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LDH releases final water grades for 951 Louisiana water systems

BATON ROUGE, La. — The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) released final water grades for 951 community water systems across the state today. This process creates accountability for water systems and transparency for customers.

The final water grades follow the primary grades that were published in January. The primary grades may not have included data for financial sustainability, customer satisfaction, or bonus points awarded to a water system. The new data included in calculating the final grades will mean letter grade changes for some water systems.

In the future, water system grades will be published annually on May 1.

The water grades are enabled under Act 98 of the 2021 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature and are known as the Community Drinking Water Accountability Rule. The grades are calculated using points assigned to seven standards that evaluate the infrastructure, sustainability, and overall water quality.

State Sen. Fred Mills authored the legislation to provide residents with a snapshot of the quality of their community water systems and to encourage water systems to invest in improvements or explore consolidating with another water system to improve sustainability. Amanda Ames, chief engineer for the Louisiana Department of Health, led the initiative's implementation.

"Clean drinking water is such a fundamentally important part of our existence. In my 16 years as a state legislator, I have filed nearly 300 bills. Act 98 is

See **LDH**, on page 2

Louisiana Higher Education Leader Defends DEI Measures, Urges Equitable Access to Higher Education



Aerial photo of LSU's Memorial Tower

The Republican State Central Committee recently passed a resolution calling for a ban on DEI measures on college campuses, while a separate resolution calling for Louisiana's colleges and universities to report their DEI spending is making its way through the state legislature.

Collis Temple III, Chair of the Louisiana Board of Regents, has defended diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) measures on college campuses in a statement released on Tuesday. Amid attempts by Republicans to ban such measures, Temple emphasized the importance of equitable access to higher education to achieve the state's goal of a postsecondary degree or credential for 60% of working-age adults.

Temple argued that DEI measures are not forces of division but practical tools that enable every individual to reach their full potential. He emphasized that learners



Collis Temple III, Chair of the Louisiana Board of Regents

must have the opportunity to chart their path to success in

an atmosphere of respect for all differences. By doing so, individuals can strengthen themselves and their communities while benefiting the state as a whole.

Louisiana's higher education leaders are preparing to go on the defensive to protect DEI measures in the face of opposition. The Republican State Central Committee recently passed a resolution calling for a ban on DEI measures on college campuses, while a separate resolution calling for Louisiana's colleges and universities to report their DEI spending is making its

See **EDUCATION**, on page 3

Louisiana Lawmakers Consider Cutting Unemployment Benefits by Half, Sparking Controversy

Louisiana lawmakers are considering a proposal to cut unemployment benefits by half for those who lose their jobs, a move that some say would disproportionately affect low-income workers. House Bill 340, sponsored by Republican Rep. Troy Romero, would reduce the maximum duration of unemployment benefits from 26 weeks to 12 weeks, based on a sliding scale indexed to the state's average unemployment rate. Under the proposed legislation, recipients would be entitled to an additional week of benefits for every half-percentage point increase in the average unemployment rate over 5%, with a maximum of 20 weeks of benefits if the average unemployment rate is equal to or greater than 8.5%.

Romero said he wants to reduce the unemployment taxes businesses pay and shore up the state's unemployment trust fund. Louisiana's GOP lawmakers have continuously filed legislation to reduce worker benefits over the last few years. Critics of the proposal, including Louisiana Workforce Commission Deputy Secretary Margaret Mabile, say the bill will mostly hurt low-income workers who are currently employed and may need assistance until they can get re-employed.

The current 26-week allowance gives laid-off workers time to find training and increase their skills to find better employment,

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Louisiana Republican lawmakers reject bill to establish state minimum wage

Advocates argue for a \$10 minimum wage in Louisiana, citing inflation and stagnant wages since 2009

Louisiana lawmakers have rejected a bill that would have established a state minimum wage of \$10 per hour, with gradual increases to \$14 by 2028. House Bill 374, sponsored by Rep. Ed Larvadain, D-Alexandria, failed to pass the House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations in a 5-9 vote along party lines on Wednesday.

