



# Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice



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## About Us



SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY  
LAW CENTER

### Vision

The Louis A. Berry Institute for Civil Rights and Justice seeks to ensure the law center's place as a center of excellence in social and restorative justice and civil and human rights research, advocacy, education and instruction. It further seeks to pursue policy initiatives and judicial outcomes that promote equal rights and justice.

### Mission

The Louis A. Berry Institute for Civil Rights and Justice is committed to the advancement of civil and human rights and social and restorative justice, especially in Louisiana and the South.

## News

### Louis A. Berry Institute Director Presents Charles Frye Memorial Lecture During African American History Month

Written by: Tiffany Rainey



Professor Bell

Most criminal justice reform efforts focus on a specific legislative or policy change. Professor Angela A. Allen-Bell, director of the Louis A. Berry Institute for Civil Rights and Justice, registered her strong disapproval of this constricted approach when she delivered her keynote address to an audience of current and former faculty, staff, students and administrators of the Southern University System; local activists and community members; and, high school students. On February 3, 2020 at Southern University at New Orleans, Professor Bell presented her contrary approach to criminal justice reform, which she describes as a holistic and intellectually honest avenue that heavily integrates restorative justice principles.



# Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice



## News

### Louis A. Berry Institute Director Presents Charles Frye Memorial Lecture During African American History Month

Written by: Tiffany Rainey

Jamal Williams, SUNO's SGA Vice President, introduced Professor Bell with a mix of humor and reverence. Before and after Professor Bell's delivery of, *"When Law & Injustice Become Bedfellows, Justice Becomes the Business of the People,"* the audience was graced with several enjoyable musical selections from the St. Katherine Drexel School Choir, which happens to be Professor Bell's alma mater. Other presenters included: Dr. Clyde Robertson, Associate Professor and director of the Center for African and African American Studies (CAAAS), SUNO; Dr. John Penny, SUNO's Criminal Justice Department Chair; LaVerne Toombs, SUNO's Interim Chief Administrative Officer for Community Outreach and Public Relations; and, Alaina Carter, graduate student at SUNO.



St. Katherine Drexel Choir

Her eagerly awaited keynote address began with an attempt to put the discussion in its proper context. This was done by her explaining the close connection between mass incarceration, the Thirteenth Amendment to the United State Constitution and slavery. Thereafter, she discussed some of what is currently taking form at the "altar of American justice."

The audience was urged to become involved in criminal justice reform because the design of Louisiana's legal system—a civil law system—envisioned the participation of citizens and stakeholders. In addition, she suggested that the justice gap requires participation because legal needs currently outpace legal services. As a final reason, she referenced how our current mass incarceration system confines the guilty, innocent and oversentenced, and, in doing so, often creates voiceless victims who are dependent on others to speak for them.



Dr. Clyde  
Robertson



Because, in her view, law and injustice have become bedfellows, she called the audience to action. She urged people to make policy implementation the priority of the hour. She also endorsed efforts to have racial impact bills presented before certain legislation is enacted. She also suggested that voters be aware of the need for progressive prosecutors. The audience was urged to act immediately and swiftly because, recalling the words of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, "There... comes a time when the cup of endurance... runs over and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss of despair." Professor Bell ended by reminding the audience that vigilance is the enemy of acceptance. She implored the audience to, "make this a season of intent and not a season of habit."



# *Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice*



## *News (Con't)*

### **Louis A. Berry Institute Director Presents Charles Frye Memorial Lecture During African American History Month**

Written by: Tiffany Rainey

The annual Charles Frye Memorial Lecture is done in honor of the late Dr. Charles Frye, Ph.D., who served as SUNO's third director for the CAAAS. Dr. Frye established the intellectual leadership and standards upon which the Center was founded. Previous speakers include Eddie Glaude, Ph.D., director of the African American Study Center at Princeton University; the Honorable Marc Morial, President and CEO of the National Urban League; and, political analyst, advisor and consultant Donna Bazile.

