CONGRATULATIONS NABJ
FROM WJLA-TV ON YOUR 30th ANNIVERSARY

We’re proud that NABJ founding members Maureen Bunyan and Sam Ford are part of our news team.

abc7 NEWS
on your side

WJLA-TV/Df WASHINGTON, DC
Telling the stories of the storytellers

Early on the morning of August 29, 2005, while the last of thousands of Gulf Coast residents were fleeing a storm called Katrina, I and a handful of journalists headed south down Interstate 65 – directly into the mouth of the killer storm.

Looking back, months later, I had to ask, “What were we thinking?”

Speeding past Mobile and merging onto I-10, it started to become real. Too real. Around us, trees were snapped like dry spaghetti. In Ocean Springs, east of Biloxi, we pulled up to the bridge that linked the two cities, hoping to cross. We couldn’t. It was gone.

As we made our way into Gulfport – the two earlier exits into Biloxi were also washed away – we dodged downed oak trees straddling the main road. When we finally made it to the Sun Herald’s plant on DeBuys Road, barely a block from the beach but protected by the railroad tracks, we were stunned to find the building relatively intact.

The next 72 hours were pretty much a blur. We worked 12-18 hours each day, slept on the floor of the newsroom, ate peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for dinner (and lunch and breakfast) and, well, don’t ask about the bathroom situation.

We were there to help the our colleagues cover the tragedy and publish the our colleagues cover the tragedy and publish the paper — we never missed a day in print — but we ended up eyewitness to the most devastating natural disaster in our nation’s history.

Black journalists were among those first responders. In addition to the extraordinary team there with me in Biloxi that first week – Mike McQueen of the Macon Telegraph, Mizell Stewart, formerly of the Tallahassee Democrat, Cathy Straight of the St. Paul Pioneer Press, Cynthia Daniels of Newsday, Audra Burch of the Miami Herald — there were scores of others spread out from New Orleans to Houston, Gulfport to Galveston, Baton Rouge to Pascagoula.

That next day, I was able to shoot out a short email update note to members at 6:06 a.m. Tuesday morning, Aug. 29:

While New Orleans has been getting most of the early attention, let me tell you that the real story is here in South Mississippi, which absorbed the full force of Katrina on as it veered east of New Orleans. The devastation is overwhelming. Homes have gone, roads destroyed, infrastructure in shambles. At least three staff members from the paper here have lost their homes...

What we saw yesterday was horrific, much worse than when I covered Hurricane Hugo in Myrtle Beach more than a decade ago. Because Katrina was so huge, it will likely dwarf the damage from even Hurricane Andrew that hit Miami. This is bad, real bad.

The devastation WAS overwhelming. Everywhere one looked, there were mounds of twisted lumber just yards away from where homes once stood. And each one of those broken houses – now represented by a vacant foundation and a pile of debris– symbolized a life, a child, a family who had evacuated, was now homeless or in a shelter or, worse yet, dead.

Their stories needed to be told. That was the job of the hundreds of television, newspaper, online and radio journalists who went into harms way those last days of August.

As you read this edition of the NABJ Journal – telling the stories of the storytellers – remember the sacrifices your colleagues made to bring the nation and the world the words and images of Katrina. Remember, too, the pain of those journalists, students and NABJ members who lived and worked in the region – many of whom are now displaced, homeless, without a job or a paycheck. (We have already begun sending out the first wave of relief checks from the NABJ Katrina Fund. You can still donate at www.nabj.org)

And there are still more stories to tell. NABJ members will be going back down to the gulf region soon – through grants from the NABJ Media Institute Gulf Coast Fellowships – to continue telling the stories of those who lives are now forever altered by the storm of all storms, Hurricane Katrina.

Let me send special thanks to NABJ vice president/print Ernie Suggs and marketing and publications manager Maria Newman for all their hard work and sacrifice in making this journal happen so quickly. And let’s not forget NABJ secretary Sarah Glover for compiling all the great photos, Copy Editing Task Force chair Diane Hawkins for the diligent editing of the magazine, and all those who contributed to making this edition happen.

Finally, let me thank all the brave reporters, editors, photographers, correspondents, technicians and engineers who went into harms way to tell the stories.

Your journalism matters.
Creating our future, one member at a time

Happy 2006!

NABJ has reached an important milestone as we culminate our 30th Anniversary. Our members understand that it is because of NABJ, our founders, and our mission that many black journalists have the opportunity to serve as anchors, writers, editors, and professionals in the media.

In a recent conversation with a member, I was asked to what I attribute members joining NABJ. Could it be convention related? Perhaps that is one factor. Could it be the opportunities to network with other black journalists? Conceivably that could be a factor as well. But I am convinced that it is because of the hard work of NABJ’s most-valued members whose infectious excitement about NABJ has caused others to join this powerful organization. And, I am sure you will agree that these are not the only reasons.

It is NABJ’s advocacy role and commitment to diversity in newsrooms. It is the professional development opportunities NABJ offers through its Media Institute, convention and regional conferences. And, it is the many job opportunities offered through NABJ’s Jobs Online and annual career fair.

Currently NABJ is nearly 4,000 members strong. But we can be stronger! More members mean an increased ability to continue what we do best: fight everyday to open doors for black journalists at every level and to serve as a watchdog of the media.

Consider this: When former Meredith Corp. media executive Kevin O’Brien remarked: “We can’t right all the wrongs of the Civil War; we’ve got to quit hiring all these black people,” your NABJ was right there, condemning the comments and lauding the Meredith Corp. for his firing. It was more than just a racist comment; the statement was a symptom of a thought process that prevents African-Americans from obtaining jobs they deserve.

And when a Las Vegas weather forecaster at KTNV substituted the racial slur “coon” for the last name of Dr. Martin Luther King, as the nation celebrated his 76th birthday, your NABJ was there to hold the television station accountable. The weathercaster was later fired.

The bottom line is that we will continue to be the watchdog of the media. We will praise when necessary. We will challenge media policies that hurt job prospects of black journalists and bigoted reporting that unfairly portrays our communities.

As we enter into a new year, our goal is to become 5,000 strong by September 2006. But we can’t do it without our members. We need you. We need you to continue to be our eyes and ears, and we also need you to encourage others to take this NABJ journey with us.

On February 1, we will launch a new member-get-a-member campaign: “Creating Our Future…One Member at a Time.” We need each member to recruit one new member. We need you to bring back those pioneer members who feel that they’ve outgrown NABJ. We need their sage advice and guidance to mentor those who want to walk in their shoes.

There is a new energy surrounding NABJ. Our advocacy has resulted in our being invited into newsrooms with managers to have frank discussions about diversity — representing the views of our members is our passion. And there is strength in numbers. The more members we have, the more power and influence we have. So, I encourage you to build on our past accomplishments and help create our future. Recruit a new member today!
Returning to ink on paper

During my tenure as NABJ's Region IV Director, I grew quite fond of e-mail as my major mode of communicating with the Region. Some might say I used it too much. But my great friend and mentor, Sidmel Estes-Sumpter, while she appreciated the e-mails, always longed for the paper. Sidmel is old school. She wanted something she could pick up. Something she could feel.

I must say, that in my three years as Regional Director, I was never able to produce a paper newsletter or regional journal. But that doesn't mean I wasn't listening to Sidmel.

So when President Monroe asked me to guide the direction of the NABJ Journal, I jumped at the opportunity. While the world and most of us live and breathe by e-mail and the Internet, doesn't it feel good to go to your mailbox, pick up the NABJ Journal and casually read it?

That is our goal.

Starting with this issue, we are committed to publishing the NABJ Journal, come rain or shine, every quarter. I have committed to that schedule and I am looking for you, the members of NABJ, to help me. As you glance through this issue, you see that I have tried to tap as many members as possible, all from diverse disciplines; to help put together this issue.