Louisiana is one of five states that does not have its own minimum wage law, instead relying on the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, which has not been increased since 2009. Despite overwhelming support from Democrat and Republican voters in the state for a minimum wage increase, Louisiana lawmakers

have repeatedly rejected such proposals in recent years.

In Wednesday's hearing, Republicans on the committee argued that the "free market" should determine how wages are set and that the minimum wage is only intended for high school students and people just getting out of prison. However, advocates for the bill argued that the minimum wage is necessary to lift communities out of poverty.

Peter Robins-Brown, executive director of Louisiana Progress, disputed claims that minimum wage hikes hurt the economy and lead to unemployment, calling them "scare tactics" and stating that research has disproved them. Meanwhile, Jim



Patterson of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry testified against the minimum wage increase, claiming that no one in the private sector is making that low wage.

Jan Moller of the Louisiana Budget Project provided data in support of the bill, stating that if the federal minimum wage had kept up with inflation since 1968, it would be equivalent to \$14 per hour today. Despite these arguments, the bill ultimately failed to pass the committee, with Republicans citing concerns about the free market and potential negative effects on the economy.

Louisiana is one of five states that does not have its own minimum wage law, instead relying on the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, which has not been increased since 2009.

WEATHER



MON. 04/58
Mostly Cloudy
High 86°.



WED. 05/10
Partly Cloudy
High 86°.



TUE. 05/09
Mostly Cloudy
High 85°.



THUR. 05/11
Mostly Cloudy
High 85°.

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LOCAL & STATE

Louisiana legislative committee rejects proposed college football ticket tax



A Louisiana legislative committee rejected a proposed bill that would have imposed a tax on certain college football tickets to help fund a passenger rail project between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. House Bill 621, introduced by Rep. Mack Cormier, D-Belle Chasse, sought to levy a \$1 tax per ticket on LSU and Southern football games. The proposed tax was estimated to generate approximately \$1 million per year to support the \$1.4 billion passenger rail project.

However, the committee voted against the bill on a 10-4 vote. Speaker Pro Tempore Rep. Tanner Magee, R-Houma, was the primary opponent, questioning why the tax only applied to football tickets and

not to other sports or teams like the Saints and Tulane. Magee also pointed out that the tax would disproportionately affect Baton Rouge, while New Orleans would not be impacted.

Cormier defended the proposed tax, stating that he only wanted to impose it on public universities and only on football tickets. He said that the tax would not apply to Tulane and the Saints, and only affected other public universities in New Orleans. Meanwhile, Rep. Joseph Orgeron joined Democrats in supporting the bill.

During the committee hearing, Rep. Matthew Willard, D-New Orleans, echoed

See **TAX**, on page 3

LDH from page 1

one of the most important because it educates consumers about the quality of their drinking water and holds the operators of those systems accountable," Sen. Mills said. "I am so proud of Amanda Ames and her LDH team for bringing this bill to life. I have never been more pleased with implementing a legislative concept. I know that the water system grades will be a valuable tool for consumers and incentivize water systems to prioritize their infrastructure."

"Clean, safe drinking water is a basic human need, and drinking water infrastructure is critical to ensuring that Louisianians have reliable access to safe drinking water. Over the past several years, more state and federal funding has become available to water systems that will allow them to make the improvements that will help raise their letter grade," Ames said. "We will continue working with water systems to identify the issues contributing to low letter grades and provide systems with various options to improve their operations, financial stability, and customer satisfaction."

Water grade distribution

- A: 386 systems, or 41%
- B: 256 systems, or 27%
- C: 171 systems, or 18%
- D: 56 systems, or 6%
- F: 82 systems, or 9%

"More than 65% of water systems in the state received an A or B grade. However, 15% of systems received a D or F and have opportunities for

improvement," Ames said. "Dedicated funding through the LDH Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund Program, as well as other funding mechanisms, are available to help systems invest in this critical infrastructure."