Click here to view Professor Bell's February 3, 2020 keynote address:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CgEMdpsb0pA&feature=youtu.be>

### **Disrupting the Injustice Narrative: the Inaugural Underground Railroad to Justice Summit**

Written by: Justin Bullard and Chelsea Hale

On February 7, 2020, the Louis A. Berry Institute for Civil Rights and Justice (Institute) partnered with the Center for African and African American Studies (CAAAS) to host "Disrupting the Injustice Narrative: the Inaugural Underground Railroad to Justice Summit" at the Baker Municipal Center. The vision for this groundbreaking summit was to educate the public about needed criminal justice reforms; and, to inform the public about how to successfully advocate for those reforms.

In attendance at this historic convening were over three-hundred social workers, lawyers, students, clergy, citizens, academics, activists and those who have been adversely impacted by the justice system. The audience was from Louisiana and beyond. Dignitaries, such as Darnell Waites, Mayor for the City of Baker, and former State Representative Donald Cravins, Sr. were present to support this eagerly awaited event.

Guests arrived to personalized folders designed to communicate gratitude for their support of what event organizers viewed as a defining moment in the battle for justice in Louisiana. If the special folders didn't convince them that this was no ordinary event, certainly the sea of decorated tables from a powerhouse list of affiliates did it. Affiliates came armed with information and a will to join hands with guests who wanted to get more involved in the struggle for justice.



Ebonni Jackson, Derrick West  
and Ja'Nai Brumfield





# Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice



## News (Con't)

### Disrupting the Injustice Narrative: the Inaugural Underground Railroad to Justice Summit

Written by: Justin Bullard and Chelsea Hale

State Representative Edmond Jordan, Terry Landry, Jr. and Will Harrel spoke about "Becoming a Legislative or Policy Advocate." Reverend Alexis Anderson shared her insights on being a watchdog for persons held in solitary confinement and for the mentally ill behind bars. Bree Anderson and Ben Robertson told about their advocacy on behalf of children and youth affected by trauma and incarceration. Deidra Howard and Donna Kennon passionately advocated for a grand jury bill of rights. Checo Yancy spoke about his work as a watchdog for the right of justice-impacted persons to vote and otherwise experience full citizenship. Jeff Thomas and Gary Chambers spoke about "Getting the Ear of the Media" and offered insights into the power of the media and how it can be used to publicize injustices.



Becoming a Legislative or  
Policy Advocate Panel



Watchdog Panel  
Mental Health; Solitary Confinement; Children of  
Justice-Impacted Parents; School-to-Prison Pipeline;  
Grand Jury; Voting Rights for the Justice-Impacted;  
Bail



Getting the Ear of the Media Panel

Kristin Downing, Kevin McQuarn and Donney Rose spoke to the audience about being an *artist* and ways in which citizens, lawyers, and social workers can promote justice by "Using Art to Advocate." Retired Judge Calvin Johnson, Jee Parks, Harry Daniels, and William Snowden spoke about "Responding to Prosecutorial Misconduct." These panelists highlighted the ever-present issue of prosecutorial misconduct in Louisiana. They provided insight into the much-needed, systematic changes required to minimize the commission of prosecutorial violations and offered useful insights about lodging formal complaints. Calvin Duncan, one of Louisiana's wrongfully convicted citizens, presented a stirring keynote address concerning non-unanimous juries, wrongful convictions and the reentry process.



Using Art to Advocate Panel



Calvin Duncan



Prosecutorial Misconduct Panel

Both organizers offered their perspectives on why such an event took place. Professor Bell, Institute director, indicated that, "Slavery was our first mass incarceration system." She continued, "Currently, the American criminal justice system holds approximately 2.3 million people in prisons, jails & detention facilities. As long as mass numbers of people lack liberty and social and political equality, civil and human rights organizations are duty-bound to disrupt such a narrative. This program manifests this commitment, as well reinforces the mission of SULC, which seeks to offer a high-quality legal education with special emphasis on training in the civil law tradition." Dr. Clyde C. Roberson, CAAAS director, followed by saying, "CAAAS' 2019-2020 theme is AKOBEN, which means vigilance. These events symbolize our attempt to call the Southern University System and the surrounding community to educational, civic, cultural and social action."



# Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice



## News (Con't)

### Disrupting the Injustice Narrative: the Inaugural Underground Railroad to Justice Summit

Written by: Justin Bullard and Chelsea Hale



Donnovan Jackson, WAFB  
and Professor Bell

Christopher Dassau, a SULC alumni and the prosecutor for the City of Baker generously donated coffee. The following volunteers gave of their time: SULC Professor Wendy Shea, Aniya Beauchamp, Ja'Nai Brumfield, Jennifer LaCarriere, Ebonni Jackson, Kachira Lattimore and Johnathan White. The official event affiliates were: Daughters Beyond Incarceration; Kristen Downing; Innocence Project New Orleans; Louisiana Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers; Louisiana Stop Solitary Confinement; the Public Defender Magazine; the Promise of Justice Initiative; the East Baton Rouge Parish Prison Reform Coalition; Justice & Accountability Center of Louisiana; the Southern Poverty Law Center; Power Coalition; and, Voters Organized to Educate (VOTE).



Daughters Beyond Incarceration



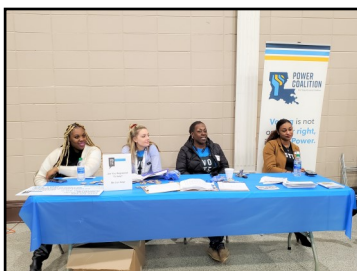
Innocence Project New Orleans



VOTE

The Underground Railroad, a network for delivering people from bondage, injustice and oppression, was successfully used by people to uplift people during the slavery era. In this spirit and in honor of our mission, the Institute plans to continue "Disrupting the Injustice Narrative" over the years.

Media coverage: <https://www.wafb.com/2020/02/07/southern-university-celebrates-black-history-month-with-film-festival-summit/>



Power Coalition



The Promise of Justice Initiative



The Public Defender





# Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice



## News (Con't)

### Disrupting the Injustice Narrative: the Inaugural Underground Railroad to Justice Summit

Written by: Justin Bullard and Chelsea Hale



Justice & Accountability Center of Louisiana



Institute Staff with Guests



Terry Landry, Jr., former State Representative Donald Cravins, Sr., State Representative Edmond Jordan, Professor Bell



Professor Bell, Gary Chambers Attorney Taryn Branson



Kathe Hambrick, Professor Bell



Kathe Hambrick, Malik Rahim



Reverend Reginald Pitcher



Jennifer Harding telling guests about VOTE



# *Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice*



## *News (Con't)*

### **Disrupting the Injustice Narrative: the Inaugural Underground Railroad to Justice Summit**

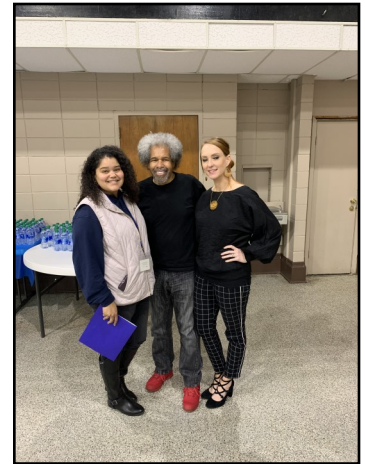
Written by: Justin Bullard and Chelsea Hale



Justin Bullard, Derrick West, Kachira Lattimore, Tiffany Rainey



Tiffany Rainey, Professor Shea, Kachira Lattimore



Chelsea Hale, Albert Woodfox, Meghan Matt



Dawnesia Jones, Professor Bell and a Guest



Institute Staff, Dr. Howard Henderson and Staff of the Texas Southern University Center for Justice Research, Panelists and SULC Students





# Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice



## News (Con't)

### Law Lessons from an Unlikely Teacher

Written by: Derrick West

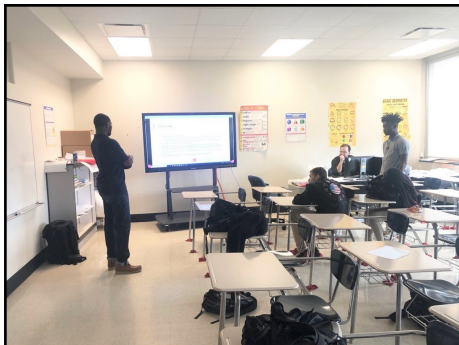
Official records will show that, on February 12, 2020, seventy-four-year-old Henry Montgomery's body was inside the Louisiana State Penitentiary, held yet another day in fulfillment of the life sentence he has been serving for the past fifty-six years. Notwithstanding this, the pre-law studies club at Istrouma High School will likely report that some of the instruction they received during our most recent visit came from Mr. Montgomery himself. Mr. Montgomery's case was used to teach heart-stopping lessons about: the consequences that follow choices; the meaning of a life sentence in Louisiana (for juvenile and adult offenders); and, about the parole process in Louisiana.

