will need to be adapted and new transportation options created as well. Just consider the lead sentences from the first story in *The Times*' climate change series: "The Windy City is preparing for a heat wave—a permanent one. Climate scientists have told city planners that based

ness will need to be adapted and new transportation options created as well. Just consider the lead sentences from the first story in *The Times*' climate change series: "The Windy City is preparing for a heat wave—a permanent one. Climate scientists have told city planners that based on current trends, Chicago will feel more like Baton Rouge than a Northern metropolis before the end of this century." Changing the way cities grow won't be easy and Chicago isn't alone in its efforts. In fact, one of the biggest drivers in recent years for green rooftops, bicycle paths and drainage overhauls has been President Barack Obama's stimulus package, especially for

Hot trend



The number of days per year with peak temperature over 90°F is expected to rise significantly, especially under a higher emissions scenario as shown in the map above. Louisiana is expected to have five months of temperatures above 90°F by century end, triple the number from the late 70s.

SOURCE: U.S. GLOBAL CLIMATE RESEARCH PROGRAM

Louisiana. Gov. Bobby Jindal will use more than \$70 million in stimulus funding to implement energy efficiency technologies.

Nearly \$14 million has already been channeled to local government to assist in the reduction of fossil fuels, based on data compiled by the state Department of Natural Resources. Just in Baton Rouge, restaurants have used the federal money and state assistance to convert to energy-efficient equipment; efficiencies have been added to construction operations downtown; and residential homes are being retrofitted.

State Climatologist Barry Keim said one of the more noticeable efforts under way in Baton Rouge and Louisiana involves aging infrastructure, like

roads, bridges and even airport runways. Intense heat is exploding highways and busting seams and forecasted climate changes will do nothing to help.

Asphalt is being installed in a manner that allows

it to expand more and surfaces are permitting water to filter through. “These kinds of decisions are being looked at closely. Things like sea levels and subsidence, the sinking of land, are being taken into account,” Keim said. “Private engineers and the state and federal transportation departments

are working to get a handle on it.”

As for Chicago having Baton Rouge’s climate, Keim said it’s a bit of a “stretch,” but it’s a “cute” way to get across a message. But Chicago is taking the climate change seriously. Under the mayor’s directive, the city is working across departments to prepare for

The Baton Rouge Area Foundation is collaborating with state and federal leaders to create The Water Institute, which will bring together scientists across many fields to provide knowledge for co-existing with rising seas and disappearing wetlands across the Gulf Coast and the world.

Impacts of Climate Change

Climate change is apparent now across our nation. Trends observed in recent decades include rising temperatures, increasing heavy downpours, rising sea level, longer growing seasons, reductions in snow and ice, and changes in the amounts and timing of river flows. These trends are projected to continue, with larger changes resulting from higher amounts of heat-trapping gas emissions, and smaller changes from lower amounts of these emissions. The observed changes in climate are already causing a wide range of impacts, and these impacts are expected to grow. Select examples follow.

Sea Ice and Permafrost

Risks and costs in Alaska increase as thawing of permafrost damages roads, buildings, and forests, and declining sea ice increases coastal erosion and threatens the existence of some communities.



Forests

Forest growth is generally projected to increase in much of the East, but decrease in much of the West as water becomes even scarcer. Major shifts in species are expected, such as maple-beech-birch forests being replaced by oak-hickory in the Northeast. Insect infestations and wildfires are projected to increase as warming progresses.



Coldwater Fish

Salmon, trout, and other coldwater fish will face additional stresses as water temperatures rise and summer streamflows decline. Ecosystems and the tourism and recreation they support will be adversely affected.



Interacting Stresses

Population shifts and development choices are making more Americans vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. An aging populace and continued population shifts to the Southeast, Southwest, and coastal cities amplify risks associated with extreme heat, sea-level rise, storm surge, and increasing water scarcity in some regions.



Coral Reefs

Rising water temperatures and ocean acidification threaten coral reefs and the rich ecosystems they support. These and other climate-related impacts on coastal and marine ecosystems will have major implications for tourism and fisheries.



Heavy Downpours

More rain is already coming in very heavy events, and this trend is projected to increase across the nation. Such events are harmful to transportation infrastructure, agriculture, water quality, and human health.



Coastal Communities

Sea-level rise and storm surge will increase threats to homes and infrastructure including water, sewer, transportation, and communication systems. Many barrier islands and coastal marshes that protect the coastline and support healthy ecosystems will be lost.



Agriculture

Increasing heat, pests, floods, weeds, and water stress will present increasing challenges for crop and livestock production.



Heat Waves

Heat waves will become more frequent and intense, increasing threats to human health and quality of life, especially in cities.



Water and Energy Interactions

As warming increases competition for water, the energy sector will be strongly affected because power plants require large amounts of water for cooling.



Water Supply

Water supplies in the rapidly growing Southwest will become increasingly scarce, calling for difficult trade-offs among competing uses.



Energy Supply

Warming will decrease demand for heating energy in winter and increase demand for cooling energy in summer. The latter will result in significant increases in electricity use and higher peak demand in most regions.



Responding to Climate Change

Responses to climate change fall into two major categories. “Mitigation” focuses on reducing emissions of heat-trapping gases or increasing their uptake to reduce the amount and speed of climate change. “Adaptation” refers to changes made to better respond to present or future climate conditions in order to reduce harm or take advantage of opportunities. Both are necessary elements of a comprehensive response strategy.

a warmer future, including replacing their treasured white oaks with Louisiana swamp oaks and cypress trees.

For Baton Rouge, the 50-year model could mean hotter summers with less rain. “Just remember that those models go all over the place,” Keim added, “but it seems like most are calling for warming across all seasons, but mostly in the summer. Rainfall regimes are forecasted to change, too, like fewer afternoon thunderstorms.”

A recent report titled “Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States” paints a disturbing picture of how Louisiana could be impacted if these fu-

• decline in production of cattle and other rangeland livestock.

John P. Holdren, director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, said the report should send up a war cry. “It tells us why remedial action is needed sooner rather than later,” he said, “as well as showing why that action must include both global emissions reductions to reduce the extent of climate change and local adaptation measures to reduce the damage from the changes that are no longer avoidable.”

The study found that Americans—particularly Louisiana residents—are already being affected by



“...tackling climate change is not a question of scientific proof but of political will.”

—Dr. Melanie Gall, LSU’s Disaster Science and Management Program

ture models are correct. The report, produced by 13 U.S. government science agencies and several major universities, supports what Keim outlined, but it also goes a step further. It suggests that less rain and greater temperatures could mean:

- the sudden loss of coastal landforms that serve as a storm surge barriers;
- lower soil moisture and higher temperatures leading to intense wildfires and pest outbreaks;
- a reduction in water availability;
- increased illness and death due to greater summer heat stress, unless effective adaptation measures are implemented;
- decline in forest growth and agricultural crop production;
- increased buckling of pavement and railways;
- reduction in dissolved oxygen in streams, lakes and shallow aquatic habitats leading to fish kills and loss of aquatic species; and

climate change through extreme weather (read: hurricanes), drought and wildfire trends. The study also found that the current trend in the emission of greenhouse gas pollution is significantly “above the worst-case scenario.”

While she contends that the climate record speaks for itself, Melanie Gall of LSU’s Disaster Science and Management Program adds that the million dollar questions are when to take action and what to do. But just because science has shown that climate change is happening doesn’t mean local governments are on-board. “As a result, tackling climate change is not a question of scientific proof but of political will,” she said.

It’s a bitter predicament for those following trends, especially since Louisiana is already battling coastal erosion, subsidence, hurricanes and a host of other challenges. “Thus, southern Louisiana will have to grapple with the loss of land and the loss of coastal

Wash us away



Within 50 to 100 years, 2,400 miles of major roadway are projected to be inundated by sea-level rise in the Gulf Coast region. The map shows roadways at risk in the event of a sea-level rise of about 4 feet, within the range of projections for this region in this century.

SOURCE: U.S. GLOBAL CLIMATE RESEARCH PROGRAM

communities—not just a changing flora and fauna,” Gall added, referring to Chicago’s declining white oak population.

On the horizon, Gall said it will also be interesting to see how corporate America approaches its planning efforts. “Obviously, insurance and particularly reinsurance companies are considering the impacts of climate change,” she said, adding that Munich Re, a global reinsurer based in Germany, is already considering climate change impacts when calculating premiums and exposed assets.

Then there’s public opinion. According to a study compiled last year by the Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program, 59% of participants felt that general preparations in terms of climate change should focus on the “most likely scenario based on the best available information.”

Another 11% indicated that changes to management practices would be “premature at this juncture,

largely due to a lack of information.” A total of 21% indicated that they either don’t agree with climate change—and thus won’t take action—don’t plan to take action given lack of governmental direction or can’t currently take planning actions due to a lack of time.