Determining a water system's grade

There are seven standards evaluated to determine a system's grade. These standards are:

- Federal water quality violations
- State violations
- Financial sustainability
- Operation and maintenance
- Infrastructure
- Customer satisfaction
- Secondary contaminants (iron and Manganese)

Water systems are also eligible for up to 10 bonus points for maintaining asset management plans, a storage assessment and maintenance program, a sound assessment and maintenance program, and a capacity development program or management training program.

The LDH water grades page can be found at ldh.la.gov/watergrade

Note: LDH and Sen. Mills will hold a joint technical briefing for the media on determining water grades at 1 p.m. today and answer questions. Members of the media may log onto the virtual meeting at the Zoom link below:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85989722348>

National Urban League President Marc Morial to address spring graduates



National Urban League President Marc H. Morial

National Urban League President Marc H. Morial will address spring graduates of Southern University and A&M College on Friday, May 12, in the F.G. Clark Activity Center. The

ceremony — culminating with awarding bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees — begins at 10 a.m. and is open to the public.

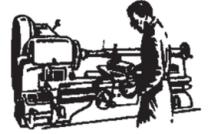
Morial is the transformative leader of the National Urban

League, the nation's largest historic civil rights and urban advocacy organization. Before his 15-year tenure, he served as a lawyer and Louisiana state senator. He is perhaps best known as one of the most prolific mayors of New Orleans and past president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. He and his father, the late Ernest "Dutch" Morial, made history as the first Black mayor and son to be elected mayor of a major city in the nation.

A published author, Morial has a leading voice on the national stage in regard to jobs, education, housing, health, voting rights, equity, and entrepreneurship. His leadership book, "10 Leadership Lessons That Help You Inspire, United, and Achieve," has been widely acclaimed, and his column, "To Be Equal," reaches hundreds of thousands. He is the host of the weekly syndicated television show, "America's Black Forum."

Morial, who is an alumnus of the University of Pennsylvania and Georgetown University Law Center, respectively, has been recognized as one of the 100 most influential Black Americans by Ebony Magazine, one of the top 50 Non-Profit Leaders by the Non-Profit Times, one of the 100 Most Influential Black Lawyers in America. He is also an inductee into the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame in Atlanta.

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 General Information 225-775-2002
 Email brweeklypress@yahoo.com

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Renewable energy advocates suspicious of leasing legislation

Bill would put solar and wind leasing into state mineral code

BY: WESLEY MULLER
Louisiana Illuminator

A legislative proposal to lock into Louisiana law the rights of landowners who lease their property to solar and wind farm operators has renewable energy advocates uncomfortable.

Senate Bill 154, sponsored by Sen. Bret Allain, R-Franklin, would tuck protections for individual property owners into Louisiana's mineral code, a massive section of statutes related mostly to oil and gas exploration.

Allain's bill cleared the Senate Committee on Natural Resources last week without objection from other lawmakers, but some in the renewable energy industry and other policy experts expressed their opposition.

Several lobbyists who spoke against the bill did so only in



Rows of solar modules generate electricity at UL-Lafayette's Photovoltaic Applied Research and Testing (PART) Lab on Aug. 9, 2021. (Wes Muller/Louisiana Illuminator)

vague terms and failed to explain exactly how placement in the mineral code would hinder the renewable energy industry. Only one offered some specificity.

Camille Manning-Broome is president of the Center for Plan-

ning Excellence, a Louisiana non-profit that provides best-practice guidance on policy related to infrastructure and community design. She told lawmakers the bill would make Louisiana an outlier among other states that

have approved laws on wind and solar leasing.

The state's mineral code is designed for industries that extract resources from below the earth's surface, where land use rights carry a unique array of ob-

ligations and liabilities, she said.

"For wind and solar, leasing is properly viewed through the lens of surface rights," Manning-Broome said. "They are more akin to agriculture or hunting."

Allain said everything in his bill came from current law pertaining to oil and gas, but he did acknowledge his legislation is not an official product of the state's Emerging Energy Codification Task Force.