The visit began with a brief lesson about Henry Montgomery who was sentenced to serve life in prison without the possibility of parole at the tender age of seventeen. After it became unconstitutional to automatically sentence a juvenile to life without parole, Mr. Montgomery prevailed in his efforts to have the SCOTUS apply this ruling retroactively. Mr. Montgomery is now eligible for parole. However, he remains in custody with the hope of one day earning his freedom through the parole process. The students were spellbound as Institute Research Assistant Justin Bullard presented this story about a person whose encounter with the justice system started when he was only a child close in age to these very students.

The students were asked to share their thoughts about the meaning of a life sentence and about the parole process in Louisiana. The students were under the false impression that only violent offenders are issued life sentences. They soon learned that a person can receive a life sentence in other instances, such as in the case of a habitual offender. They were also taught about the parole process and about the role of the legislature in civil and common law jurisdictions. Necessary lessons about choices and consequences were imparted along the way.

Mr. Montgomery's case proved to be the perfect backdrop for this lesson because: the students identified with him because of his age at the time of his arrest; they related to way they too are often called upon to make quick decisions and, when they have proven not to be the best, they have had to face consequences; and, it contained profound lessons about how all people are able to play a role in the struggle for social justice and civil and human rights, which is exactly what Mr. Montgomery did when he successfully carried the weight of an entire people on his tired shoulders and bore it valiantly until he attained justice before the SCOTUS.

This was undoubtedly a lesson taught by the unlikeliest of teachers, but certainly the most qualified. To some, Henry Montgomery is a dean of justice, a chancellor of endurance and doctor of perseverance. More importantly than any of this, we know that these students were armed with tools to avoid his plight and to assist others in doing the same.



Justin Bullard (3L) Facilitating the Lesson



IHS Pre-Law Club





## *Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice*



# **DID YOU KNOW?**



### **That Efforts to Collect Data About Traffic Stops Are Ongoing in Louisiana...**

Written by: Derrick West

Louisiana law requires law enforcement agencies to record and retain information involving traffic stops. Law enforcement agencies who have adopted a written policy against racial profiling are exempt from compliance, however. Exactly what qualifies as an anti-racial profiling policy? The current law does not offer guidance, leaving each department to its own devices when it comes to making this determination.

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), one third of 331 Louisiana law enforcement agencies have reported that they do not have an anti-racial profiling policy in place. This means that a third of the agencies should be reporting statistical data. The remaining two-thirds of the agencies reported having an anti-racial profiling policing. As such, they have availed themselves to the exemption.

Data about stops is of great importance. Absent reliable data on traffic stops, it is impossible to know if policing has a disproportionate impact on certain populations, such as people of color, people with disabilities or people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer. The data is also a tool that law enforcement agencies can use to improve their performance or refute criticisms that their practices unfairly target certain groups or that misconduct persists across an entire department. Additionally, the data can help law enforcement agencies identify crime trends, allocate resources, and assess the effectiveness of training and operational planning. And, public access to data increases transparency and helps build trust with the community.

During the 2019 legislative session, the “Data Collection Task Force” was created. The task force was designed to collect data in a wide range of areas, such as: traffic stops, pedestrian stops, clearance rates, use of special weapons and the use of special force. Terry Landry, Jr., policy council at SPLC who was instrumental in this legislative effort, remarked: “We are here not to point the finger at the police. We are here to create trust and accountability, which is good for both law enforcement and the public alike.”



# *Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice*



## *Reading Assignment*



### **Black Resistance in Louisiana's Cancer Alley**

In Revilletown, which was founded by freed slaves, a petrochemical company has seized ownership of an ancestral cemetery. But an attack on the dead is an attack on the living.