Sarah Glover, of the Philadelphia Inquirer, served as our picture editor and gathered a crack team of shooters to fill our pages with images of one of the biggest stories of all of our lives, Hurricane Katrina.

Willie J. Allen Jr., Monica A. Morgan, Andre Chung, Jason Miccolo Johnson, Carl Juste, William Philpott, Brandi Jade Thomas, Dick Tripp, Paul Warner and cartoonist Ron Rogers' graphic images, told the stories visually that our team of reporters told through their words.

Steven Gray, Cindy George, Cynthia Daniels and Errin Haines, all members of the next great generation of young journalists, provided eyewitness accounts of the devastation, heartache and poignancy left in Katrina's wake.

Tammy Carter and Lawrence Aaron, both acclaimed columnists, looked at the role of the black journalist in this crisis and the role of being black and how that had an impact on the coverage and recovery afterwards.

Our students also got involved in the coverage, through the Black College Wire and The Black Collegian, links of which are provided on these pages.

Speaking of students, Student Representative Mashaun Simon takes us "On the Yard," to catch up with what NABJ's vast and important student body is doing.

Jerome Thompson, my colleague at the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, gave us a primer on the exciting world of 3-D imaging, an area where he is quickly becoming one of the country's foremost experts.

Perhaps my favorite piece in the whole issue was my sit down with Nekesa Mumbi Moody to talk about what she does as an entertainment writer for the Associated Press.

We also take time to pay homage to two giants that we lost – Rosa Parks and John H. Johnson.

Oralandar Brand-Williams, who I sat next to for seven hours as we covered Mrs. Parks' funeral, penned an excellent tribute and shares with us her unique experience of knowing the legend as a family friend and covering her as a reporter for the Detroit News.

And Lyn Norment, managing editor of Ebony Magazine gave a rare photograph and a rarer glimpse into the life and legacy of Mr. Johnson.

Diane Hawkins, Lamar Wilson and Michael K. Watts read everything to make sure it sounded right and putting it all together was Maria Newman, NABJ's Marketing & Publications Manager.

There is still much more to be done for our upcoming issues. We will be adding features, recruiting more people to help us and continuing to refine this great product and resource.

But this is going to be your magazine. If you have ideas, suggestions, letters to the editor or comments, please let us know. If you want to write, shoot or illustrate, let us know. I can be reached at suggse@bellsouth.net and you can catch Maria at maria@nabj.org.

We look forward to hearing from you.

So, to Sidmel and the entire NABJ family, I hope you enjoy this. And I’ll see you all next quarter.
catching up with...

Nekesa Mumbi Moody

On writing, Michael Jackson, purple dressing rooms and wet fingers

As the music writer for the Associated Press, Nekesa Mumbi Moody is always where the action is. Since 1992, she has been a newswoman with the AP, first in Albany, N.Y., and for the last seven years in the Big Apple, she’s interviewed everyone from Britney to Diddy to Madonna, and covered everything from the Grammys to the MTV Awards to the deaths of Aaliyah and Luther Vandross to the trials and tribulations of Michael Jackson. Between it all, Nekesa, a 1992 Barnard College graduate has developed into one of the finest music writers in the country. In the midst of cooking some spaghetti and meatballs, she told her story to Ernie Suggs.

**Journal: How did you get in the business?**

_Nekesa:_ I worked on my high school newspaper. In college I did more activist stuff and during my sophomore year, I was president of a black women’s group. But I decided I wanted to do something different and get back into journalism, so I got an internship at the Times Union of Albany. The Associated Press office was upstairs and I asked if they wanted me to freelance when I went back to New York - but they told me instead about their minority internship program. I took the test, got the internship. I went back to Albany for six years and worked as a general news, woman, in broadcasting, supervising, re-writing, I covered state politics, news, West Point football, state basketball championships with Stephon Marbury, Elton Brand and Ron Artest. But I always had a real love of entertainment.

**Journal:** What was your first entertainment story?

_Nekesa:_ My first feature was Brandy. I did it over the phone, because most people weren’t coming to Albany. The more features I did, the more I enjoyed it. At the same time I loved editing. I became a national editor in 1998 and moved to New York. I honed my editing skills there and continued to write entertainment stories. People joked that I was the black entertainment writer for AP. Around 2000, our music writer, who had been there for 40 years, retired. I applied and got the job.

**Journal:** Why entertainment?

_Nekesa:_ I’ve always loved entertainment, but not just the music or the movies, the business part of it. I knew who the president of CBS Records was when I was a kid and read Rolling Stone and Vanity Fair. I thought it would be fun to be an entertainment writer. Still, I didn’t get into the business saying I wanted to get into entertainment. Especially in Albany, which is not a hotbed of entertainment.

**Journal:** What makes you good at what you do?

_Nekesa:_ I think I know how to ask the right questions and know how get the most revealing or interesting nugget of information for my story. I make my subjects comfortable enough to talk to me, but not in a buddy-buddy kind of way — maybe like a therapist! My focus is on storytelling and revealing as much about what makes a person tick as possible. I don’t always do the most popular person. But if I do, I want to make it interesting, I am not interested in who’s dating who, or the more gossipy stuff. Everyone has a really good story to tell. Hopefully, when you read my story, you will get something different.

**Journal:** Who is tough to interview?

_Nekesa:_ Beyoncé is a hard person to interview because she is so media trained. She is smart and is not going to reveal if she had a fight with Jay-Z or is even dating Jay-Z. Others are more natural, they don’t censor themselves or think about what their answer will look like in print before they talk. Those are people who I love to interview.

**Journal:** Who was your favorite interview?

_Nekesa:_ Prince. I went in there, thinking he would be talking with hand signals and aloof. But he was so open and willing to talk about different things. He was much more conscious than I anticipated — and candid and frank. It was just us, with candles in a purple dressing room. We spoke for almost two hours — and it only ended because the concert was drawing near!

**Journal:** Who do you want to talk to that you haven’t?

_Nekesa:_ I have done two of the 80s trio Madonna and Prince. If I can do Michael Jackson, it would be amazing. I am a huge Michael Jackson fan, but at the same time, I would have to write critical and analytical stories about his stuff. Even if you like somebody you have to be objective and look at it through another eye. Once you become a music writer, all that fandom goes outside the window.

**Journal:** Okay, so tell me the Fiddy story.

_Nekesa:_ 50 Cent was probably my most unusual. We talked about all of his bullet wounds and at one point, I could see his cheek and I asked, ‘Is that where the bullet went?’ He gets up and goes to the bathroom. I see him in there running water and asked him what was he doing. He comes out, he takes his finger, wipes it off and puts it in his mouth. He wanted me to feel where the bullet went. I was a little disgusted, but in a warped way, kind of flattened — I mean, of all the fingers in the world, he picked mine! But it was definitely kind of weird. I can’t imagine Terrell Owens or President Bush putting his finger in their mouth.

**Journal:** That was pretty weird. Let’s move on. A lot of students that I meet often tell me that they want to be music critics. I bet you get that a lot.

_Nekesa:_ I think they think what I do is fun. They know who the president of CBS Records was when they were 10 years old. But the key to being a good music writer is not knowing all of the minutiae, but knowing the good stories. I know who to focus on. Who the acts are. That is what I pride myself on. I have covered System of a Down, Dolly Parton, Willie Nelson, Luciano Pavorotti. I knew the right questions to ask at that right moment. I don’t think that you need to be a specialist in a certain genre. I had a good time at the CMAs.

**Journal:** Do you ever find yourself star struck?

_Nekesa:_ No. I never ask for a picture. Never ask for autograph. The moment you ask makes them assume you have admiration and awe of them. I don’t want them to think I am a fan.