Allain established the task force last year in an effort to develop legislation like SB 154, but the panel's final report isn't due until Feb. 9, 2024 — after Allain's term in office ends.

"As you know, I will not be here next year because of term limits, and I thought it was important that I get a leasing bill for emerging energy on the books here," he told the committee last week.

In a phone interview, Man-

ning-Broome explained that folding wind and solar leasing into the mineral code unnecessarily complicates the law and can make it less accessible to the public.

"We shouldn't rush into laws like this," she said. "It's really critical that we're very smart, intentional and deliberate, and we want to ensure a transparent process in creating this law. Let the task force do its work."

Ownership of mineral rights can be very complicated, and Louisiana is home to an entire industry of lawyers who specialize in the subject, though Allain sees that as a benefit to using the mineral code for solar and wind. He even appointed the director of the Louisiana Mineral Law Institute, Keith Hall, to the Emerging Energy Codification Task Force.

The bill is now pending on the Senate floor.

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Mabile said. She added that the proposal would push many low-income workers back into poverty and into a workforce that does not make any exemptions for the cost of going to work. Employers will not save any money under the proposed legislation. She said that the state will pay out smaller amounts in unemployment benefits but won't be able to use that money for other things because it will pile up in the restricted unemployment trust fund.

LWC Secretary Ava Cates said the proposal's most significant consequences would happen during times like the pandemic that cause unemployment rates to spike quickly. She said that laid-off workers would be locked into fewer benefits for an entire year based on unemployment rates of

the previous month. Unemployment rates also differ significantly according to geographic areas within the state, with metropolitan areas having significantly higher rates than other parts of the state. According to the National Employment Law Project, sliding-scale programs like Romero is proposing disproportionately hurt communities of color.

Republicans on the committee remain unconvinced by the LWC leadership's testimony. Romero said that if the proposal is approved, lawmakers could enact new legislation to use the money or lower the unemployment tax rates. He believes the proposal will improve the state in the long run. "I think in the future, and the state's going to be better off by doing this, I really believe... Once it's in place, I think you'll see some positive results," he said.

Crawfish, Music, and Fun: Buggin' on the Bluff is Back

BATON ROUGE, La. — Get ready to shake your tail feathers at the ninth Annual Crawfish Boil and Music Festival, 'Buggin' on the Bluff', hosted by the Southern University Alumni Federation Home Chapter. It's all happening on Saturday, May 6th, from noon until 6 p.m. on the lawn of the Mayberry Dining Hall at Southern University in Baton Rouge.

This year, we have a lineup that'll have you on your feet all day. Zydeco musician Chris Ardoin and the Human Jukebox band will be taking the stage.



So grab your lawn chair, bring your appetite, and prepare to dance the day away.

The event is expected to draw in over 800 alumni, friends, and supporters, so you can bet it will be a blast. And if that's not enough, there will also be a vendor fair market with tons of local goodies to explore.

"It's a party for everyone!" exclaimed Home Chapter President Brian Adams. "Come out and show your support for our

university while enjoying some amazing food and music. Plus, all the net proceeds will go towards scholarships for deserving students. It's a win-win!"

So make sure to take advantage of the fun. Mark your calendars and get ready to join the party at 'Buggin' on the Bluff'!

Tickets are \$35 for crawfish or fried fish. Visit <https://www.suhomechapter.org/general-6> to purchase tickets.

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Magee's concerns. However, he proposed amendments that would expand the tax to include events in New Orleans, making the cost more equitable. Cormier expressed openness to amending the bill on the house floor.

Committee Chair Stuart Bishop, however, did not allow the bill to move forward, forcing a vote that ultimately failed. The rejection of the bill means that the passenger rail project

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way through the state legislature.

Temple's statement comes in response to the renewed attention on DEI measures in Louisiana, with higher education leaders and academic organizations pushing back against attempts to curb their effectiveness. Despite ongoing debate about the efficacy of DEI measures, both sides agree that equitable access to higher education is essential

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Observatory
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Observatory
May 20 | noon-2 p.m.