Regardless of all the posturing, city planners are still up against an unpredictable foe: Mother Nature. All the green rooftops and energy retrofits in the world sometimes can’t protect a city from Her forces. Maybe that’s why budding city planners should take a few divination courses while they’re at it as well. “There’s just a lot we don’t know about how climate change will play out and the future,” Keim said. “That’s what makes planning so difficult.” •





Shenid Bhayroo (pictured) and wife Lori Waselchuk moved into an impoverished Philadelphia neighborhood so their children Mira, left, and Zahli could attend the exemplary Penn Alexander School, which is operated by the University of Pennsylvania.

OnSite

Magnet school

UPenn's lab school pulls residents into Philly's inner city. Can Baton Rouge do the same?

By Sara Bongiorno | Photo by Lori Waselchuk

A neighborhood school in a once-dickey section of Philadelphia has inspired a new member of the Baton Rouge school board to look for innovative ways to create an excellent neighborhood school here.

Craig Freeman, whose District 6 includes the areas surrounding the LSU campus, says a school informed by the success of Penn Alexander School in his hometown of Philadelphia could create a local “win-win-win”: a top-notch neighborhood school, a potent community revitalization tool and new muscle in the university’s faculty recruiting efforts.

“This is just the beginning of a long-term effort, but I think we need to think big when it comes to the future of our public schools,” says Freeman, who teaches in LSU’s Manship School of Mass Communication.

Penn Alexander School reflects a unique partnership between the University of Pennsylvania in West Philadelphia and the city's public school system. In some ways, the school functions as a traditional "laboratory" school, with its 500 pupils providing a place for hands-on experience to Penn's teachers-in-training and a means to deploy leading-edge university research in teaching strategies.

Its flexible curriculum likewise includes features often present in top-performing charter schools in urban centers around the country, such as student-focused, hands-on learning and amenities such as gardens, an orchestra, specialists in the arts and technology and an open, airy atrium for performances and group study sessions.

Elective classes for students in the middle-school grades at Penn Alexander range from journalism to hand bells.

But the school differs in key ways from both traditional laboratory and charter models, with Penn playing a prominent role in what makes it unique. For starters, the university provides a per-student supplement of \$1,300 per year to pay for those additional amenities and keep its teacher-student ratio at 23:1, compared to about 30:1 at other city schools.

The university also was instrumental in the design and construction of the gleaming \$22 million campus and rents the 10-year-old facility to the city school district for \$1 a year.

Penn also provides an on-site manager to coordinate the university's support of the school, provides round-the-clock security and actively encourages students and teachers to use its libraries and other educational resources.

The light-filled campus is cited by school officials

and outside experts as another important element in Penn Alexander's success. Sheila Syndor, the school's no-nonsense principal who gets high marks from her teachers, says that the diverse student body, on-site selection of teachers and a rigorous curriculum are also crucial core components to its success.

Penn Alexander's connection to the local neighborhood is equally noteworthy. Unlike charter schools that draw students from across a large region, Penn Alexander truly is a neighborhood school, with a student body of neighborhood children.

As such, the campus reflects the racial, cultural and ethnic diversity of the local neighborhood. The school population is 72% minority (48% African American, 28% white, 13% Asian, 6% Hispanic, and 5% other ethnicities), and about half qualify for free or reduced lunch. About 20% are the children of immigrant parents. A similar percentage are children of Penn faculty.

The result, parents say, is a school with both solid

ties to the surrounding neighborhood and a "United Nations" feel to it.

"Almost everybody walks," says Shenid Bhayroo, a Temple University journalism professor whose two children attend the school.

The model is clearly working, both for students and the once-gritty neighborhood alike.

Eighty-four percent of its students met or exceeded proficiency standards on Pennsylvania reading tests, as did 84% in mathematics, according to 2009 state data.

Significantly, Penn Alexander's low-income students do as well as their more affluent classmates on state proficiency tests.

The school's impact on the surrounding neighbor-



At the ethnically-diverse Penn Alexander school, 84% percent of students met or exceeded proficiency standards on Pennsylvania reading tests in 2009, as did 84 percent in mathematics.

Reclaiming Old South Baton Rouge, the area between LSU and downtown, is among Baton Rouge Area Foundation projects. University Terrace is in OSBR on the border of LSU, and Polk Elementary is in the heart of the neighborhood. They could be candidates for a school like Penn Alexander, which is detailed in this story.



“It’s a slow process, but why not look for ways to harness the talents of our universities to create an excellent neighborhood school?”

—Craig Freeman, EBR School Board member

hood is also hard to miss. Rents and real-estate values have soared, with identical houses inside its attendance zone sometimes selling for as much as \$100,000 more than houses across the street—and outside of the enrollment area—Bhayroo notes.

Freeman first learned about Penn Alexander School from Bhayroo, who completed his doctorate at LSU several years ago. Freeman recalls his surprise upon hearing that Bhayroo was determined to live in West Philadelphia, which Freeman remembers as “pretty dicey” from his childhood.

“I could not imagine what the draw for him was,” Freeman says.

Since then, what Freeman has learned about the school has inspired him to work to create a similar model at the local level. He is quick to add that it’s early in the process, and that he’s also not proposing a model to compete with the existing laboratory schools on the campuses of both Southern University and LSU.

He acknowledges that the idea would require addressing a host of complex issues, including funding

and reconfiguration of school attendance zones, possibly for University Terrace School, which borders the LSU campus.

But Freeman also says he is looking at the big picture over the long run. He says the idea will inform future discussions with LSU campus officials and other school board members, as well as candidates for the parish’s next school superintendent.

“It’s a slow process, but why not look for ways to harness the talents of our universities to create an excellent neighborhood school?” he says. •





CoverStory

Time for our close-up

A downtown renaissance draws a performing arts gathering.

By Maggie Heyn Richardson

Across a decade, the people of East Baton Rouge have come together to reclaim their downtown. This accomplishment, sparked by a strategic plan paid for by the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, is among reasons the Performing Arts Exchange chose Baton Rouge for its annual gathering, which will bring more than 600 artists and booking agents to the city in September.

Earlier this year, actor/comedian David Epley and his Doktor Kaboom! science show made young Baton Rougeans squeal so loudly it made Renée Chatelain wonder if she hadn't booked a rock star by mistake. Wearing a signature orange lab coat and bulging safety goggles, Epley and his mad scientist alter ego explained relativity, matter and pressure through a succession of zany experiments told with a thick, Einstein-inspired accent.



He launched catapults, shrank water balloons and caused explosions with cupboard staples while children cackled, clapped and fell under the spell of math and science.

“He was fantastic. You would not have believed how excited these kids were,” says Chatelain, executive director of the Manship Theatre and the Shaw Center for the Arts, which is hosting the performer again later this year. “It was a great way to bring alternative learning to our audience.”

But as well-received as Doktor Kaboom! has been at Baton



“You’ve got these artists and agents coming in from all over the country and they’ll be able to see the usable space for performing artists in the Shaw Center. It’s a huge opportunity for us. The city will be noted as an arts center.”

—Renée Chatelain, executive director of Shaw Center for the Arts and Manship Theatre

Rouge’s Manship Theatre, Chatelain says she might have overlooked the act had she not experienced a live snippet at a national conference called the Performing Arts Exchange. Artists, presenters and agents flock to the event annually for sample performances, workshops and networking. In the end, it was seeing Doktor Kaboom! in person that convinced Chatelain he’d be a good fit for local audiences.

The Performing Arts Exchange has been connecting artists and presenters since the eighties, when it began rotating in select cities throughout the south and eastern U.S. This fall, the prestigious event will be held in Baton Rouge. It’s the first time it has ever taken place in Louisiana.

Organizers expect about 600 participants to attend the 2011 Performing Arts Exchange, held Sept. 21-24 at the River Center, with events at the Hilton Hotel and the Shaw Center for the Arts.

“It’s a major opportunity for our city,” says Derek Gordon, executive director of the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge. “The fact that we have been chosen shows what a great place we have here, that Louisiana is open for business and that Baton Rouge is one of the hottest markets for the arts and for creating opportunities. We’re making our presence known.”

The Baton Rouge conference falls between

Performing Arts Exchanges in Pittsburgh in 2010 and Miami in 2012. The Atlanta-based nonprofit South Arts plans the annual conference along with other east coast arts conveners. South Arts Executive Director Gerri Combs says Baton Rouge presented several appealing characteristics.

“We love the idea of coming to Baton Rouge. It’s very easy to get around downtown and we love being on the river,” says Combs. “It’s a manageable size. We get lost in a big city.”

Gordon believes that conference-goers will also thrive on Louisiana’s pulsing culture.

“Hospitality is core to who we are,” he says. “We love food, we love to party, we celebrate with music, and the opportunity to share ideas about the arts is really spectacular.”

The conference attracts three key groups: performers, booking agents and presenters.

Performers include up-and-coming theater and dance troupes, musicians and performance artists, who all want to reach a broader audience. Booking agencies are there as well to promote current acts and sign new talent. Finally, presenters looking for performances that fit their markets also attend. This year, for example, Chatelain will be looking for bluegrass acts, since the genre always does well among local audiences.

Portland Cello Project was a desired ticket at the Manship Theatre last season. Manship discovered the band at a national convention of performers and booking agents.