**Journal:** How long do you see yourself being a music writer?

_Nekesa:_ I always wanted to be in entertainment, features or even sports. I don’t like hard news while there’s good stories to be told, there are too many depressing stories that in the past have really weighed heavily on me. I once covered the funeral of a 7-year-old girl who was raped and murdered. I don’t want to cover that stuff anymore. When I am able to talk one-on-one with someone, whether it’s Madonna, Lil Jon or Shakira, I usually leave enlightened and energized, and that’s a blessing in any field.
Goodbye, Mother Parks
Civil rights icon will be sorely missed as friend of reporter’s family

BY ORALANDAR BRAND-WILLIAMS
THE DETROIT NEWS

Mrs. Parks died in her Detroit apartment Monday, Oct. 24, just five weeks before the 50th anniversary of her historic act of civil disobedience on an Alabama city bus on Dec. 1, 1955. Her actions that day gave rise to the modern civil rights movement, which eventually led to the dismantling of segregation laws throughout the country. Her decision to ignore the demands of bus driver James Blake to give up her seat so that a white man could sit there unleashed an unbridled spirit of determination among black Americans who long ago had grown weary of being treated like second-class citizens by their fellow countrymen.

Mrs. Parks’ decision not to back down from a possible arrest that day helped bolster a strong black middle class and an abundance of black doctors, lawyers, judges, college professors and even journalists in America.

Rosa Parks’ legacy and death has resonated with me a lot in the past month and a half since her passing. My reflection of her life is on many levels, but most notably a personal one.

Mrs. Parks was not only a civil rights icon whose life I often covered as part of the Diversity and Race Relations beat for The Detroit News. Mrs. Parks also was an old family friend.

As I sat in the sanctuary of Greater Grace Temple in Detroit covering the seven-hour-long funeral for Mrs. Parks, I was at times taken with my own grief over her passing.

I thought of the gentle-spirited woman whose decision to make a defiant and bold stand against an unjust system of Jim Crow laws in the South made it possible for me and other African Americans to realize our dreams.

I also thought of the quiet and unassuming woman who always came to our westside Detroit home with a warm smile and a helping hand.

Mrs. Parks was one of the first people who greeted my family as we arrived in Detroit in March 1963. We came north on a Greyhound bus seeking safety and refuge from the White Citizens Council and others like them in Greenwood, Miss. My mother was a civil rights activist. She was among a small group of blacks in Greenwood who worked with the NAACP and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in an effort to gain voting rights for blacks in our small southern town.

My mom had met Mrs. Parks years earlier in the south during the early years of the civil rights movement. Once we arrived in Detroit, Mrs. Parks came to my mother’s aid. She did so by calling her friends and others to help the “woman from Mississippi” and her children get clothed and settled.

Over the years, Mrs. Parks was a frequent visitor to our home. She always came with kind words and sage advice about staying in school. Years later, when I graduated from high school, I sent Mrs. Park an invitation to the graduation ceremony. She came and created quite a commotion among my high school friends who couldn’t believe that Mrs. Parks was there.

I graduated from the University of Michigan and became a journalist and years later, Mrs. Parks became the focus of many of my stories. The years passed, and my mother’s talks with Mrs. Parks became less frequent because of her many travels and advancing age. But she always stayed deep in our hearts and our prayers.

In the few weeks since Mrs. Parks’ death, I can’t help but think about the old adage that life sometimes goes full circle.

As an 8-year-old growing up in a working class neighborhood of Detroit, I never would have imagined that my love of books and words would someday lead me to become a news reporter at a major daily newspaper. I also would never have imagined that the sweet and quiet-spoken friend of my mom would become the subject of many of my articles.

When I covered celebrations honoring Mrs. Parks, I always maintained a professional tone with her. Once my stories were filed, I always thought back to the soft touch she had with me and my siblings. I thought about how lucky I was to have such a great woman in my life as a child.

Thank you, Mrs. Parks, for encouraging me to follow my dreams. Thank you, Mrs. Parks, for being the person you were.

Thank you, Mrs. Parks, for demonstrating the value of quiet strength and dignity. Thank you, Mrs. Parks, for showing us the importance of humility. Thank you, Mrs. Parks, for illustrating the necessity of leaving one’s comfort zone to make an impact on the world around us.

Thank you, Mrs. Parks, for leaving a legacy that is a constant reminder of the importance of sacrifice. Thank you, Mrs. Parks, for sharing your spirit with us all.

The 1948 General Motors bus on which Rosa Parks was arrested was acquired by Henry Ford Museum and displayed in 2001 at an event to mark the 40th anniversary of Rosa Parks’ arrest.

In the Montgomery Sheriff’s Dept. booking photo, Rosa Parks remains resolute after being arrested.

Mrs. Parks smiles as she rides the bus on which she protested to mark the 40th anniversary in 1995.
Rosa Louise McCauley Parks
1913 – 2005

Mrs. Parks chats with then first lady Hillary Clinton in 1995.

Mrs. Parks was presented with the Congressional Gold Medal on June 15, 1999, for her courageous act.
The Eye of the Storm

BY TAMMY L. CARTER
NABJ REGION III DIRECTOR

When Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus in 1955, she jumpstarted the Civil Rights Movement. At that time, however, there were few – if any – black journalists working at white media companies to cover one of the biggest events of the era.

Fifty years later, Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast, displacing most of the residents of New Orleans. Another major event had occurred, but this time dozens of black reporters were sent to cover the big story. Whether they were reporting, anchoring, shooting video, taking photographs or producing news segments, black journalists were there, not on the sidelines as in decades past.

They came representing the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, the Baltimore Sun, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, the Detroit Free Press, the Associated Press, CNN, Fox, ABC, NBC, CBS and other media companies. They reported from New Orleans, Biloxi, Miss., Gulfport, Miss. and Houston. Their reports brought food and water to the survivors, reunited families and led rescuers to those trapped on their roofs.

Because 65 percent of New Orleans residents are black, the role black journalists played in covering Hurricanes Katrina and Rita was even more significant. This time we were there to tell our own story, just as the 44 NABJ founders intended 30 years ago when they started this organization. Our dream is no longer deferred.

Though the storms have passed, the story is far from over. As Louisiana and Mississippi officials attempt to repair their coasts, many of their citizens remain homeless. The water finally has drained from New Orleans, but the city still is in critical condition. Families have been separated, businesses closed, and services stalled. Though politicians are trying to remain positive, the future of New Orleans remains dicey. Many of its citizens already have decided not to return.

As this story continues to unfold, black journalists will continue to follow it. They will continue to provide thorough as well as sensitive reports. They will continue to ask tough questions. They will continue to hold government officials accountable.

Most important, they will continue to prove what our founders knew all along: Black journalists are an exemplary group of professionals who honor excellence and outstanding achievement.
After the storm, going back home
BY STEVEN GRAY

Last month, when I was sent to Louisiana to cover Hurricane Katrina’s aftermath, relatives who’d fled New Orleans before the storm’s arrival made two requests: “Be safe. Check on the house.”

I’d reported from all over my hometown, yet hadn’t seen my 70-year-old grandmother’s house in the Lower Ninth Ward. So early one morning, I drove my SUV between military checkpoints and crossed the Industrial Canal into the neighborhood my family settled in nearly a century ago after selling large tracts of land in St. Bernard Parish. Over the decades, the neighborhood had become a prideless, crime-ridden eyesore. But the post-Katrina scene was worse than I’d expected: Floodwaters had lifted cars from driveways onto the “neutral ground,” as New Orleanians call the patch of grass between lanes. Trees had been pulled out by wind or been killed by water that rushed in from Lake Pontchartrain. Homes had been knocked off their foundations. And the few homes that remained were slathered with a grayish mud that strangely glistened in the sunlight. Streets were eerily silent, covered in a thick, greenish mud. It was otherworldly.

Driving along Caffin Avenue, near Grandma’s house, my SUV began spinning in mud. For several minutes, I was trapped. I panicked.

There was no way I could reach Grandma’s home.