SWAMP BIRTHDAY PARTY
Bluebonnet Swamp
Nature Center
May 20 | 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

STEM EXPANSION
Highland Road Park
Observatory
May 20 | 3:30-7:30 p.m.

MAKE A SPLASH
Liberty Lagoon
May 24 | 3-6 p.m.

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Hope and a Future: Trusting in God's Plans

BY IVORY D. PAYNE

Jeremiah 29:11 is a verse that has brought comfort and encouragement to countless individuals throughout the ages. In this verse, God declares that He knows the plans He has for us, plans to prosper us and not harm us, and plans to give us hope and a future. I know when the word prosper is used many first thoughts are of financial gain. God's prosperity plan is so much more than money. It includes your health, relationships man to man and man to God, and yes even your financial well-being. He just wants you to trust his plan.

But what does it mean to trust in God's plans? Trusting in God's plans means acknowledging that His ways are higher than ours and that His plans for us are more significant than anything we could ever imagine. It means surrendering our plans and desires to Him and seeking His guidance and direction in every area of our lives.

Trusting in God's plans also means understanding that the path to our future may not be easy or painless. We may face struggles and challenges along the way, but we can have confidence that God is with us and that He is using those struggles to shape us into the person He created us to be.

God's plans are not always what we expect but they are always good. He uses every experience, every struggle, and every setback to prepare us for the future He has planned for us. His plans are designed to

give us hope and a lot, even when we can't see it ourselves.

Trusting in God's plans also means being patient and persistent. We may not see immediate results, but we can trust that God is working behind the scenes and will bring His plans to fruition in His time.

It's important to note that trusting in God's plans doesn't mean we won't face challenges or difficult circumstances. However, it does mean that we can meet those challenges with hope and confidence, knowing that God is in control and His plans for us are good.

Trusting in God's plans requires faith, which is not always easy. But as we seek Him in prayer and study His word, we can grow in our faith and deepen our trust in Him. We can learn to rely on His wisdom and guidance to make decisions rather than on our understanding.

In conclusion, if you're feeling lost or uncertain about the future, hold on to the promise of Jeremiah 29:11. Trust that God has good things in store for you and that He is working everything out for your good. With Him by your side, you can face any challenge, overcome any obstacle, and walk confidently into the future He has prepared for you.



Ivory D. Payne

RELIGION

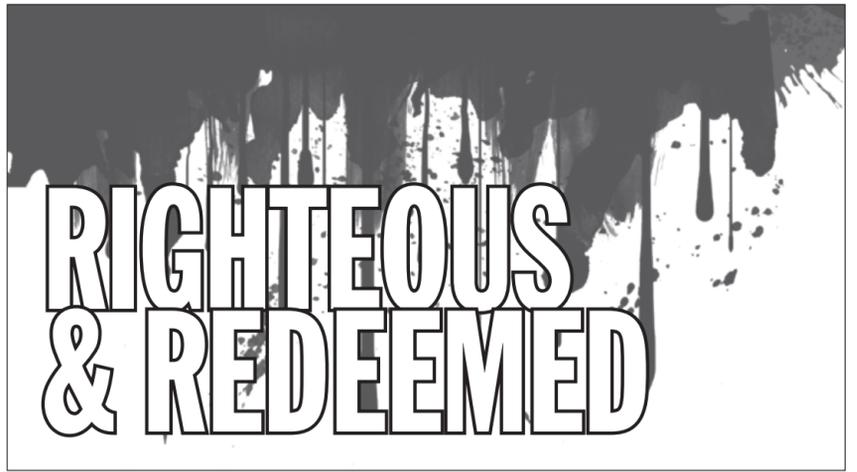
Righteous and redeemed only by Christ's Blood

BY CREFLO DOLLAR

The external environment believers operate in every day is far from ideal. If we're not careful, the negative messages the world sends us can make us feel like sinners on their way to hell. However, Jesus bled and died to change the trajectory of our final destination after our earthly lives are done. When the enemy attacks us with negative thinking regarding our righteousness and salvation, we can trust in Jesus' powerful blood to guarantee our entrance into heaven.