The conference is a fast, convenient way for hundreds of like-minded people to network and to experience some of the hottest performance art around, says Combs. It's known for a palpable creative vibe—the result of hundreds of performance artists gathered in one place. But the event is ultimately about the business side of the arts.

“I don't know how much the average person thinks about the infrastructure behind the arts—the selection and administration and fundraising it takes to get groups on stage in your community,” says Combs. “It's sort of the backstage look at things. This kind of buying and selling is an important part of the arts. It's a business—and a lot of dollars exchange hands to make it happen.”

September inspiration

Louisiana performers will be in rich supply at the event, but one of the best known is actor Wendell Pierce, who delivers the keynote address. Famous for his role as Detective Bunk Moreland on HBO's *The Wire*, and now for playing scrappy trombonist Antoine Batiste on the network's post-Katrina series *Treme*, Pierce studied at the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts (NOCCA) and has been a champion of the region's indelible culture.

The Performing Arts Exchange also includes an exhibitors' marketplace, held at the River Center. A hub for presenters, agents and performers, the marketplace invites participants to meander through booths, discover acts and forge new relationships. Nearby, in the River Center's breakout rooms, workshops will also take place.

Combs says topics will likely include the use of social media to promote acts and venues, managing risk and fiscal accountability. Fundraising is always a big part of the educational lineup, and this year, the conference includes a panel discussion on how to attract and maintain corporate sponsorship.

But while exhibits and workshops are fundamental components of the Performing Arts Exchange, it's the juried and independent live showcases for which the event is best known.

On Thursday and Friday evenings, performers from throughout the U.S. will present back-to-back 20-minute shows. These juried showcases are selected by conference organizers from a pool of applicants prior to the event. The shows will take place at the Manship Theatre and are free and open to the public.

Gordon says it's an unbeatable opportunity to see several genres at once.

"It's one of the earliest opportunities presenters have to nail down their next season," he says. "You can see up-and-comers, great shows and sometimes even stumble onto someone undiscovered who is really fabulous."

On Wednesday, the Performing Arts Exchange will also feature independent showcases at the Hartley/Vey Theatres and in other locations around downtown. Gordon expects Louisiana artists, especially blues, jazz and zydeco musicians, will gain exposure during these showcases.

"South Arts has long had a commitment to the traditional arts in a given community," he says. "There are a lot of familiar names out there from Louisiana,

but it's also great to be able to get folks to come out and see the next round of artists."

Presenters unquestionably emerge with ideas for their own stages, but there's another byproduct of the conference as well. Presenters also begin the process of finding funding to deliver acts to their communities. Combs says she's seen many presenters find an out-of-state artist they love, then apply to South Arts for funding to help bring them to a local stage.

Jewel box

That all of the Performing Arts Exchange's main performances take place at the Manship Theatre is not lost on local organizers. Open for just six years, the 325-seat space offers top-quality design, lighting and sound and a phenomenal experience for both audience and artists.

"The Manship Theatre is a glorious venue," says Gordon. "It's a jewel box, and to be able to show it off to so many artists is going to be phenomenal."

Moreover, the recently updated Hartley/Vey Theatres, also in the Shaw Center, feature state-of-the-art sound and lighting in a space that's highly versatile.

"You've got these artists and agents coming in from all over the country and they'll be able to see the usable space for performing artists in the Shaw Center," Chatelain says. "It's a huge opportunity for us. The city will be noted as an arts center."

Gordon adds that when artists look for venues, they're looking for great spaces, hospitality and a good report from other artists. Historically, artists



"Hospitality is core to who we are. We love food, we love to party, we celebrate with music, and the opportunity to share ideas about the arts is really spectacular."

—Derek Gordon, executive director of Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge

A LEGACY OF CLASSIC ELEGANCE CONTINUES...



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Imago Theatre Zoo Zoo is among groups that perform at conventions like the Performing Arts Exchange, which will be in Baton Rouge in September in downtown. Baton Rouge's rebounding downtown was among reasons the city signed the arts get-together.



haven't known enough about Baton Rouge for the city to emerge from a crowded field.

"There are a lot of great performers who frankly have passed Louisiana by, so we're trying to create a reputation of presenting great artists in a great setting and treating them wonderfully," he says.

Indeed, that's been happening as local arts organizations have made a concerted effort to attract talent not normally associated with a market the size of Baton Rouge.

"All of our organizations are really raising the bar and, in doing that, we're saying to the country, when you come here, you're not losing access to things, you have access to the best things," says Gordon.

Nationally known jazz performers like Ramsey Lewis, Dianne Reeves and Stefon Harris all participated in the Arts Council's acclaimed River City Jazz Masters 2010-2011 season. The Baton Rouge Ballet Theatre brought Garth Fagan Dance in winter 2011. And the Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra's Irene W. and C.B. Pennington Foundation Great Performers in Concert series has brought legendary performers since 2003 like cellist Yo-Yo Ma, trumpeter and composer Chris Botti, violinist and conductor Itzhak Perlman and mezzo soprano Denyce Graves.

The city's clear commitment to expanding the arts was one of the selling points in a competitive bid process to become a Performing Arts Exchange site.

Winning them over

Gordon was instrumental in helping attract the conference.

The nationally known arts administrator had



Wendell Pierce, an actor who trained in New Orleans, is slated to give the keynote address at the Performing Arts Exchange. Pierce played Bunk Moreland in *The Wire*, which many critics declared as the best TV series in history. His lead character on HBO's *Treme* is Antoine Batiste, a trombone player trying to scratch out a living in New Orleans after Katrina.

served as president and CEO of Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York and senior vice president of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., before returning to his hometown Baton Rouge. Appointed head of the Arts Council in 2006, Gordon formed a team shortly after to bring the Performing Arts Exchange to the Capital City. It included leaders from Visit Baton Rouge, the Shaw Center for the Arts and the Louisiana Division of the Arts.

"We love the idea of coming to Baton Rouge. It's very easy to get around downtown and we love being on the river. It's a manageable size. We get lost in a big city."

—Gerri Combs, executive director, South Arts



At the Performing Arts Exchange in Baton Rouge, many of the sessions are free to the public, which can hear singers and watch dramas, such as Aquila Theatre's *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

"The process of getting the conference here didn't happen overnight," says Gordon. "It took place over a few years."

Baton Rouge submitted a host city package in 2008, recalls Visit Baton Rouge Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing Renée Areng. By then, the Shaw Center was thriving, the Hilton Capitol Center was complete and the Hotel Indigo was under way. The proximity of the arts block, the convention center and downtown hotels screamed convenience. Furthermore, the River Center was newly expanding and there were more downtown bars and restaurants than ever.

Still, recalls Gordon, the selection team was stuck on something.

"The biggest hurdle for them was that it was not going to happen in New Orleans."

But Areng says once they got organizers to come, the equation changed.

"It took a year for them to even come to do a site

tour," Areng says. "But that's when we sell Baton Rouge best, when expectations are low. They ended up being impressed by the reality. It just overwhelmed them."

Gordon says that the team pitched several points, including Baton Rouge's reputation as a political history hub, its central location between New Orleans and Cajun Country, the indigenous arts scene, including swamp blues and jazz, and the pedestrian-friendly scale of downtown.

Each of these factors helped win over the selection committee, says Combs, the lead organizer in the 2011 conference.

Areng says that local organizers were also able to show a level of personal attention and hospitality that doesn't always exist in big cities. "A conference this size is a big deal to us, and we really can give that level of service that you might not see in a place that's used to huge conferences all the time," she says. "That's where we really excel."

To business

The Performing Arts Exchange closes with a large party in the Shaw Center plaza on Lafayette Street, where all manner of actors, musicians, dancers and performance artists along with the individuals who plan shows will spill out into the street for a final night in Baton Rouge.

By then, inspiring deals should be under way to bring new art to communities around the south and eastern U.S. In some cases, theaters may have decided to collaborate and organize block bookings to make an area more appealing. Chatelain says that could happen between communities like Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Lafayette and others eager to find the best possible talent.

“Artists need presenters and presenters need artists,” says Gordon. “The truth is, we’re very dependent on each other and this conference gives us a chance to make the most of our relationships.” •

“A conference this size is a big deal to us, and we really can give that level of service that you might not see in a place that’s used to huge conferences all the time. That’s where we really excel.”