Yesterday, however, my parents finished the job, returning to New Orleans for the first time. The water had receded. At its peak, the water had reached the 10th step leading to the second floor of grandma’s house. A portrait of my great-grandmother, fair-skinned with sharp Native American facial features and long black hair, was missing from Grandma’s salon. A portrait of Grandma done before Brenda Joysmith became Brenda Joysmith was destroyed. “I can’t explain how painful it was, seeing that,” my mother told me, as I boarded a flight from San Francisco back to the Midwest. As my mom and dad searched the house, my mom’s cell phone rang. It was Grandma, calling from my uncle’s suburban Dallas home. Inside one of her favorite coats, Grandma’s house, was a bundle of cash. Turns out the coat had fallen off its hanger, to the closet’s floor. In various pockets were bundles of $20 bills, bound by rubber bands. The total amount: $2,000.

Sad, that’s about all that can be salvaged from Grandma’s house. Hurricane Betsy’s floodwaters nearly destroyed it in 1965. Grandpa, then with six kids, quickly rebuilt it.

It’s safe to say he won’t, this time.

Poverty, racism and now a hurricane
BY ERIN HAINES

I’ve seen cotton before. But never stretched across so many miles of landscape, never as such a dominant feature in a town, of a people. In the Mississippi Delta, I saw bales and bales of cotton: stacked along two-lane highways, jostling in tractor-trailers, strewn on the side of the road like lint.

About a month after Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans and the Gulf coasts of Alabama and Mississippi, I asked my editors to send me to a story I thought we’d missed: the Mississippi Delta. It was a gamble, since the area suffered no physical damage from Katrina. But I wondered, “What happens when people ask for help in a place that can barely help itself?” My editors decided they and readers might be interested in the answer, too.

I’m black and from the South. Seeing that much cotton has a way of making people like me uncomfortable. I thought of black people, my people, stooped over those bushes, sacks slung over their bent backs for hours.

But this wasn’t 50 or 100 years ago. It was a few weeks ago. People younger than my mother are still picking cotton here, for $5.15 an hour, and they would have all year.

I found Ila Rae and Doyle Watkins enjoying the breeze on the porch of their Leakesville, Miss., home. This is rural Mississippi, where they are glad to welcome me to sit with them. They and their cat, Boots, have been getting by with a generator hooked to their motor home in the driveway. She’s 81 and a retired teacher, and he’s a 78-year-old retired truck driver.

On the radio, some banks have announced they’ll be open on Labor Day and local Social Security agents are trying to get first-of-the-month checks out on Monday. It’s been a week, and there’s still no mail service in these parts. Officials are beginning to offer emergency food stamps, home play out of the Big Easy comes from the United Radio Broadcasters of New Orleans, who seem to come from different stations possibly owned by different companies. Mississippi listeners are calling stations in Hattiesburg, and Mobile, to ask if their work places will be open on Monday or Tuesday. Some power crews don’t have hotel rooms and little to eat. There’s also information about shelters and feeding centers.

Down the road in the county outside Leakesville, state prison inmates in white T-shirts and green-and-white striped pants are the laborers who load water and ice as vehicles pull up in an empty field across from Greene County High School. A man pulls up with packs of Black and Mild cigars and asks the burly man in charge if the fellows can have them. The man says yes.

I’m in southern Mississippi to see how people are faring inland.

Driving the narrow roads along the Mississippi River on the Mississippi-Louisiana border, it was hard not to think about what a hopeless situation my people here must be in. There were no jobs, there was no training, nothing new had
been built in some of these places in my lifetime. And now there are more mouths to feed.

When I stopped in towns like Waterproof, Tallulah and St. Joseph in Louisiana or Midnight, Miss., the reactions I got from people ranged from suspicion to desperation to indifference to optimism. Yes, people are poor, and they know it. But they loved their small town charm. They are rich in so many other ways. By the time I left, it was usually much harder for me to feel badly for them or to wonder why they stay around.

Poverty there is like the Mississippi: strong, touching everything and overwhelmingly brown. I left with a story, but few answers, hoping someone smarter than I am is working on a solution – and that I can report it while they do.

Not a savior, but a reporter
BY CYNTHIA DANIELS

To some, I appeared as a savior — the only one who could bring relief to an ever-dismal situation. To others, I was a connection to the outside world. Yet to myself, I was simply a reporter — one of many sent to Mississippi’s Gulf Coast to cover the destruction Hurricane Katrina left behind.

Katrina was my first national assignment, my first hurricane assignment and my journalistic test. Could I find the stories, report them and file them, all the while working without a functioning cell phone or laptop and living with no bed, no running water and little food?

I arrived on the Coast the Tuesday after Katrina hit. Along that 60-mile strip, I discovered miles of foundations lacking their luxurious homes; storefronts without the stores behind them; families who slept in cars because there was nowhere to stay; children who went days without a drink of water; areas riddled with so much devastation it was hard to decipher where a house once stood.

Each morning, I set out determined to find people’s stories and families’ plights that I could tell our readers. Each day, I moved past the devastation, the rancid smell of dead bodies and the tears, to report. I looked past the fact that I had never seen anything like this in my life and I crafted stories that will serve as a testament of this national crisis.

It was my job to tell the story. And I, along with my colleagues, did just that to the best of our ability. So many people thanked us, praised us, said “Without ya’ll they would have no idea what happened to us.” They wanted to return the favor.

We brought light to a dire situation and for that we should be proud. I was.
Patricia Money prays during Sunday Mass at Our Mother of Sorrows Catholic Church in Biloxi, Miss. Sunday, Sept. 4, 2005.

Brandi Jade Thomas/St. Paul Pioneer Press
Black was the dominant color left behind after Hurricane Katrina slammed New Orleans. It took several days, however, for the national press to report on race as an element necessary for understanding the story. Damaged levees sent flood waters coursing through the city’s streets that first week in September. Flushed into the sunlight were the byproducts of centuries racial politics that had festered, barely seen, in New Orleans’ neighborhoods.

To visitors fueling the city’s $5 billion tourism industry, New Orleans was the painted-face party girl, a little ditzy and frayed at the edges, but always ready for a good time. Hidden from view were the now-flooded neighborhoods where one-third of the city’s residents lived below the poverty line. These people were in no way ready for the natural disaster and manmade negligence that unmoored their lives. Subsistence level income was the rule rather than the exception. Now they are torn between establishing new lives in the communities where they’ve landed or trying to go back to a city that would rather move on without them.

For 2006, Mardi Gras may be scaled back a bit, but visitors and residents can count on cavorting in the French Quarter and other parts of the city Feb. 28. Come hell or high water: Laissez les bons temps rouler. It’s uncertain whether the February elections will take place. Mayor Ray Nagin is running for another term. As of late November about 80 percent of the city’s black residents had not returned from the 41 state they’ve drifted to. The 67 percent black majority is no more. Absentee ballots are not likely to be distributed to them very aggressively. Numerous, but not strong or rich enough to save themselves from being overpowered, black New Orleanians are being encouraged to rebuild their lives permanently in the safe havens they have found elsewhere.

Homes in the black areas are either flattened, or if still standing, dangerously contaminated with mold and filth. Areas are on flood prone land that would need levees higher and stronger than the ones that failed. Only an intense organized movement can preserve any rights they may claim. The Congressional Black Caucus faces heavy opposition to the comprehensive bill members authored and introduced Nov. 2. It includes the right of return and a victims’ compensation fund for the Hurricane Katrina evacuees.

Hundreds of thousands may never go home again to New Orleans and the familiar gumbo that doesn’t taste right anywhere else. Still unanswered are questions about mortgages on unlivable homes, insurance settlements on property the city may condemn. Homeowners with uninsured homes, which is about half the destroyed housing stock, may have no choice but to sell to developers. Still unsettled are allegations that the black Ninth Ward and other low-lying areas were deliberately flooded out.