The devil tries his best to get us to doubt our knowledge of the truth of who we are in Jesus Christ, and to question whether or not we're really saved. He points to what we've done in the past, and suggests that maybe God won't accept us anymore because of our actions. This is a dangerous way to think because it opens the door to destruction. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..." (Hosea 4:6).

Our salvation isn't based on anything we do, but on what Jesus already did. Therefore, nothing we could ever do is stronger than what He accomplished on the cross. Our standing as saved, redeemed people



of faith can never change. This is comforting and reassuring in the midst of the devil's spiritual onslaughts.

Jesus' blood carries great power not only in the physical realm, but also in the spiritual realm. It gives us authority on the earth now, and secures our future with Him later. In the Old Testament, the people shed the blood of sacrificial animals to atone for their sins. Believing that the blood that Jesus shed has permanently broken the power of sin puts us in right-standing with God and keeps us there. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13).

Jesus gave believers the same power that God gave Him. In the physical realm, this en-

ables us to dominate over the power of the devil, and nothing he does can hurt us. Because of His great love for us, God also gave us helpers in the supernatural realm to protect and minister to us. "Therefore, angels are only servants—spirits sent to care for people who will inherit salvation" (Hebrews 1:14, NLT).

God has made some amazing promises to us, His children, and we have every right to expect all of them to come to pass in our lives. Being covered in the blood means we have victory in life, deliverance from trouble, supernatural protection from evil, and prosperity in everything we do. We've been freed from sin, fear, deception, sickness, and everything else Satan tries to use against us. When the world struggles with insufficiency, we

lack nothing. "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

When we plead the blood, we can have the utmost confidence in God's Word concerning everything that touches our lives. Unlike the promises others make to us, the ones God makes to us are trustworthy and stand forever. "... You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed" (Joshua 23:14, NIV). When everything around us that seems true shifts and we can't count on it in a pinch, the blood of Jesus is the one thing we can rely on.

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BUSINESS

Louisiana House Passes Tax Incentive Worth \$180 Million to Boost Film Industry, Now Headed to Senate



If approved, the tax break will remain in place for another decade, providing a stable environment for film studios and bringing in new productions to the state.

The Louisiana House of Representatives has passed a tax incentive worth \$180 million to keep film productions in the state. If approved by the Senate and signed by the governor, studios will continue to receive incentives that will help bring more jobs, money, and production to the state.

Katie Pryor, the Executive Director of the Baton Rouge

Film Commission, praised the tax break for making Louisiana competitive in the global film market by providing stage space, an excellent crew, and fantastic locations. She believes it will keep Baton Rouge in the eyes of filmmakers who want to shoot there.

However, only some people support the incentive. State Rep. Richard Nelson criti-

cized the proposal, calling it a waste of money. He cited the \$170 million budget for NCIS New Orleans, which he says is equivalent to the entire budget of the New Orleans Police Department.

In contrast, State Rep. Mandie Landry supported the bill, highlighting the job opportunities and payroll taxes paid by the film industry. She

said the tax incentive would help provide stability and create steady jobs for people who previously worked as waiters and waitresses.

If approved, the tax break will remain in place for another decade, providing a stable environment for film studios and bringing in new productions to the state.

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Hey students! Are you interested in photography, writing or graphic design? The BR Weekly Press Newspaper wants you to join their team! You'll get to work with professionals, create cool content and gain valuable experience. It's a great opportunity for internships and to build your portfolio.

If you're interested, call 225-775-2002 or email your resume to ivory@brweeklypress.com. Let's create something awesome together!