—Renée Areng, Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Visit Baton Rouge

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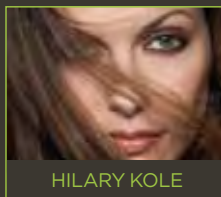
CHARLIE HUNTER



ROBERT GLASPER



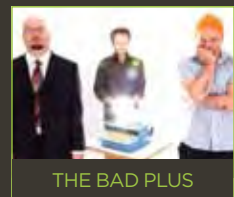
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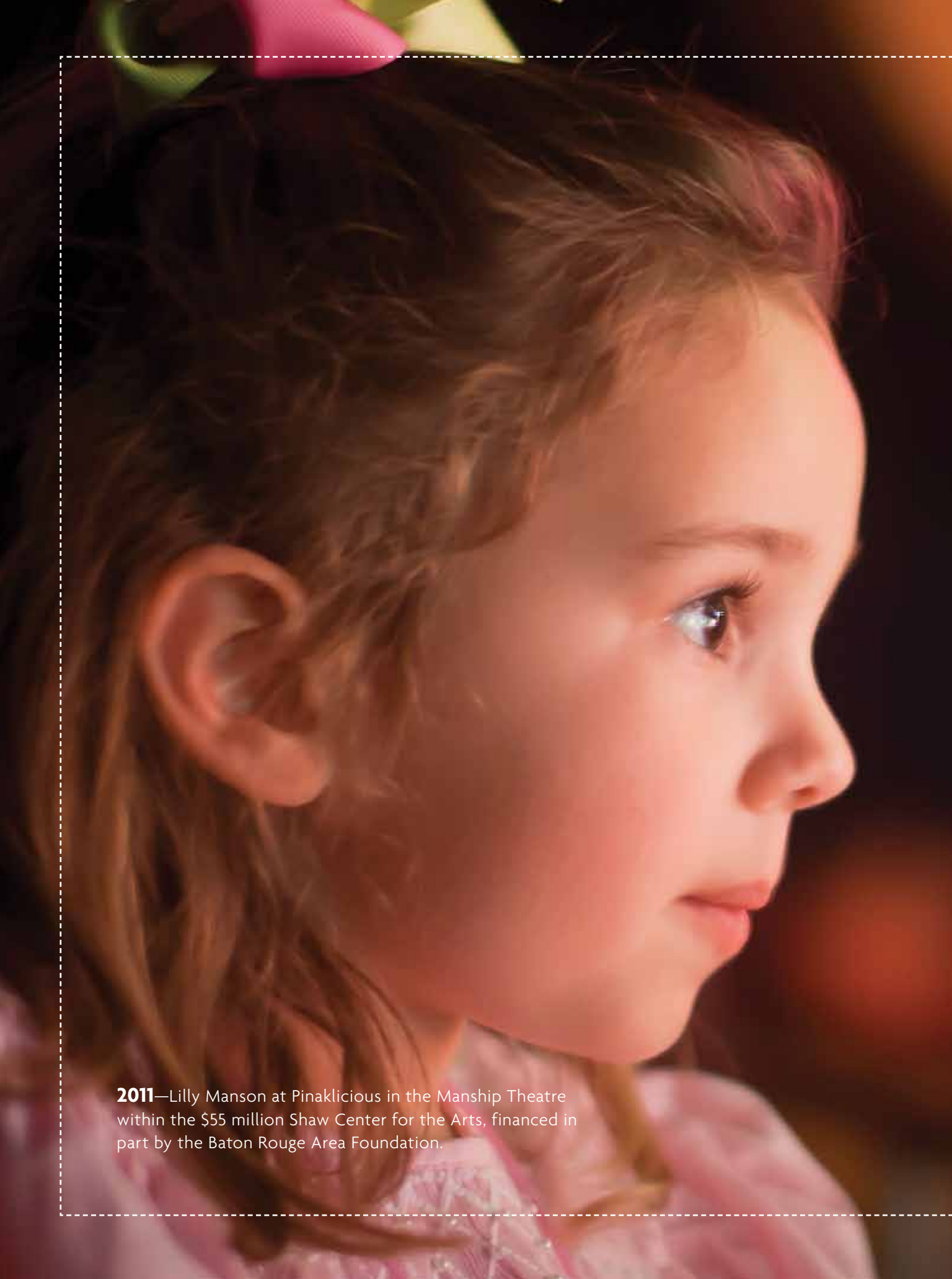
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2011—Lilly Manson at Pinaklicious in the Manship Theatre within the \$55 million Shaw Center for the Arts, financed in part by the Baton Rouge Area Foundation.

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A patchwork of hope

With scraps of past successes and an eye toward future stitches, a new tapestry for the HIV and AIDS community is being sewn in Baton Rouge and beyond.

By Jeremy Alford

Ten years ago, the Peace Corps told Susan Bergson to pack her bags for Africa. Above all else, she was to be an advocate and educator on the prevention and care of HIV and AIDS. To say she was airdropped into ground zero would be a slight understatement—at the time, more than 20 million people in sub-Saharan Africa were living with HIV, including 2.3 million children. In the year prior to her visit, an estimated 1.3 million Africans died from AIDS.

Today, Bergson is the program manager at the Louisiana Public Health Institute in New Orleans, a city that ranks ninth in the United States for AIDS cases. Among other resources, LPHI receives funding from the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, headquartered in the city with the nation's second highest rate of AIDS cases. In certain respects, Bergson went from the frying pan to the skillet when she landed in the Bayou State, where more than 75% of all new AIDS and HIV cases are diagnosed to African-Americans.

You wouldn't think Bergson would be able to draw parallels between the world's second-largest continent and Louisiana, but she can. While there's certainly a level of humanity felt when working with people faced

with such dire challenges, she says she often looks back on her time in Africa when reviewing the root causes for HIV and AIDS cases in Louisiana.

Poverty appears to be an overriding theme, but the basics are much more tangible to explain and understand. "In certain respects, it's the same. Education and access to health care," Bergson says. "The fact remains, no matter where you are, that if you get tested early enough and get on the right medications, you can slow down the progress of the disease."

Yet there is good news to embrace, kind of, especially in the Baton Rouge area. The most recent figures released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show the Capital City has dropped 10 points in the rate of local AIDS cases. Still, it's not enough to prompt a celebration from the likes of Bergson. "Not to be a downer, but these new statistics are a bit misgiving," she says. "The rate has actually remained pretty steady and Baton Rouge remains second in the nation. This is not a time to relax."

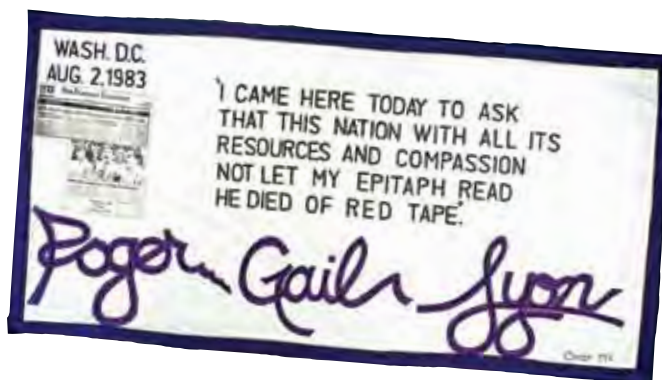
New idea

It has been almost 30 years since the first documented report of HIV and AIDS appeared in a jour-

nal called *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. And since then, community partners and non-profit groups have been looking to the government for assistance—and often finding themselves wrapped up in the red tape of bureaucracy. Or, even worse, as victims of budget cuts.

Roughly one year ago, the Louisiana Office of Public Health stopped accepting new clients for its AIDS Drug Assistance Program. It allowed low-income residents to access treatments and health care. Hundreds of cases have been turned down in the state as a result and, as citizens wait for assistance, at least one group has stepped up with answers.

It's called the State Healthcare Access Research



cure, networked database of information and consumer data. Such programs allow case managers and providers to securely store patient and doctor information and supporting documentation.

While state officials say they're receptive to the ideas, the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals has been focusing its latest efforts on out-

“In the period of October 1980–May 1981, five young men, all active homosexuals, were treated for biopsy-confirmed *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia at three different hospitals in Los Angeles, Calif. Two of the patients died. All five patients had laboratory-confirmed previous or current cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection and candidal mucosal infection.”