When Katrina arrived, the media hit the ground running. Intent on wrapping up stories on deadline under difficult circumstances, they grabbed the obvious images of fleeing, flooding, looting and chaos. Those initial reports left the damning impression that the black residents stayed in town to take advantage of the five-finger discount. Indeed some were seen running off with TVs and nonessential goods. But let’s remember those who took Pampers and other essentials were beginning to understand that they would be without food and water for an unknown peri-
od. It took a few days for the national media to get off the looting and address the obvious: Why are the people in the worst, most squalid, most vulnerable situations all black?

Initial reports did a disservice, labeling blacks as looters while describing whites in less damning terms. The reporters, editors, producers and their crews went for the easy story, not appreciating the complexity of what they were seeing and ignoring in their early reports the level of stress the survivors were experiencing.

To their credit, however, once media people realized that FEMA, the mayor, the absent president, Bush, the governor and the police were not serving the interests of those people, they looked for and wrote about the governmental failures responsible for the huge holes in the safety net.

The embodiment of the attitudes that created the problem was Michael Brown, the unqualified FEMA director appointed by the president. Then it took the president days to go to the stricken area. When he arrived, he declined to face the suffering black masses at the Superdome and Convention Center. His mother, Barbara, the compassionate one, dropped a bombshell full of elitist let-them-eat-cake disdain for the masses of compassionate one, dropped a bombshell full of elitist let-them-eat-cake disdain for the masses of dark-skinned victims of disaster. The African-Americans were stuck. The vulnerability of survivors varied in direct proportion to their poverty. The more money they had the more options available. The same will hold true for those trying to get back home. Every aspect of the hurricane, the shelters, the evacuation, the emergency response, the reconstruction, relocation and recovery can’t be understood completely unless race, class and wealth are factored into the discussion. Heavy use of eminent domain, authorized in a congressional bill to create the Louisiana Recovery Corp. would create new barriers for residents trying to return. The condemnation provision was removed, but there will be plenty of opportunities for government to steamroll property owners for the sake of developers. They are poor, scattered, disorganized and unsure whether their chances or survival are better away or back home.

New Orleans is at a crossroads. Oh, yeah, the tourist town can be rebuilt, all right. But race relations in the South may take longer. Decades of building better race relations in the new South may prove to be just a sham. Planning for the new New Orleans means strengthening the levees, restoring the water and utilities, rebuilding businesses, big and small, and welcoming back the African-American working poor residents who should be returned closer to New Orleans in temporary housing. Without a lot of outside help, dispersed residents will be squeezed out. In addition to Congressional Black Caucus and NAACP Legal Defense Fund efforts, the Brooklyn, N.Y. — based Association of Community Organization for Reform Now – or ACORN, has shown some savvy in organizing for the long battle ahead. Operation PUSH is mobilizing to keep residents interests on the front burner.

This story has many more chapters still to be written. Given the media habit of reaching prematurely for a happy ending, it’s essential to stay on top of this before rebuilding and recovery plans are cast in concrete, shutting out black and other poor residents while billion dollar contracts are handed out. The same forces that created chaos for Katrina’s survivors – race, color, ethnicity, money, and self-interest – drive every decision to be made about the future of this treasured and unique American city.

Lawrence Aaron is a columnist for The Record in Bergen County, N.J.
Carl Juste/Miami Herald
FDNY Alfred Benjamin staggles out of building 911 after he and others gain control of the fire. New Orleans and New York City Fire Departments responded to a fire in the French Quarter (911 Burgundy Street). No one was hurt and no one seemed to be in the building at the time. The cause of fire was yet determined at the time.

André Chung/Baltimore Sun
A corpse is marked and left for retrieval at Carrollton Ave. near the I-10. As residents try to return to their homes they drive by the horrible aftermath of the storm. New Orleans continues to cope with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. As the water recedes in some areas of the city, bodies are stranded on sidewalks. In other areas, residents who lost their homes camp out in open areas on higher ground.

Through the fire...through whatever comes what may...a mother finds time to share a kiss with her son after being rescued from New Orleans and settling down in their temporary housing at the Astrodome in Houston.

Courtesy of Monica A. Morgan
Through the fire...through whatever comes what may...a mother finds time to share a kiss with her son after being rescued from New Orleans and settling down in their temporary housing at the Astrodome in Houston.
After being rescued from his home by boat Brian Gayton cries for his grandmother that he lost during Hurricane Katrina in the Ninth Ward district on Tuesday.
The disaster double-whammy

Back-to-back storms bring the Black College Wire, The Black Collegian together

BY PEARL STEWART
FOUNDER AND COORDINATOR
BLACK COLLEGE WIRE

Just as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita brought numerous organizations and agencies together to aid the evacuees and their families, these back-to-back disasters led the Black College Wire and The Black Collegian to join forces to provide a broad range of coverage for our readers.

Although we are different in design and corporate status — one is a non-profit service and the other is a for-profit business — we combined resources to offer information to students and families who were affected by the hurricanes.

It is with great pride that we share articles written by talented college students from HBCUs in and around the disaster areas. Often these students were reporting and writing articles amid the same challenges facing the hurricane victims they were covering.

Our coverage began with articles about evacuations at HBCUs in the Gulf region. The Black College Wire was the only news organization on the scene at Grambling State and Southern Universities for the overnight arrival of buses carrying 400 rescued Xavier University students and staff. Our student correspondents were able to produce a credible account of the Xavier students’ ordeal.

We also asked our writers to find information about services for the thousands of displaced HBCU students, and others who were safe but whose families and friends suffered losses.

We compiled lists of colleges offering free transfers and agencies providing disaster aid specifically for students.

In addition to our dedicated writers, our editors, Richard Prince and Jean Thompson, made this collaborative effort a reality. They honed the students’ fine work into the best journalism Black College Wire has presented to date. We are honored to include these articles in this venerable publication.

ONLINE
Black College Wire Hurricane Katrina Stories:
http://www.blackcollegewire.org/news/050902_katrina-dillard
http://www.blackcollegewire.org/news/050903_katrina-rescue

Joint "Black Collegian/Black College Wire Katrina project":
http://www.imdiversity.com/special/bannister_katrina_photos.asp

COVERING KATRINA
AN NABJ SPECIAL REPORT

Willie J. Allen Jr./St. Petersburg Times

(Above) In front of the Burgers restaurant, a Mardi Gras mask lays in three inches of muck in the ninth ward district in New Orleans. (Top) Allen “Sarge” Smith, 55 (left), helps his neighbor, Frank Stewart, 77, evacuate. The school had become a designated evacuation point, and the Coast Guard and Army National Guard air-lifted 18 people from the roof.

Willie J. Allen Jr./Baltimore Sun

ANDRÉ F. CHUNG/Baltimore Sun

COVERING KATRINA
AN NABJ SPECIAL REPORT

18 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK JOURNALISTS • WWW.NABJ.ORG
On the yard and ready to work

We have gotten off to a great start in these first few months of the 2005-2007 terms. In the last months of 2005, I and the NABJ Student Council have worked hard along with the local officers and membership to update chapter leadership and contacts.

We have worked to successfully hold the first NABJ Student Chapter Audit that will help NABJ and the staff to best update chapter information as well as ensure that all chapters are operating successfully and in compliance with NABJ, its missions, goals and purpose.

We have moved successfully in the direction to implement a grant program for student chapters that will best help them in their efforts of programming and service to their membership locally. We have also worked to make sure communication is better than ever between me and all NABJ student members.

I promised when I ran for this position that I would make myself accessible to you as I could and I have done a good job in fulfilling that promise.

If you do not believe me, just ask any student who has reached out to me with questions or concerns. I have spent hours on the phone just in the last few months answering questions, helping students with school and chapter issues and passing on advice. I have spent many hours online via Instant Messenger chats with student members who have concerns, frustrations and fears.

And not only have I reached out to students, but also professionals who have issues and concerns. I would like to believe that my role as the NABJ Student Representative is one that does not limit me to just student members.

The issues and concerns that professionals face are important to me as well. Without the professionals to serve as mentors and advisors, I cannot best serve the student membership. When I have helped a professional, I have helped a student.