For more information: <http://bostonreview.net/race/robin-mcdowell-black-resistance-louisiana>

### **Formerly Incarcerated Men Create Program to Keep Youth Out of Prison**

After serving a collective total of 50 years in prison, Louisiana courts ruled the incarceration and sentencing of Daniel Rideau, Jerome Morgan and Robert Jones unjust. The three met in the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola and were brought together by shared aspirations for a hopeful future. Following their eventual release, Rideau, Morgan and Jones reunited with a common goal in mind: saving impoverished youth from mass incarceration. They created Free-Dem Foundation, a nonprofit organization founded on Frederick Douglass' idea that "it is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."

For more information: <http://www.uscannenbergmedia.com/2020/02/07/formerly-incarcerated-men-create-program-to-keep-youth-out-of-prison/>

### **Father of Two Sues Los Angeles Hospital After Wife Dies During Childbirth**

Approximately 700 women in the U.S. die in childbirth every year. It is the only developed country with a rising death rate for pregnant or new mothers. For African American women, like Kira Johnson, the risk of death is even higher. Globally, more mothers die in childbirth in America than in Iran, Turkey or Kazakhstan. "We are in the midst of a maternal mortality crisis that isn't just shameful for American standards. It's shameful on a global scale," Charles Johnson said.

For more information: <https://www.wafb.com/2020/02/18/father-sues-los-angeles-hospital-after-wife-dies-during-childbirth/>

### **Secretary of State Agrees to Settle Voter ID Lawsuits by Entering Into Consent Decree with North Dakota Tribes**

Facing a trial date in the Spirit Lake case in May of this year, the Secretary of State announced an emergency rulemaking last week in an attempt to address some of the issues raised by the lawsuit. At an in-person mediation at the North Dakota capitol on February 6, 2020 with representatives from the Spirit Lake Nation and attorneys from CLC and NARF, the Secretary agreed to take additional steps to ensure that eligible Native American voters are not disenfranchised due to the restrictive voter ID law.

Because of the state's broken addressing system, many Native Americans living on reservations do not have or do not know their residential addresses, and are therefore unable to comply with the North Dakota voter ID law. During the 2018 election, the Spirit Lake Nation and the Standing Rock Sioux tribe expended substantial resources to ensure that their tribal members would have the identification necessary to vote, including by shouldering the burden of identifying and providing residential street addresses for their members.

For more information: <https://campaignlegal.org/press-releases/secretary-state-agrees-settle-voter-id-lawsuits-entering-consent-decree-north-dakota>



## *Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice*



### *Giving*

The Louis A. Berry Institute for Civil Rights and Justice seeks monetary donations to support the continuation of its work. If you wish to contribute, use this link and select the Louis A. Berry Institute from the list of options: <https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=416825>

Payments can also be mailed to:

Office of Development  
PO Box 9294  
Baton Rouge, LA 70813

We are also soliciting donations of civil rights era documents, memorabilia and/or artifacts. If you wish to donate, please email our director at: [ABell@sulc.edu](mailto:ABell@sulc.edu).

### *Announcements*

**Through April 2, 2020**

**In Bloom New Works by Kristen Downing**

Kristen Downing, a self-taught visual artist, began her career as a sought-after tattoo artist. Kristen's art is largely fueled by the social and political climate of America. She believes an artist has the responsibility of speaking to the times. The focus in her latest work is the current realities experienced by people of color and minorities in America.

Southern University Visual Arts Gallery

Frank Hayden Hall

F Street

Baton Rouge, LA 70807

Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Curated by: Randell Henry

Contact Randell Henry: 225-771-4109 or [randell\\_henry@subr.edu](mailto:randell_henry@subr.edu)

**March 2 - 5, 2020**

**Southern University Law Center Diversity Committee Presents**

**March 2, 2020**

Kick-Off

12:00 p.m.- 1:00 p.m.

Location: SULC Atrium

**March 3, 2020**

Addressing Unconscious Bias

12:00 p.m.- 1:00 p.m.

Location: Roche Reading Room

**March 4, 2020**

Overcoming Obstacles, Creating Opportunities

12:00 p.m.- 1:00 p.m.

Location: Roche Reading Room

**March 5, 2020**

Latin and African Beatz Workshop

12:00 p.m.- 1:00 p.m.