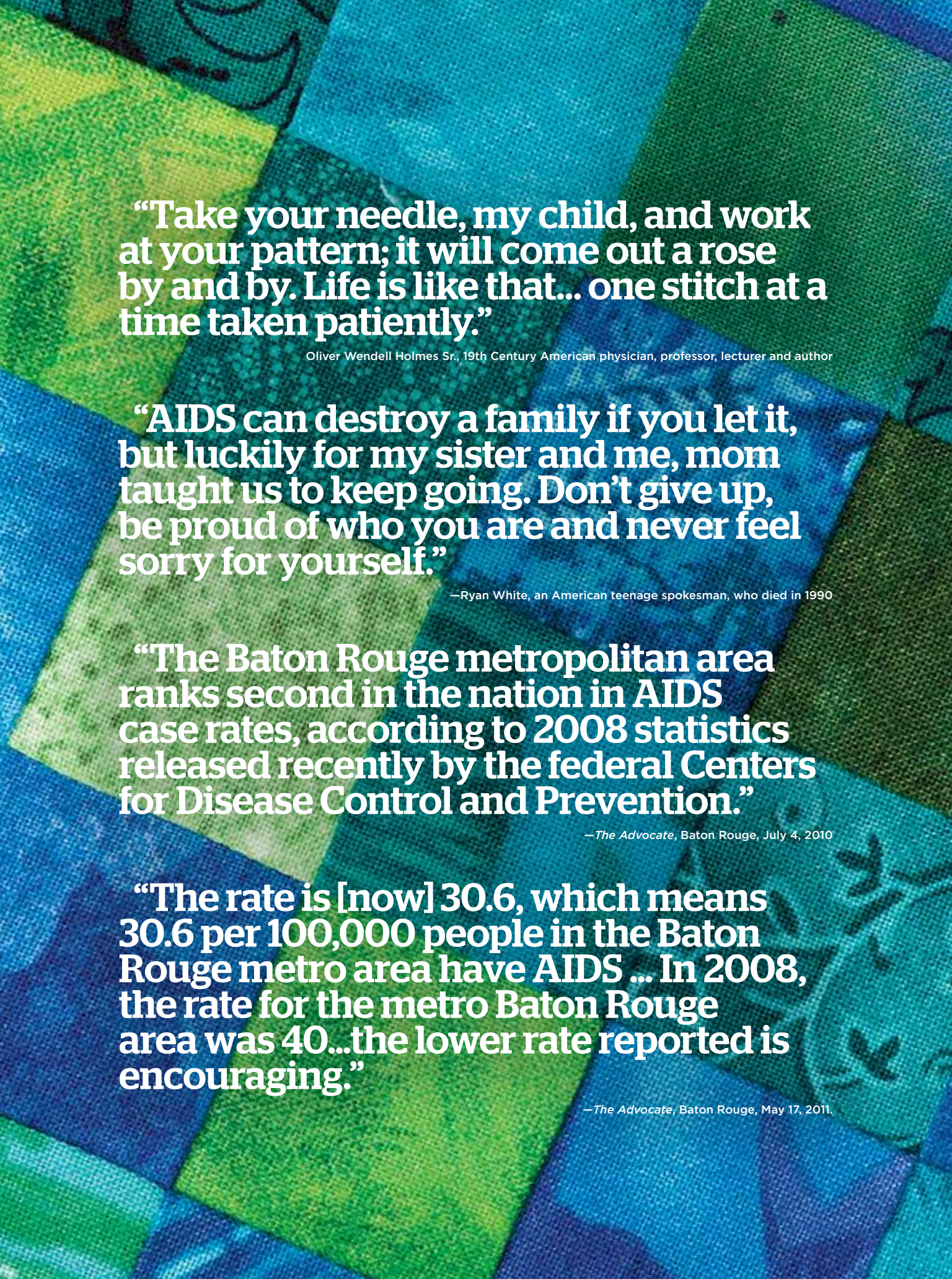
—Dr. Michael S. Gottlieb, identifying HIV and AIDS cases for the first time in the June 5, 1981, edition of *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Project, a joint venture between the Health Law and Policy Clinic of Harvard Law School and the Treatment Access Expansion Project. It recommends that the state pursue an HIV waiver for its Medicaid program, expanding eligibility to include pre-disabled individuals living with HIV.

A report by the joint venture has also asked the state to deploy coordinated Patient Assistance Program application software that maintains a se-

reach. For example, during the most recent Bayou Classic in New Orleans, the state offered no-cost HIV screenings to African Americans, who make up 32% of the state's population, yet represented 75% of Louisiana's new HIV cases last year.

More African Americans in Louisiana are infected with HIV than any other racial or ethnic group, reflecting a national trend. “If people with HIV have the virus diagnosed early, they are able to receive



“Take your needle, my child, and work at your pattern; it will come out a rose by and by. Life is like that... one stitch at a time taken patiently.”

—Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., 19th Century American physician, professor, lecturer and author

“AIDS can destroy a family if you let it, but luckily for my sister and me, mom taught us to keep going. Don’t give up, be proud of who you are and never feel sorry for yourself.”

—Ryan White, an American teenage spokesman, who died in 1990

“The Baton Rouge metropolitan area ranks second in the nation in AIDS case rates, according to 2008 statistics released recently by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.”

—*The Advocate*, Baton Rouge, July 4, 2010

“The rate is [now] 30.6, which means 30.6 per 100,000 people in the Baton Rouge metro area have AIDS ... In 2008, the rate for the metro Baton Rouge area was 40...the lower rate reported is encouraging.”

—*The Advocate*, Baton Rouge, May 17, 2011.

End of AIDS?

Thirty years after it was discovered, a breakthrough could end AIDS, but getting it done will require much work. Scientists have discovered that AIDS drugs are more than therapeutic. They also stop the transmission of the disease, meaning that HIV infected people could stop transmission if they begin drugs early and remain on the antiretroviral therapy. A report in *Lancet* says deploying this strategy would peak at \$22 billion in costs worldwide by 2015, but the amount would drop thereafter with fewer cases. A key is getting tested early and regularly.

treatment and care in advance to delay the onset of AIDS,” said DHH Secretary Bruce D. Greenstein. “Early diagnosis also gives us the opportunity to provide outreach and education, helping those with HIV better understand how they can avoid spreading the virus to others.”

Louisiana’s federal partners, though, have not embraced every section of the new report. It suggests that Louisiana’s Congressional delegation should co-sponsor the National Black Clergy for the Elimination of HIV/AIDS Act, a bipartisan bill that would authorize \$50 million in grants each year from 2010 to 2014 for public health agencies and faith-based organizations to conduct prevention and testing activities as well as outreach efforts. To date, the delegation as a whole has yet to sign on.

That has created a gap for others to fill, like ViiV Healthcare, a collective of pharmaceutical companies that oversee initiatives in Louisiana and elsewhere. It recently launched a \$50,000 annual grant program for groups specifically focused on reducing disparities in HIV/AIDS linkages to care and treatment among African Americans and Latinos in the Bayou State.

It’s all about putting money in the hands of those on the front lines. “Grassroots organizations know what their communities need,” says Bill Collier, ViiV Healthcare’s head of North America. “They have innovative ideas and knowledge required to succeed, but may lack adequate financial resources.”

So far, ViiV funding has been used to add mental health counseling, train individuals in care, incorporate culturally appropriate resources and increase testing.

No rest

For Bergson, a New York transplant via Africa, it’s an encouraging trend to see the state attempting to ratchet up its outreach and corporate America underwriting nonprofit efforts. But it’s not enough. “If we want to continue lowering the rate in places like Baton Rouge, there has got to be more testing,” she says. “People need to have themselves tested for HIV and AIDS as they regularly do for cholesterol or any other condition.”

On the horizon, Bergson says she hopes to see

Louisiana’s stakeholders attach themselves to the growing national trend of advertising safer sex alternatives and even abstinence. “It has become a situation that requires prevention,” she adds. “That, and providing adequate health care.”

Additionally, efforts to improve health care must begin with a firm understanding of the state’s limited resources and the importance of philanthropy. Geographic disparities are on Bergson’s list as well, since people with AIDS and HIV living in urban areas have better access to transportation and care than those in rural areas. Faith-based groups need to chip in, too, and should learn to work around the stigma associated with testing.

It’s a tall order to fill for folks in South Louisiana, who were just recently cheering the decreasing rate of AIDS in places like Baton Rouge. But, more than anything else, Bergson’s to-do list should serve as a reminder that this deadly disease takes a firm grip on humanity no matter where you live. “We can’t rest on our laurels. We have to keep pushing,” she says. “The new stats are encouraging, but the pressure isn’t off. We still face a monumental challenge.” •



Minding criminals

LSU professor explores rise in EBR crime, offers solutions.

By Mukul Verma

Edward Shihadeh knows when it's safe to venture into a dangerous area. Go out in the morning, he says, when even the most dangerous places become relatively peaceful because criminals have done their business and gone to bed.

An LSU professor in the sociology department, Shihadeh has been studying crime for decades, giving him a knowledge that is valuable in East Baton Rouge, where murder rates are near record levels. In an interview conducted before Mayor Kip Holden named Dwayne White as his new police chief, we asked Shihadeh about crime in the parish and some potential solutions.

Why should people who don't live in crime-ridden areas even care about crime?

For two reasons: One, high crime rates give a city a bad name that frightens away investors. Remember the old saying, "There's nothing more scared than a million dollars." For a potential business investor in Baton Rouge, there's nothing scarier than Baton Rouge's murder rate, which is nearly the highest in the country. Fewer investors mean fewer jobs, fewer

opportunities and less tax revenue, and that harms the city. It also means more of our children will eventually leave in search of better opportunities.

Also, though you may live in a low-crime area, you actually spend only a small portion of your day there. Most of our work, play, shopping is conducted outside our immediate neighborhood. That means, in a high-violence city like Baton Rouge, you spend a significant amount of time exposed to crime. And if not

you, then a family member or kin will be out there, circulating near high-crime places. Can you be sure that, at the next parade or festival, a stray bullet won't hit a loved one? The old notion that "crime is that other group's problem" won't be of

much comfort at the funeral. It's time we bring down the rate of crime in Baton Rouge.

You have studied crime and criminals in considerable detail. Can you share some pieces of knowledge about crime that will help us understand it, such as the root causes of crime?