My e-newsletter, the NABJ Student Informer currently has a little more than 200 members subscribed to it. Through the Informer, I have communicated with members about jobs and internships, my travel plans as well as looked to them for suggestions and advice on major decisions that affect them.

And while we are on the topic of travel plans, I have worked to incorporate time in my personal or business travel plans to meet with local members and chapters to “break bread” and talk about the issues that we as student face today and in the future. Great things are taking place!

As I make it halfway through this message I noticed that I have spent a lot of time talking about myself and what I have done. That is truly not on purpose.

So let me take the time to tell you a little about what your peers and colleagues are doing.

The Columbia College Chapter of NABJ has doubled their membership since last spring. They participate as a group feeding the homeless once a month at a local church in Chicago, have started a monthly newsletter and are planning to host a black-tie event to honor area journalists in the spring.

The proceeds of this event will benefit students and their families affected by Hurricane Katrina. Invited guests include: Senator Barack Obama, Richard Dent (Chicago Bears), John Legend, Jamie Foxx, and Jesse Jackson and tickets will be $100.

They have also extended an offer to assist the Indianapolis NABJ chapter with preparations for the 2006 convention.

The University of Texas at Austin chapter of NABJ have planned a speaker series of four forums that will spotlight four issues they feel are important and need to be discussed.

They also plan to do a brown bag with professionals which will allow UTA members and local professionals the sit down together. This should be a nice mentor/mentee type of program.

They are also in the process of producing a newspaper and are planning to start mentoring at a local high school.

Hopefully in the next two years, we will be able to tell of the plans and successes of all of our chapters.

So far I have received at least six e-mails from chapter leaders claiming NABJ Student Chapter of the Year in 2006.

As you can see, there are great things in the works for NABJ nationally and locally. I look forward to talking with you more, working with you all and all of our successes together.

If at anytime you need to, feel free to contact me so that we can talk and share with one another!

Until then, be successful and blessed!

Mashaun D. Simon, at mas678-760-2099.

About NABJ Student Services

As part of its commitment to our student members and aspiring journalists, NABJ provides the following as part of its Student Education Enrichment and Development (SEED) Program. More information and application forms can be found online at: http://www.nabj.org/programs/index.html

Student Membership

All NABJ programs require student membership to participate. For only $25 per year, students can become a member of NABJ and receive the “NABJ Journal,” information on career development, members-only access to the web site, NABJ Jobs Online for employment opportunities across the United States and participate in the SEED Program.

To join the NABJ student listserve and receive the nabsjstudentinforme e-newsletter, email NABJ Student Representative Mashaun D. Simon at masuandsimon@hotmail.com

Student Short Courses

NABJ offers print and broadcast short courses to journalism students on the campuses of historically black colleges or on college campuses with a large African-American student enrollment. NABJ’s short courses strengthen the existing programs.

The short courses are taught by teams of professional journalists who provide students with information about careers in the industry, training in writing, reporting and editing, and tips on job interviews and landing the first job or internship. These are ongoing.

Deadline: January 16
• On March 15-18, 2006, NABJ will host a TV short course on the campus of North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro.

Internship Program

NABJ is dedicated to expanding job opportunities for black journalism students. NABJ annually awards summer internships to students committed to journalism careers. Successful candidates are offered paid print, broadcast or on-line positions at selected news organizations around the country ranging from small Black-owned weekly newspapers to major market dailies and broadcast outlets.

Sports Journalism Institute

The Sports Journalism Institute is a nine-week training and internship program for college students interested in sports journalism careers. The Institute is designed to attract talented students to print journalism through opportunities in sports reporting and editing and to enhance racial and gender diversity in sports departments of newspapers nationwide.

Deadline: January 2

Scholarship Program

Annually, NABJ awards deserving students interested in pursuing a career in journalism awards of more than $30,000 in NABJ scholarships. Each scholarship is worth up to $5,000. Scholarships are open to any foreign or American born students, currently attending an accredited four-year college/university in the U.S. or those who are candidates for graduate school.

Deadline: April 1

Student Career Mentoring Program

The NABJ Career Mentoring Program matches students and new professionals with dedicated members wanting to ensure that the next generation of black journalists thrives in the newsroom. This year-long process will help young journalists understand the proper protocol and the culture of the newsroom. It will also give them the chance to listen to people who have already gone through what they will have to face and that can help guide them through the proper channels for their professional expectations.

Student Projects at the Convention

NABJ offers four student projects during its annual convention. These projects include:

• NABJ-TV, a student-produced nightly half-hour newscast, the NABJ Monitor, a daily convention newspaper: NABJ Radio, a student-produced radio news program, and NABJ Online, the NABJ convention Web site.

NABJ Student Council has majoring in broadcast journalism, communications, television production, print journalism, or who are pursuing a career in broadcast journalism, print journalism, or news media journalism are invited to submit an application to participate in the NABJ student projects.

NABJ student projects will give students from various backgrounds an opportunity to work side by side in the real world of daily deadlines and production pressures. The hands-on experience will expand their knowledge of the total news business - from gathering news, to the mechanical workings of the press, to the Internet.

For more information about SEED Programs, contact the NABJ national office at (312) 445-7100 x108.
2005 Convention & Career Fair: A Look Back

NABJ invited its members to Atlanta for our 30th Anniversary Convention and Career Fair, Aug. 3-7, 2005, at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. The 2005 convention attracted more than 3,200 attendees, the largest professional gathering devoted to journalists of color in America that year. The 30th anniversary convention’s theme — “Telling Our Story” — reflected NABJ’s goal to continue to voice the passion, pride, purpose and power of black journalists.

Former NABJ Presidents Herbert Lowe, Vanessa Williams, Tom Morgan, Chuck Stone and Condace Pressley.

NABJ board and staff pray with Bishop T.D. Jakes.

Newly-elected NABJ President Bryan Monroe enjoys a moment with his wife Tahirah Monroe.

NABJ Babies celebrate 15 years of student programming.

The Whispers

The Honorable Andrew Young

Gospel Singer Micah Stampley
Former President Bill Clinton made history by speaking for the third time at an NABJ convention. Clinton spoke in 1992, when he was running for president; in 1997 during his second term in office and in 2005, during NABJ's 30th anniversary.

Photos on this page and previous page by Jason Miccolo Johnson
Mark Your Calendar

NABJ 31st Annual Convention and Career Fair

In The
“Crossroads of America”

August 16-20, 2006

Indianapolis Convention Center
Indianapolis
Gaze the covers and pages of mainstream magazines, get ensnared by it on Web-based applications or discover it in your local newspaper. 3-D graphics are everywhere. It seems everyone is creating them. Without question, newsrooms across the nation are implementing this form of medium. It is exciting and dynamic. Although 3-D has been around for many years, 3-D design has clearly made its mark on the news graphics industry in the last seven years. It gave us the ability to think and execute...well, in 3-D. Never again are we limited to the two-dimensional world. Information design can be taken to another level by use of this technology.

Not all 3-D programs are the same. Some programs are more robust and in-depth than others. Some have lower learning curves. Others are beasts to grasp and learn. Usually, the softwares that are the most difficult to learn (and sometimes more expensive) are the ones that offer more quality in the final product (graphic).

Learning 3-D requires perseverance, studying and a lot of patience. Moving from a 2-D world into a 3-D world can become challenging. You are designing in space. You are dealing with textures and creating light sources. Oh and don’t forget any animation you would like to implement for online projects. There are classes that teach 3-D design, but it might be difficult to find one that teaches a specific software. As more interest develops for learning, classes for every software available will be easily accessible. In the meantime, there are plenty of books and online tutorials to help those who have the strong will to learn. The learning process is ongoing. So don’t think you can learn everything there is about 3-D design in a weekend classroom. Unless you are a prodigy, it can be done. But I can safely assume we are all normal folks, right?