Systems Services, Inc seeks an Odoo Developer in Baton Rouge, LA

Duties: Analyze user needs & req'ts to determine feasibility of design considering time & cost; Support & customize the Odoo (Enterprise Resource Planning) ERP software platform; Maintain, customize, & optimize existing business software for clients; Create & develop custom business applications based on clients' needs to streamline & improve day-to-day business processes, debug potential/existing bugs in the systems; fix them; Customize business applications & their UI design, manage databases, dev'p APIs, write scripts & scheduled actions, design reports & create new custom applications. Review & inspect; General Ledger data in Odoo databases & provide answers to customer tickets regarding the financial results; Work w software dev't team & others on project status, proposals, technical issues.

Req't: Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Computer Science, Computer Engineering, or related degree; College-level course work in an Intro U.S. Accounting course; 1 year Odoo development exp. must include customizing existing apps and creating new modules with clean and re-usable code in different Odoo versions (V12, V13, V14, V15); 6 months' programming exp with JavaScript, XML, HTML, and SQL; 6 months' exp using Python, GitHub, Odoo.SH, and Docker; Candidate must be able to successfully extend an Odoo module given a set of customer specifications.

Apply: <https://www.ssihr.com/jobs/detail/odoo-software-developer-5>

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF MARICOPA JUVENILE DIVISION CASE NO. JS21560 NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR TERMINATION PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

In the Matter of:
ELIZABETH MONK DOB: July 22, 2009
Person under 18 years of age.

TO: Fadia Erica ElMohamed aka Fadia Monk
Petitioners, Brandon Vincent Monk and Jessica LeeAnn Monk, having filed with this Court a verified Petition to Terminate Parent-Child Relationship between Elizabeth Monk and her Natural Mother, Fadia Erica ElMohamed aka Fadia Monk.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a hearing on the Petition to Terminate Parent-Child Relationship is scheduled for the 22nd day of June, 2023, at the hour of 9:15 o'clock, a.m. (Arizona time), before the Honorable Pamela Gates in the Maricopa County Superior Court, Juvenile Division at the Old Court House located at: 125 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85003, for the purpose of determining whether any parent named herein is contesting the allegations in the Petition for Termination.

The hearing will be virtual. You may contact the division at 602-506-6391. You may use the following link <https://tinyurl.com/jbazmc-ju17> to connect to the hearing or call in at the time of the hearing to 917-781-4590 and use Conference ID: 447-368-555#. You have a right to appear as a party in this proceeding. The failure of a parent to appear at the initial hearing, the pretrial conference, the status conference or the termination adjudication hearing without good cause may result in an adjudication terminating the parent-child relationship of that parent.

Failure to appear at a hearing may result in a finding that the parent has waived legal rights, including the right to a jury, and is deemed to have admitted the allegations in the motion or petition for termination. The parent shall be advised that the hearings may go forward in the absence of the parent and may result in the termination of parental rights based upon the record and evidence presented.

In the event a named parent appears and enters a contest to the allegations, a trial will be scheduled for a later date. If a named parent does not contest the allegations, then that parent's rights shall be terminated on the above date and time.

The above-named individual may obtain a copy of the Notice of Hearing and Petition to Terminate Parent-Child Relationship by submitting a written request to: **Kristy B. Blackwell**, Attorney at Law, 3920 S. Alma School Rd., Ste. 5, Chandler, AZ 85248. A request for reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities must be made to the Court by parties at least three (3) working days in advance of a scheduled court proceeding.

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SPORTS

Southern University Lady Jaguars Win 2023 SWAC Women's Basketball Tournament Championship



Southern University Lady Jaguars

BATON ROUGE, LA – The Southern University Lady Jaguars have emerged as the 2023 SWAC Women's Basketball Tournament Champions after defeating Arkansas-Pine Bluff in the Final. The Lady Jags secured their first NCAA Tournament Appearance since 2019 with a 62-52 victory in the championship game.

The Lady Golden Lions had a two-point lead at halftime and maintained a 41-38 lead after three quarters. However, the Lady Jaguars made a strong comeback in the final period, scoring 24 points and holding their opponents to 12 points. Southern University's defense was instrumental in their win, limiting Arkansas-Pine Bluff to only 26.7% from the floor.