Since we all have the basic propensity to commit crime, it's helpful to understand what makes us not

27%

SAID THEY WERE VICTIMIZED BY CRIME IN 2010, UP FROM 25% IN 2009. CRIME IN OUR SURVEY IS DEFINED AS MONEY OR PROPERTY STOLEN, PROPERTY VANDALIZED, HOME BROKEN INTO, CAR STOLEN, PERSONAL ATTACK OR PERSONAL ASSAULT.

SOURCE: CityStats Survey

commit crime. Look at kids playing in a day care; often one child will walk up to another, bang him on the head and steal his toys. That kind of behavior among toddlers is begrudgingly accepted as part of that phase of life.

But that same behavior among adults is a violent crime that will net you jail time. On the path to adulthood, we remove from that child any propensity for behavior that our society finds unacceptable. We do that by connecting children to social institutions—family, school, church, sports programs, the military and so forth. These are the institutions in which we teach children to do acceptable things.

But when a child is not connected to any of these social institutions, they are what I call “floaters” who live an atomized, disconnected existence. Because they are not connected to us or our community, we cannot alter or modify their behavior. They are the adult version of that under-socialized toddler, but far more dangerous. Think about it: when was the last time a violent offender in Baton Rouge did not fit the description of a “floater?”

Baton Rouge’s murder rate is among the highest in the nation. Can you give reasons why the murder rate has spiked in recent years?

We derive enormous benefits from being near a great city like New Orleans. But with all the good from New Orleans, there is some bad, namely, the ridiculously high rate of violent crime. Until 2005, Baton Rouge successfully resisted the spread of crime from New Orleans. But Hurricane Katrina blew a lot of things our way: along with a lot of good people looking for relief, some bad influences came this way as well.

By bad influence, I refer to the criminal culture that infests parts of New Orleans. In effect, Hurricane Katrina transmitted the New Orleans criminal culture to Baton Rouge. For evidence, look at how criminal culture has changed in Baton Rouge; we now see the “code of silence” that is indicative of gang culture. Running shoes are being hung from utility wires, indicating territorial fights that are common to street gangs. And crime is not just higher in Baton Rouge; it’s getting more ruthless.

Also, I suspect that we have more floaters in Baton Rouge today than in the past. One reason is our

lack of funding and lack of commitment to schools. Schools are the main institution by which children are connected to society. It’s no coincidence that in the entire country, Louisiana has the worst schools and the highest violent crime rate. Our two major cities, New Orleans and Baton Rouge, together



are hands-down the most violent cities in the nation. On the other hand, look at Texas; they collect ample property taxes to support their schools and educate their kids and, as a result, their crime rate is lower.

How does the high murder rate affect our community?

In addition to creating the economic problems I’ve mentioned, high crime rates also generate fear. Fear of crime is debilitating and it lowers the quality of life. It causes people to retreat into their homes, buy more guns, get noisy dogs and light up their yards like prison compounds. It’s no way to live.

Could you tell us which police departments are among the best in the country and what sets them apart?

New York City has done an admirable job in lowering crime. They’ve done so—in a variety of ways. One way was to invoke a zero tolerance policy toward any kind of illegal activity, even the small stuff. The idea is that if you write the small tickets, you’ll end up writing fewer big tickets. That means ticketing and fining people who litter or who violate city noise ordinances or who allow their grass to grow too long.

In other words, New York has something we don’t: a culture of enforcement. Along with that, we need to

give the police more resources to accomplish that job. I know the public mood is “no-taxes-please,” but you can’t get something for nothing. We need to fund and empower our public servants to do the job.

What abilities would you seek in hiring a police chief?

We have plenty of superb cops in Baton Rouge. But our new police chief has to be more than a great soldier. Our new chief must be a General. By that I mean the police chief must be able to administer his army by bringing information and human resources together with some notion of timing. In other words, we need someone with executive talent like the CEO of, say, Honda or Google. The police chief needs to be receptive to information/intelligence about the spread of crime in Baton Rouge and then implement a tough policy to wrestle crime to the ground.

Some cities have managed to reduce their crime rates even during a recession. What are they doing right? Give us some ideas on strategies that might work.

Recognize that crime takes place only in about 5% of a city’s territory. With that in mind, we must coordinate our police deployment disproportionately in those areas initially. Later, when the serious stuff is better under control, we can implement a zero-tolerance policy like that of New York City. We should revive Baton Rouge’s Operation Takedown of the 1990s. This was a police initiative where law-enforcement would cruise in high crime areas at night looking for two things: People with guns and drugs out on the street, and abandoned/dilapidated housing that would later be torn down. I have the data to show that initiatives like this really work.

Get school hours in Baton Rouge in sync with adult work schedules. Right now, our kids have to rise at a

ridiculously early hour for a 7 a.m. report time and they leave school at 2:30, only to be unsupervised for several critical hours before parents return from work. Bad idea, since a lot of youth indiscretions take place in mid-afternoon when they are not supervised by adults.

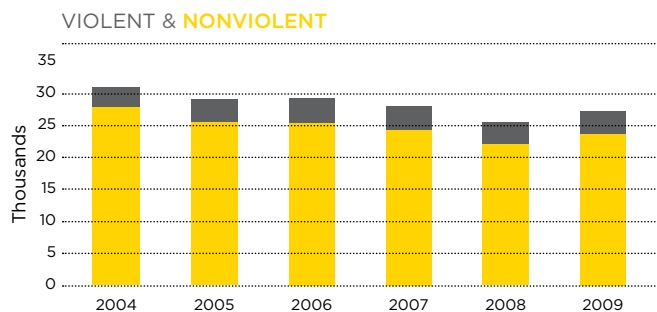
District Attorney Hillar Moore has a great initiative whereby he holds parents responsible for their child’s truancy. I support any initiative that strengthens a child’s connection to school. I would like to see that idea expanded. For instance, when a teacher recognizes that a child is having problems in school and requires a conference with the child’s parent, that parent or guardian must show for the meeting or face legal

sanctions. Again, I support initiatives that connect children and their parents to school.

Community improvement is crucial. In the 1990s, Boo Thomas led an initiative to revitalize the area around the Baton Rouge General off of Florida Boulevard.

With modest funding, her group helped to spruce up houses in the area. In the meantime, her group approached slumlords and directed their attention to the improvements going on around them. They challenged slumlords to clean up their act. I was hired to measure the result. Before they started, one out of every 40 robberies in the city took place in that area. After five years, one out of every 400 robberies took place there. I also measured the crime in the surrounding area, and it dropped slightly as well. In other words, crime was not simply bumped to another area, it was actually reduced.

The bottom line is that crime can be reduced. Many cities have done it successfully. For starters, let’s prevent 20 or 30 of the murders from occurring in a given year in Baton Rouge. At least that would get us off the bad list for crime, not to mention save lives. •



Violent crime in Baton Rouge has been relatively unchanged. Total crime declined from 2005 to 2008 but rose again in 2009.

SOURCE: FBI



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Sean Simone created SeNSE to ignite entrepreneurship.

Monitor

Sense and possibility

A nonprofit is platform for budding entrepreneurs, other nonprofits.

By Maggie Heyn Richardson | Photos by Frank McMains

It's Pitch Night in Baton Rouge and about 125 people have gathered at The Lyceum on Third Street to network and hear new ideas from the Capital City's young entrepreneurs. The crowd is comprised of twenty-somethings and business veterans all networking over cocktails and finger food. The show starts.

One by one, the founders of three would-be companies take the stage and present their business plans. They explain their concepts, their target markets, growth strategies and capital needs. The crowd listens intently and so does the panel of experts there to provide honest and specific comments to each presenter.

"It's really valuable to get that kind of feedback," says Sean Simone, founder of the Baton Rouge nonprofit SeNSE, which organizes Pitch Nights. "By the end of the event, you know if you're ready or not." So far, SeNSE has held nine Pitch Nights in the last two years, providing a forum for 25 new and existing companies to share and hone their latest inspirations.

Open mike night

“Pitch Nights” aren’t new to Baton Rouge. Nationwide, they’ve become a popular forum for a new generation of entrepreneurs and social idealists to share start-up concepts in rapid-fire fashion. Ignite is one of the best known, and it inspired SeNSE mentor Michael Trufant and founder Sean Simone. Launched in Seattle in 2006, the organization holds social gatherings during which innovators share ideas for business and social change in five minutes or less using slides that must advance every 15 seconds. The event’s tag line sums it up: “Enlighten us, but make it quick.” More than 200 Ignites have been held throughout the northwest and around the country. In February 2011, Global Ignite Week took place in 63 different domestic and international cities, during which hundreds of innovators shared ideas both real and conceptual.

Pitch nights have also become accessible, engaging tools for drawing youth, especially girls, into the realities of entrepreneurship. The San Francisco-based science and technology nonprofit, Iridescent, holds an annual Technovation Challenge in which girls from diverse backgrounds with little experience in technology learn how to create their own mobile app prototype. After a crash course in inventing, computer science and business basics and with help from industry mentors, participants compete in a national Technovation Pitch Night in the spring. The winning team is awarded professional development for the winning app and distribution on the Google Marketplace. The program was formed in 2010 and now takes place in New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Mountain View and Berkeley, Calif.