There are many things that go into developing a 3-D graphic. You start like any other project by brainstorming creative ideas. When a final concept is chosen, studying the concept would be the next step. By studying, I mean three things: How it will be modeled; what kind of environment will be created, which includes lighting and camera angles; and how long it will take to create and render.

Depending on the size, a project can take anywhere from a couple of hours to weeks. It could take one artist or a team of artists to execute. That is why it is important that everyone be involved when planning for a project. That means editors, reporters, researchers, artists, as well as copy editors. Why copy editors? Copy editors see things that some of us can’t see or don’t question. The last thing you want to happen is that your model be incomplete or incorrect.

When is it necessary to use 3-D? This question will be asked time and time again. Yes, 3-D has the ability to produce great images that look as if they were taken by a camera. If it can be taken with a camera, use the camera. If it is something that needs in-depth explanation of what, where and how something happens, then 3-D can become a very powerful solution. Photography can only capture frames of the scene, where in 3-D you can recreate the entire scene and show everything at one time. We have a responsibility to our readers to not make them think that something is a photograph when it is actually a 3-D model.

Why should 3-D be used in newsrooms? Educate, educate, educate! Did I say it simply enough? We want to educate our readers. Again, it is personal preference, but I would advise to consider implementing 3-D design if you are not currently doing so. You will not use it every day but it sure does come in handy when the right project comes along. Used correctly, it gives readers another level of understanding of information you are trying to convey. It gives the story added dimensions. No pun intended!

3-D design is going to be here for a very long time, and it will continue to become more advanced. Many visual journalists will discover new ways to push information design to another level by the use of it. Many have already, creating highly informative graphics. The future is bright and the opportunity is there to participate in this creative form of visual journalism. What are you waiting for? Jump in!

Jerome Thompson is a senior visual journalist at the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.
NABJ’s annual journalism awards competition recognizes outstanding coverage of people or important issues in the African diaspora, in categories for print, radio, television and new media. The Salute to Excellence Awards maintains our commitment to honor the outstanding achievements of black journalists and the media industry.
The finalists were honored and winners announced at the Salute to Excellence Awards Gala, Saturday, Oct. 15, 2005, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C. Also recognized were the Lifetime Achievement, Journalist of the Year, Community Service, Ida B. Wells and Emerging Journalist special honors recipients.

Photos by Jason Miccolo Johnson

Dawn Collins, daughter of the late Derek Ali (a reporter at The Dayton Daily News), accepts the Community Service Award in her father’s honor.

2005 Awards Gala presenter Vic Carter, News Anchor at WJZ (Baltimore)

NABJ President Bryan Monroe and Executive Director Tangie Newborn present Reginald Dennis (Night Manager at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel) with a proclamation.


1st place winner in Television - News/Long Form: Michel Martin (right), Nightline (ABC News), “Critical Condition: America’s Obesity Crisis”
2005 Salute to Excellence Awards Gala

Photos by: Jason Miccolo Johnson

Awards Gala Emcee/Founder Maureen Bunyan and guest

Emerging Journalist of the Year Award recipient Krissah Williams of The Washington Post

Journalist of the Year Award recipient Andy Alford of the Austin-American Statesman

Kathy McCampbell Vance, NBC4 News Anchor Jim Vance, Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Ed Bradley and Patricia Blanchet

R&B and jazz vocalist Angela Bofill sings at the 2005 Awards Gala

NABJ members enjoy the hip hop, R&B, classically trained sounds of Black Violin
A COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

The National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) is an organization of more than 4,000 journalists, students and media-related professionals that advocates for diversity in newsrooms and in news content. We are committed to providing quality programs and services for black journalists worldwide.

As a NABJ member, you'll receive these valuable resources and benefits:

- Year-Round Personal and Professional Development Opportunities
- Access to NABJ Jobs Online
- Access to the NABJ Annual Career Fair
- Leadership and Mentoring Opportunities
- Regional and National Networking Opportunities
- Industry Information and Action Alerts
- Scholarship and Internship Opportunities
- Discounts on Convention Registrations and Regional Conferences
- Participation discount for annual Salute to Excellence Awards Contest
- Student Services Support
- Members-only Web Access, including Online Membership Directory
- Free Subscription to NABJ E-News, our weekly electronic newsletter
- Free subscription to *NABJ Journal*, our quarterly magazine
- NABJ Annual Report

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3. **COLLEGE/GRADUATE STUDENT MEMBERS**

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4. **RELEASE INFORMATION**

Indicate preferred mailing address:  ☐ Home  ☐ Work/School

NABJ occasionally receives requests for our membership mailing list to disseminate vital industry and educational information to NABJ members. Would you like to be included in such mailings?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No
Changing Places

**Cesar Andrews** was named executive editor of the Detroit Free Press. Andrews had been editor of Gannett News Service.

**Dean Baquet** was named Editor of the L.A. Times. The newspaper becomes the largest circulation daily paper with an African American editor.

**Talia Butler**, former editor of Hampton University’s Hampton Script when it was seized in 2009 by the university administration, started at the Providence Journal as a two-year intern.

**Denise Bridges** joined the Virginian-Pilot in Norfolk, Va., as director of recruitment and staff development.

**Kenneth Bunting**, the only African American top editor at Hearst Corp. newspapers, stepped down as executive editor of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer to assume the new position of associate publisher.

**Nicholas Charles**, a former reporter at the New York Daily News and People magazine, was named editor of the AOL Black Voices Web site.

**Keith Clinkscales**, former CEO of Vibe magazine and later Vanguard Media, joined ESPN as senior vice president and general manager of ESPN publishing.

**Eric Deggans** has been named media critic for the St. Petersburg Times.

**Kimberly Godwin**, was named assistant news director at New York’s WCBS-TV.

**Ric Harris** was named executive vice president and general manager of digital media and strategic marketing with NBC Universal in New York.

**Fran Jeffries** has joined the Atlanta Journal -Constitution as an education editor.

**Erin Aubry Kaplan** has been hired as an op-ed columnist for the Los Angeles Times.

**Allison Keysa** joined National Public Radio’s National Desk as a general assignment reporter.

**Emerong King** of WDIV-TV Detroit has been named communications director of the Detroit Medical Center.

**Howard Manly** has been named executive editor of the Bay State Banner in Boston. Manly had been a columnist at the Boston Herald.

**Ron Nixon** was named projects editor for computer assisted reporting at The New York Times.

**Glenn Proctor** has been named executive editor of the Richmond Times-Dispatch in Virginia.

**Bob Reid**, former executive vice president of the Discovery Health Network, has been named executive vice president and general manager of the Africa Channel.

**Megan Scott** joined the Associated Press’ new service aimed at young readers.

**E.R. Shipp**, a columnist for the New York Daily News, has been named Lawrence Stessin Distinguished Professor in Journalism at Hofstra University

**Collins Spencer** joined WSB-TV in Atlanta to co-anchor Action News “This Morning.”

**Sheila Stainback**, a New York-based former television anchor, has been named press secretary for the New York City Administration for Children Services.

**Pearl Stewart** has joined the School of Mass Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern Mississippi as a part-time professor.

**Betty Anne Williams** has been hired as the managing editor overseeing regional coverage at the Gazette-Star newspapers in Prince George’s County, Md.

**Alan Whitte** joined the Nashville Tennessean as assistant managing editor for sports.

Leaving

**Dorothy Bland and Michael Limo** were laid off as publisher and executive editor, respectively, of the Gannett Co.’s Fort Collins Coloradoan.

**Ken Parish Perkins** has resigned from Texas Fort Worth Star-Telegram over plagiarism charges.

**Joshua Fahmy’ Ratcliffe** resigned his position as Editor-in-Chief of The Source Magazine.

**Charlotte Roy**, who guided the development of the New York Times Co.’s first black-oriented newspaper, left the paper Aug. 23, a day before the first issue of the Gainesville Sun was set to hit newsstands.

**WSB-TV Atlanta morning and noon co-anchor Warren Savage** unexpectedly resigned from the station. In farewell e-mail to the newsroom, Savage quoted a rapper who said: “Before I sell out, I get the hell out.”