Southern's Head Coach, Funchess, expressed his pride in his team's performance. "We fought hard and never gave up. We knew we had to stay focused and continue playing aggressively until the end. Our players executed the game plan perfectly, and it paid off."

The Lady Jaguars dominated the game, scoring six fast break points, ten points off turnovers, and 24 points in the paint. They

also had an impressive 60% in 3-point shots, eight defensive rebounds, and 55 court points compared to Pine Bluff's 21. The Lady Jags took the lead at 5:54 in the fourth quarter and never looked back, clinching the championship.

The Lady Jaguars' journey to the championship was challenging, as they had to overcome the defending conference champions, Jackson State, in a nail-biting semifinal. Southern University finished the season with an 18-14 overall record and a 12-6 record in the SWAC.

With this victory, the Lady Jaguars have secured a place in the NCAA tournament, which will be their first appearance in four years. Southern University fans are already looking forward to seeing their team compete on the national stage.

LSU Women's Basketball Coach Kim Mulkey's Request for Stadium Renovation Sparks Debate in Louisiana

Legislative leaders have revealed that LSU women's basketball coach Kim Mulkey's desire to renovate the Pete Maravich Assembly Center (PMAC) might come to fruition this year. House Speaker Pro Tempore Rep. Tanner Magee confirmed that there's a chance the money would be set aside in the state construction budget, House Bill 2. However, how much funding would be allotted remains unknown, and it's unlikely that the PMAC renovations would receive more than the new LSU Library, which is set to receive \$3.2 million in the current budget cycle.

LSU officials were surprised by this news, as the university did not request any funding for the PMAC in its capital outlay requests to the state. Mulkey had made the request for state funding for the renovation or replacement of the PMAC on April 19 during LSU Day at the Capitol, an annual event where LSU students, researchers, administrators, coaches, and athletes gather to showcase the university.

According to Magee, Mulkey had stated that the PMAC's degraded condition posed a safety risk to her players during a conversation with legislative leaders. However, some state leaders, including Governor John Bel Edwards, have questioned the proposal, emphasizing the need for a new library instead.

Rep. Barry Ivey had initially opposed the plan, citing the university's \$631 million upkeep backlog, but later softened his stance, stating that he would support funding for high priority needs, such as safety.

LSU officials hope that any improvements to the PMAC would benefit the entire campus. However, some lawmakers are concerned that funding for the PMAC renovations might result in cuts to other projects in the state's construction budget. Lawmakers are currently meeting to determine how to allocate funds for the fiscal year starting July 1.

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NEW FROM THE CITY OF BAKER NEWS

BREC Strategic Planning Community Advisory Committee Accepting Applications

The BREC Strategic Planning Community Advisory Committee is seeking applicants who will set the foundation for future Community Advisory Committees, as well as future Friends of BREC Parks, through their new Community Engagement Policy.

This committee will be a part of making their community's voice heard.

BREC is looking for a diverse group to comprise this 15-member committee.

Being recipients of a grant from the Trust for Public Land for this project will allow BREC to compensate each CAC member a total of at least \$1,000, with eligibility for additional funds

for those members who qualify for financial assistance.

If you are interested or if you know a community resident that would be interested in being a part of this endeavor with us, please encourage them to apply at the link below.

BREC will begin reviewing applications by May 22, 2023, so that they can begin the selection process by the beginning of June.

Apply today at Survey Participation visit <https://survey.sogolytics.com/survey1.aspx?k=RQsRTSSRYsQQXsPsP&lang=0> (sogolytics.com)

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- Clear title to the property
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2022 INCOME GUIDELINES

What Documents Will I Need?

Acceptable Forms of Proof of Income

- Check Stubs
- W-2
- 1099
- Social Security Award Letter

Proof of Ownership

- Deed
- Mortgage Statement
- Current Year Property tax receipt

Proof of Insurance

- Policy Declarations Page
- Payment Receipt

Picture ID Required before meeting with the intake personnel.

APPLICATION INTAKE LOCATION

CONTACT
Reatha Wright (225) 615-4174
Juandrika Allen (225) 975-0007

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