GiftMeo is one. Founded by LSU alumnus Michael Angle and LSU senior Martin Roth, the company builds on the concept of group gift-giving, the best example of which may be parents pitching in for teachers’ gifts cards. GiftMeo removes the manual retrieval of donations and gift cards with a new technology platform that also takes advantage of social media and its crowd-rallying abilities. Now tenants at the Louisiana Business and Technology Center, GiftMeo’s founders perfected their idea after presenting at a SeNSE Pitch Night. The company has secured about \$375,000 in seed funding and officially launched in summer 2011.

Simone says GiftMeo is proof of an exciting, local start-up scene among young entrepreneurs in Baton Rouge that’s gaining traction, but which still needs to be fostered. Simone founded SeNSE in 2009 to give these innovators an evolving forum in which to share ideas, connect with mentors and obtain feedback from respected sources to shape their concepts.

“It felt like there needed to be open space where this group could gather and where other people could find them,” says Simone, 22, who refers to the organization as a “watering hole” for entrepreneurs.

Simone founded SeNSE because, as an entrepreneur, he couldn’t find a central gathering spot for people like him in Baton Rouge. The Mandeville native is described as having boundless energy and a passion for business. By the time he was a sophomore at LSU, he had started a janitorial company and was trying to get into the biofuels business using sugar cane as feed stock.

Casting about for mentors, Simone connected with entrepreneur, activist and former Baton Rouge resident Michael Trufant. The two began discussing the start-up scene in Baton Rouge and what it lacked. Both men were compelled to convene all those interested in “going through the chute,” of launching a business idea.

“We said, ‘Hey, we really need a place in Baton Rouge for entrepreneurs that’s edgy and leaderless and that can meet people at different stages,’” Trufant recalls. “But it would also be the type of thing where, when somebody gets off a plane in Baton Rouge and says I’m an entrepreneur and where do I go, they’d connect with this group. We knew we needed to build the pool, and build the attitude and the desire.”

Trufant shared his experiences in co-founding A6, a decentralized group that took shape following a Baton Rouge Area Chamber canvass workshop to Austin.



Michael Angle pitches the idea of GiftMeo to a group at SeNSE. His company secured funding for a website that lets people network to give gift cards.

The group amassed hundreds of like-minded members and pushed several local social and policy issues. It struck a chord with Simone, who had recently completed Seth Godin's *Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us*, and was chewing on the concept of being an influential, action-oriented leader rather than simply one who inspires.

Simone and Trufant pulled in Terry Jones, who now leads the Regional Innovation Organization (RIO), and the group began to consider what a grassroots organization aimed at entrepreneurs would actually do. Based on the belief that Baton Rouge was full of ideas waiting to bubble to the surface, they decided to start with Pitch Nights. Trufant wrote a personal check to rent the Reilly Theater and Simone spread the word through his networks.

"We had no idea if people were going to attend or not," recalls Simone.

About 100 showed up, and plans for another Pitch Night were soon under way.

At that point, recalls Simone, SeNSE was fully formed and at a crossroads: remain an LSU-based organization or expand and serve the entire city.

"That was a really important decision for us—and expanding to the whole city definitely turned out to be the right one," Simone says. The organization has partnered with Southern University, Baton Rouge Community College and the Louisiana Technology Park. By summer 2011, it was up to 395 members, including entrepreneurs looking for advice and capital and investors looking for good ideas.

The group has also held themed pitch nights, such as a recent event devoted to social enterprise. Nonprofit organizations like O'Brien House presented projects that can earn a profit while also meeting the agency's social mission. O'Brien House gleaned feedback on its program, Plant it Forward, which puts recovering addicts to work in a self-run landscaping business.

Along with Pitch Nights, SeNSE holds coffee shop meet-ups to discuss how young entrepreneurs can grow their businesses. Evening workshops sometimes take place at local restaurants on topics like "conscious self-leadership" and the art of communicating.

Trufant says the real value is something intangible. Young men and women drawn to opening their

own businesses don't have to feel like they're alone. Moreover, their level of professional experience doesn't matter.

"My vision is that wherever you are on the continuum you bring value to the play," says Trufant. "We needed a place where everyone could come regardless of area of expertise and where they're likely to take risks because they're not alone. This is different from a one-day bank seminar or a big institution that, frankly, moves too slow."

Mentors have been a crucial part of the organization's composition. Entrepreneur Emanuel F. Valencia, 39, founder of the company CMO Accelerator, and the new arts and culture initiative, 300Seats, has been a regular participant in SeNSE events. He agrees that the group's dynamism comes as a result of bringing together like-minded enthusiasts who draw inspiration from each other's experiences—good and bad.

"SeNSE is making it so that there's a continuous discussion around entrepreneurship," says Valencia. "You have access to people who might be at any given time starting or failing or starting again. All of these stages are important to learn from. It becomes its own ecosystem."

In the midst of launching and growing SeNSE, Simone started a new business, BluReach, a web development and marketing firm housed in the LBTC Student Incubator, which he describes as profitable and thriving. He and his partner Trevor Reeves are part of a new generation of Baton Rougeans excited to apply their start-up passion to the Capital City and who don't feel pressure to move away for meaningful work. And while they still hear frustrations among 20-somethings about a perceived lack of opportunity, Reeves and Simone say they flatly disagree.

"We don't have time to complain," says Reeves. "We surround ourselves with people who are doing things. Yeah, the bellyaching is there, but there is a lot of hopefulness. I think that everybody sort of wants the same thing." •

"We surround ourselves with people who are doing things. Yeah, the bellyaching is there, but there is a lot of hopefulness. I think that everybody sort of wants the same thing."

—Sean Simone, SeNSE

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Alarming sea rise

Scientists predict sea level rise. A couple of years later, they are proven to be too cautious. Newer evidence reveals seas are rising faster than expected.

This predict-revise cycle popped up again in spring, when scientists working for the international Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program reported glaciers and ice caps are melting at an accelerating rate.

Coupled with other factors, such as expanding oceans under warmer climates, AMAP researchers predict seas will rise by 35 to 63 inches by the end of the century. Four years ago, the U.N.'s scientific panel on climate change had estimated the rise would be 7 to 23 inches.

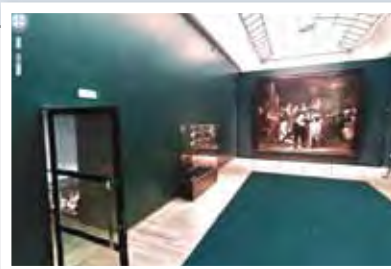
This upward revision should alarm Louisiana, where unprotected coastal areas would either wash away or turn to soft mud under such a rise. With a higher water table, land also would flood more often. Untold billions in investments—roads, homes, businesses—would disappear.

As a response, the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, on a request by U.S. Sen. Mary Landrieu, is creating a model for an organization that would provide knowledge and guidance to coexist with rising seas around the world. Our work has been guided by state and worldwide leaders, both scientists and elected officials. We expect to deliver a plan before the end of the year. (For a story about the Water Institute, see 2Q Currents at BRAF.org under the News navigation.)

Look in here

Google StreetView is going inside.

Providing panoramic images of U.S. streets, the service has started to venture inside buildings, showing what it's like, for instance, in museums. Users click on the door of a building to step inside. Google used cameras mounted on cars to document street views. The same technology—multiple cameras catching overlapping images that are stitched together by computer—is being used to deliver images of interiors.



Top: Rembrandt's painting *The Night Watch* in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Bottom: The Coronation Room of the Palace of Versailles, France

Data:

235.39

Total tons recycled by LSU in April. The university recycled 57% of its waste, with 110 tons in cardboard/paper, plastic containers and aluminum cans.



FISSION FRICTION

Nuclear power is promoted as a clean alternative to coal. Not in Germany, where Chancellor Angela Merkel released a proposal to replace all 22 of the country's power plants with renewable energy by 2022.

The government estimates consumers would spend about \$50 more per year because of the switch, but doesn't include its own cost of transitioning. The plants produce 11% of the country's energy.

With subsidies, Germans have been among the most aggressive in deploying solar energy. Wind power, solar power and energy efficiency are expected to bridge the transition from nuclear. The country shut down eight of its oldest reactors after the Fukushima nuclear disaster.

Money in brine

Albemarle Corp., based in downtown Baton Rouge, has created a technology for extracting valuable lithium from brine, playing into the shift toward more gadgets—cars even—using the chemical for batteries.

Albemarle says the market for lithium chemicals is expected to grow to \$1.2 billion annually by mid-decade. The firm is in excellent position, as some of its plants produce brine.

Using this new technology and brine from its bromine production facility, the company has successfully produced lithium carbonate in a lab setting and is currently operating a pilot plant to optimize the process. Commercial production could begin as early as 2013.

"Over 70% of the U.S. demand for lithium is currently met by imports," said Sharon McGee, Albemarle VP of performance chemicals. "There is certainly a need for more domestic production with the growing market demand and Albemarle is encouraged that we will be able to meet that need."