**Pamela Thomas-Graham** stepped down as chairman of CNBC for a senior job at Liz Clabornce Inc.

**Amapindi Akiillaahh Amapiindi**, a 23-year-old journalist and recent graduate of Kenyon College, died Aug. 8, in Atlanta during the NABJ convention. Amapiindi, who had come to the convention to work on the student project, was stricken with malaria during an earlier internship in Africa. To mark her death, NABJ and the Atlanta Association of Black Journalists raised over $11,000 at the convention’s closing Gospel Brunch and assisted the family with all of the funeral arrangements.

**Les Brownlee**, the first African-American reporter for white-owned media in Chicago, died November 21 at the age of 90.

**Hugh Pearson**, a former editorial writer at the Wall Street Journal and author of a book on his Black Panther name-sake, Huey P. Newton, was found dead Aug. 19 in his Brooklyn apartment. He was 47.

**Emma B. Pullen**, a former journalist and filmmaker who spent more than two decades in Los Angeles documenting the history and culture of African Americans, died July 20 in Raleigh, N.C. She was 52.

**George H. Scourlock**, 85, a commercial photographer who documented 20th century black Washington in the storied U Street studio founded by his father, died Aug. 10 of lung cancer.

**LeRoy Whitfield**, a writer who focused on the battle against AIDS among black Americans, died after living 15 years with the HIV virus — while refusing to take medication. He was 36.

**Clint C. Wilson Sr.**, the editorial cartoonist for the Los Angeles Sentinel for more than 45 years, has died. He was 90.

Great Achievements

**Hannah Allam**, Knight Ridder’s Cairo bureau chief, was awarded the top prize, the John S. Knight Gold Medal, in the company’s James K. Batten Excellence Awards competition.

**Ed Besley** replaced Mike Wallace as the first face viewers see when CBS’ “60 Minutes” begins.

**M.L. Elrick and Jim Schaefer** of the Detroit Free Press won a Clark Mollenhoff award for a series that exposed scandals in the administration of Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick.

**Vanessa Gallman**, editorial page editor of the Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader, was elected treasurer of the National Conference of Editorial Writers.

**Kimbrille Kelly** of the Chicago Reporter has been chosen for the 2009 Racial Justice Fellowship Award by members of the University of Southern California’s Annenberg’s Institute for Justice and Journalism.

**Bennie Ivory**, executive editor and vice president/news of the Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal, and Ward Busbee, editor and vice president/news of the Arizona Republic in Phoenix, are the first two winners of a new Signet Award for Gannett executives who have been cited 10 times as President’s Ring winners.

‘The Boondocks,’ the new animated series based on the comic-strip by Aaron McGruder, delivered record ratings in its Cartoon Network premiere. A total of 1.6 million viewers tuned in for the 11 p.m. Sunday show.

**Thomas Morgan III**, a former president of the National Association of Black Journalists was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association.

Passages

**Aklah Amapiindi**, a 23-year-old journalist and recent graduate of Kenyon College, died Aug. 8, in Atlanta during the NABJ convention. Amapiindi, who had come to the convention to work on the student project, was stricken with malaria during an earlier internship in Africa. To mark her death, NABJ and the Atlanta Association of Black Journalists raised over $11,000 at the convention’s closing Gospel Brunch and assisted the family with all of the funeral arrangements.

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The above information has been provided by Richard Prince’s Journal-Iams.
John H. Johnson rose from poverty to create an unparalleled international media and cosmetics empire that fueled the dreams of many Americans. The founder and publisher of Ebony and Jet magazines and the chairman of Johnson Publishing Company and Fashion Fair Cosmetics died at age 87 during the 60th anniversary year of Ebony magazine, which, under his tireless and visionary leadership, has been the biggest black-owned magazine since 1945.

Johnson, who borrowed $500 on his mother’s furniture to fund his first publication, became the first African-American on Forbes list of the 400 Richest Americans. He was the most honored of all publishers, and his story is one of the greatest “American dream” success stories of all time.

His first magazine Negro Digest, published in 1942, was a success and led to the post-World War II founding of Ebony magazine in 1945. The first issue of Ebony sold 25,000 copies, instantly making it the largest-circulated black magazine. Today, 60 years later, Ebony is still at the top, with a circulation of 1.6 million.

In 1951, Johnson started Jet, which became the No. 1 black newsweekly. The company continued to expand its media interests, and Johnson eventually published books, bought radio stations and produced television shows. Another triumph for the company was the Ebony Fashion Fair, the world’s largest traveling fashion show, which is produced and directed by Johnson’s wife, Eunice Walker Johnson, the secretary-treasurer of Johnson Publishing Co. Since 1958, the fashion show has raised more than $51 million for the UNCF and other scholarship groups.

In 1973, the media entrepreneur studied by business students across the country, diversified even further with the creation of Fashion Fair Cosmetics. Fashion Fair Cosmetics, which includes a fragrance line for both men and women, is sold in more than 2,500 stores in the United States, Africa, Europe, Canada and the Caribbean.

In 1972, Johnson was named Publisher of the Year by the Magazine Publishers Association. In 1974, the National Newspaper Publishers Association named him the “Most Outstanding Black Publisher in History.” In 2003, Baylor University named him the “The Greatest Minority Entrepreneur in U.S. History.” In that same year, Howard University named its communications school the John H. Johnson School of Communications.

In 1995, on the 50th anniversary of the founding of Ebony magazine, the publisher received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, America’s highest civilian honor, from President Bill Clinton, who said Johnson gave “African-Americans a voice and a face, in his words, ‘a new sense of somebody-ness,’ of who they were and what they could do, at a time when they were virtually invisible in mainstream American culture.”

Because of his business acumen and commitment to the community, Johnson is credited as one of the trailblazers in business and international media and is acknowledged as the first entrepreneur to recognize the colossal buying power of black America.

The secret of his success, by most accounts, was his indomitable spirit and his refusal to take no for an answer. Defying the odds was his passion — the great theme of his life. “Failure,” he said, “is a word I don’t accept.” In his bestselling autobiography, Succeeding Against the Odds, he said that the message of his life to “blacks, to Hispanics, to Asians, to whites, to dreamers everywhere, [was] that long shots do come in and that hard work, dedication and perseverance will overcome almost any prejudice and open almost any door.”

Johnson’s legacy will continue to leave a mark in the black community. “I would tell [young people] to start where they are with what they have and that the secret of a big success is starting with a small success and dreaming bigger and bigger dreams,” he said in his last major interview. “I would tell them also that a young black woman or a young black man can’t dream too much today or dare too much if he or she works hard, perseveres and dedicates themselves to excellence.” He was the most honored of all publishers and his career is one of the greatest “American dream” success stories.
International Photojournalist

Internationally, Monica's work has appeared all over the globe from The Associated Press Worldwide to Newsweek-Japan.


Commercially, she has shot for: DaimlerChrysler, General Motors, Anheuser-Busch, the Coca-Cola Company, the National Newspaper Publishers Association of America, Comcast and HBO.

Her Subjects have included: President George W. Bush, former President William Jefferson Clinton, Aretha Franklin, Muhammad Ali, Louis Farrakhan, Halle Berry, Denzel Washington and Sidney Poitier.

Her Assignments have included: South Africa's first all-race elections; the inauguration and retirement of Nelson Mandela, the 30th revolution celebration of Libya, and several Organization of African Unity summits.

Her Travels have taken her to: Africa, Corsica, England, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Malta, Sicily and Spain.

Civil Rights icon Rosa Parks called her work “Great” and selected Monica to be her official photographer.


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Going Up?

Growth and opportunity are hallmarks of a career in Gannett. We offer talented journalists the chance to grow at any one of 100 daily newspapers and web sites across the USA, and the opportunity to move up from our smallest to our largest. Your skills and aspirations will chart your course.

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