Location: SULC Atrium





## Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice



## Announcements (Con't)

**March 6, 2020**

**Pre-Roots Camp**

**5:30 p.m.**

SULC's Professor Angela A. Allen-Bell

The Precursor Discussion "The Intersection of the Black Panther Party and the Ku Klux Klan & the Continuing Call for Redress & Restorative Justice"

**6:00 p.m.**

"Race and Nationalism" panel discussion with:

[Shailly Agnihotri](#), The Restorative Center

[Frank Curiel](#), LiUNA and former body guard to Caesar Chavez

[Mike McClanahan](#), Louisiana NAACP

[Maxine Crump](#), Dialogue on Race Louisiana

Southern University Law Center

Room 225

2 Roosevelt Steptoe Dr.

Baton Rouge, LA 70813

5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

[Click here to register](#)

\$50 Registration fee covers March 6-7, 2019 events.

\*Admission free to SULC students who register with SULC promotional code and present a Student ID.

Jointly hosted by: Solidarity Project Advocacy Network and

Louis A. Berry Institute for Civil Rights and Justice

**March 7, 2020**

**Roots Camp**

RootsCampLA is the convening of activists in the state. It has been the progressive event of the year for the past nine years whether your issue is maintaining democratic control of schools, worker's rights, #BlackLivesMatter, voting rights, women's rights, transit, racial equality, LGBTQIA, disability rights, healthcare, or housing. This isn't your usual gathering; it's an "unconference." Instead of PowerPoints and "expert" panels, participants design sessions and decide the program. This doesn't mean "experts" aren't in the room. They are - many of them are you. RootsCampLA is about fostering homegrown talent.

Southern University Law Center

2 Roosevelt Steptoe Drive

Baton Rouge, LA 70813

8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

[Click here to register](#)

\$50 Registration fee covers March 6-7, 2019 events.

\*Admission free to SULC students who register with SULC promotional code and present a Student ID.

Hosted by: Solidarity Project Advocacy Network

**March 16, 2020**

**Sharon Weston-Broome, Mayor-President East Baton Rouge Parish**

"All Women, Especially African Americans, must be Motivated to Pursue Political, Civic, and Social Action!"

SUNO-Conference Center

6400 Press Dr.

New Orleans, LA 70126

11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Hosted by: Center for African and African American Studies



## *Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice*



## *Announcements (Con't)*

**March 19, 2020**

### **The History of Danielle Metz "From Pep Rallies to Prison"**

Danielle Metz was granted clemency by President Barak Obama in 2016 after being sentenced to life in prison for a non-violent drug offence. Danielle Metz will tell the story of how she went from becoming a high school drop out, sentenced to life in prison, received her GED, granted clemency and is now on the Dean's List in college.

St. Katharine Drexel School Auditorium

5116 Magazine Street

New Orleans, LA 70115

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Hosted by: Center for African and African American Studies

**March 25, 2020**

### **VOTE BR Monthly Meeting (meeting held every 4th Wednesday)**

Voice of the Experienced (VOTE) is a grassroots organization founded and run by formerly incarcerated people, their families and allies. Vote is dedicated to restoring the full human and civil rights of those most impacted by the criminal justice system.

VOTE

251 Florida St. Ste. 201

Baton Rouge, LA 70802

6:00 p.m.

Contact: [jenniferharding@vote-nola.org](mailto:jenniferharding@vote-nola.org)

**April 1, 2020**

### **Census Deadline**

Be counted before the deadline.

Pledge to be counted by texting "2020" to 52886

Issues while voting or registering to vote, share your story at: <https://wevotewecount.org/>

To learn more about the 2020 Census and voting rights, visit: <https://nvl.org/>

**April 23, 2020**

### **3rd Annual Conference for Men, Boys and the Women Who Love Them**

Community members will provide useful information, advice and encouragement for men and boys. The program will also benefit mothers of boys, wives and others. Topics include social development, inspiration, mentorship and more.

Baker Municipal Center

3325 Groom Road

Baker, Louisiana 70714

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Contact: Christopher Dassau at (225) 778-1717





## *Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice*



### *Food for Thought*

**“Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world’s grief. Do justly now, love mercy now, walk humbly now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it.”**

**The Talmud**

### **Subscriptions**

Our newsletters are mailed to subscribers only. Please share our subscription link with others:

<http://www.sulc.edu/form/subscribe-to-the-louis-a-berry-civil-rights-and-justice-institute-enewsletter>





# Louis A. Berry Institute For Civil Rights and Justice



## Contact Us



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