Cool jacket

Leaving India's blistering summers should be a small cause for celebration. But not when the destination is Massachusetts' teeth-chattering winters. Suffering these extremes, MIT foreign student Kranthi Vistakula has invented a lightweight air-conditioned jacket.

His breakthrough and award-winning technology uses Peltier plates, which turn cool on one side and warm on the other when an electrical charge is forced across the junction of two different metals. Because of this effect, a Peltier plate can double as the basis of a heat pump.



Vistakula deployed many Peltier plates within lightweight plastic tiles to heat or cool the jacket, depending on the direction of the current across the plates. The outerwear weighs a little more than one pound and operates up to eight hours on a battery charge.

Returning to India, the inventor established a company to produce the jackets, which are in testing with the Indian Army in harsh environments

like the Siachen glacier, the world's highest battlefield. Vistakula has integrated the technology into helmets, gloves, wraps, car seats and shoes. Sales are about to begin at <http://www.dhamainnovations.com>.



Rocket revolution

A radical idea received the green light in spring, setting up the possible reinvention of the rocket engine.

Approved for funding by the European Space Agency in June, the Skylon could become a replacement for the retiring U.S. Space Shuttle. The key difference among them is the engine.

Skylon doesn't need the shuttle's enormous fuel tanks filled with liquid hydrogen and oxygen. Instead, the engine would extract oxygen from the atmospheric gases, then compress and burn it.

With the technology, the aircraft becomes significantly lighter and, more important, has fewer parts, reducing the chance of failure.

The reusable Skylon would be cheaper to operate and reduce the cost of hauling space cargo. When the space plane will fly is not known. Test engines are under development.

Murderous maps

In some municipalities, the cops make their information difficult to use, giving up only the bare minimum under state laws. Trulia.com is letting the sun shine in.

On the web, the firm that provides house information to prospective buyers and window shoppers has begun to publish crime data, beginning with 50 cities that include New Orleans, the only Louisiana city so far.

Trulia.com makes it easy to see types of crimes and where they are committed. Users can search down to an address. The company wants people to know before they buy a home, which could cause a stir among real estate agents and elected officials, who may ultimately hear it from property owners if house values drop.

Trulia gathers its data from existing sources, CrimeReports.com, EveryBlock.com and SpotCrime.com. By dropping it on a map, Trulia identifies the most



dangerous intersections and offers times when crimes most often occur. Armed robberies, for example, happen most frequently around 10 p.m., while reports of property theft spike at 6 p.m. when people return from work and find their homes have been burgled.

Affirming the technology

Sanofi, a multinational drug company, and venture capital funds that include the Baton Rouge Area Foundation have invested in a Baton Rouge-based firm that has a promising cancer drug in human clinical trials.

Esperance Pharmaceuticals, located in the new Louisiana Emerging Technology Center at LSU, has received \$7.5 million to support further clinical development of a drug that seeks and latches onto cancer cells and kills them with a piggybacking poison. Sanofi put up \$4.5 million; the rest of the funding was from Louisiana Fund 1, Themelios Ventures, Research Corporation Technologies and Advantage Capital Partners/Louisiana Technology Fund, as well as private investors.

“Esperance has made great strides over the last few years building an impressive, proprietary technology platform with broad-based application and bringing forth strong therapeutic candidates to its pipeline,” said Joseph F. Lovett, Esperance chairman and managing general partner at Louisiana Fund 1. “I am pleased to continue to be part of the progress moving forward and I believe the caliber of investors involved



in this syndicate, particularly Sanofi, is a significant accomplishment for Esperance and speaks to the strength of the growing biotech community in this region.”

EP-100, the lead drug candidate, is currently in a Phase 1 study in patients with advanced solid tumors to determine toxicity at different doses. In addition to EP-

100, Esperance has other drug candidates in preclinical stages based on its technology, which offers a mechanism whereby drugs bind to surface antigens or receptors that are only found in cancer cells, then unleash toxins to implore them.

Dr. William Hansel of the Pennington Biomedical Research Center came up with the idea for the technology and

worked with scientists at LSU to develop it. If drugs from the technology reach the large market for cancer treatment, LSU would get significant royalties, though the parties have not revealed potential amounts.

The Foundation was an early investor in venture capital funds that have invested in promising Louisiana technology firms.

App for the OCD

You can track your every move using an application created by Nicholas Feltron, an exceptional graphic designer who has reported minute details about his life in annual reports.

Working with Ryan Case, another designer, Feltron (Feltron.com) created Daytum and a related website that lets you input just about every detail of your life: How much coffee you drank each morning; which books you read during a week; how many tomatoes you harvested from the backyard garden. Data can be produced as infographics to chart life.

Seeing its clever appeal among navel gazers, Facebook purchased Daytum. Feltron, meanwhile, is a bit wealthier but less forthcoming, at least about his work with Facebook.

HELLO...
DAYTUM HELPS YOU COLLECT,
CATEGORIZE AND COMMUNICATE
YOUR EVERYDAY DATA.

Solar works



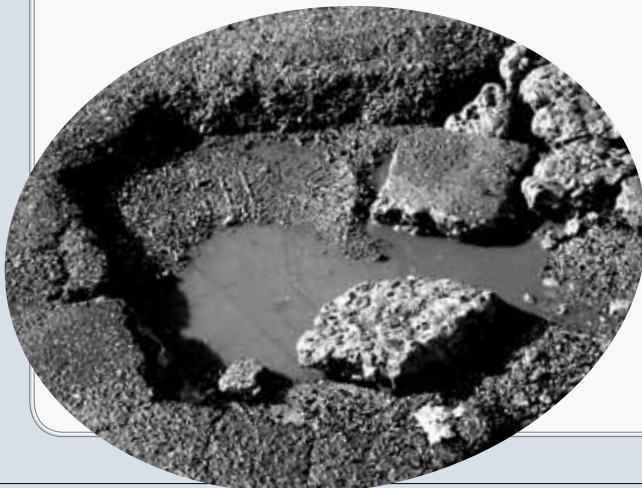
In our last issue, we wrote about Adam Knapp's solar installation in his Garden District home. Eighty percent of the system's \$37,000 cost was picked up as tax credits by federal and state governments. So how's it working out for him?

"On the electric portion of our bill, we have saved 93% on average for the first three months since installing solar," says Knapp, who is CEO of the Baton Rouge Area Chamber. "Interestingly, we had put a number of energy efficiency improvements into

our old house before installation and were surprised to find that we had also saved significantly on our total bill, including gas, which we use for heating. We've saved an average of 73% on the combined bill. We used 85% less gas during January through March.

"If these savings rates hold fairly constant, the payback period from the savings on our total bill should take five years for the costs of both solar and energy efficiency improvements."

Bump and send



A mobile application that requires little effort can be used to target potholes.

Developed by the city of Boston, Street Bump collects pothole data from smartphones. Sensing a jolt while motoring, the app uses GPS to mark the spot as a potential pothole and transmits the information to the department of public works. DPW waits for additional verification from other Smart Bump users before sending crews to confirm the existence of a pothole. A previous app required users to photograph the pothole and send the image to the city.

To improve the Smart Bump app, the city is offering a \$25,000 reward through Innocentive.com, a marketplace for crowdsourcing innovation.

Boston has an active civic app program. Residents can report graffiti and other nuisances using smartphones.



Warren Smith is 65 years old. He'll tell you that he's been a dairy farmer for every day of those years. Until last month, when an explosion shut down his family's Smith Creamery.

Because of two charitable funds at the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, we were able to raise thousands of dollars from generous people and grant it quickly to the Smiths.

They know that starting almost from scratch won't be easy. But the family from Mount Hermon wants to return to the Red Stick Farmers Market, where they sold their very first gallon of milk, where they met so many people who now call them Warren and Sandra.

Please help the Smiths and other farmers who face difficulties beyond their control.

Donating is easy and tax-deductible at www.breada.org/donate.



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Less than 365 days of living in Louisiana and she's holding back the tears. Something about here, maybe the way the people come together, has linked the woman with a movie star name to this place she has found.

How she moved here is not unusual. Her husband, Michael B. Victorian, wanted to study law where he was born, and Roxi Victorian came along.

Wanting to find her people, she tried out for dance company Of Moving Colors. At 29, Roxi believed she was too old to be picked, even though she had been dancing almost daily since 10 and had earned degrees at North Carolina School of the Arts and Howard University. She was chosen.

What to do next? Believing Hip Hop is misunderstood, Roxi proposed a festival to the head of the Manship Theatre, who told Roxi to make it go, and off Roxi went.

Recruiting dancers and other artists, she created Baton Rouge Hops, which will have its August debut at the Manship Theatre. Over two days, there will be DJ battles, fashion shows, graffiti competitions, poetry readings, master classes, singing, dancing.

"Bring your coolest self," says Roxi Victorian, "and have a ball."

—Mukul Verma

Roxi Victorian, atomic particle

FRANK MCMAINS



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