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The Skanner has received 20 NNPA awards since 1998

The Skanner Newspaper, established in October 1975, is a weekly publication, published every Wednesday by IMM Publications Inc.

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The Skanner is a member of the National Newspaper Publishers Association and West Coast Black Publishers Association.

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Opinion

Cop Killings Bear Strange Fruit for Families

I'm about to be extremely facetious!

We're Black, right? We all like a "hook-up" on something every now and then, don't we?

Well, it seems as if Black people have found a way to instantaneously enhance their lives, and all it takes is the sacrifice of one of our loved ones in order for us to come up.

Wanna hear more about this exciting new phenomenon that's sweeping the nation? Glad you said YES!

I want to introduce every Black family in America to an innovative new way to lucratively bless your family for years to come – it's called "The New Black Benefit Package."

That's right y'all. Forget about school. Forget about college. Forget about athletics. Forget about entertainment. Forget about learning a trade. Forget about life insurance.

Forget about investing.

Why the hell should we pursue any of that stuff, when all we have to do is send our Black men, women, boys and girls out here to get killed by members of law enforcement?

I mean, with the rate at which cities across America are breaking the bank to pay off Black families after the



Jeffrey Boney
NNPA
Columnist

death of their unarmed loved ones, it seems as if these cities have seemingly come to the conclusion that this is the best way for Black families to become financially free and then remain quiet about the lack of law enforcement accountability in this country.

“ This Black family got a huge settlement and the officer who shot Rice got away with murder

Let's just look at examples, some as recent as last year.

I know you remember Freddie Gray, right? He was the 25-year old Black man who was murdered in police custody after suffering a severe spinal injury. Well, in September of last year, the city of Baltimore settled a lawsuit with his family for \$6.4 million. I know what you're saying. There were six officers who were indicted for Gray's death, right? Well guess what? Gray is still dead and the city of Baltimore never acknowledged the Bal-

timore police were wrong.

Just last month, the family of Tamir Rice, who was 12-years old when cops rolled up on him in 2014 and shot him to death in less than 2 seconds for having a toy gun, settled their lawsuit out of court with the city of Cleveland for \$6 million. Guess what? This Black family got a huge settlement and the officer who shot Rice got away with murder. No accountability whatsoever.

What about Eric Garner, the 43-year-old Black man who was choked to death on cam-

cer, Michael Slager has been charged and was terminated, the city refused to acknowledge that the officer or the police department did anything wrong.

Shall I keep going?

What about Oscar Grant III, the 22-year old Black man and father, who was fatally shot in the back by a police officer at the Fruitvale station in Oakland in 2009 on New Year's Day?

The officer worked for Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and they agreed to settle a lawsuit brought by the family by giving \$1.3 million to his mother and \$1.5 million to his daughter. The officer resigned a week after the incident and was charged with murder but was only convicted of the lesser charge of involuntary manslaughter. The officer only served about a year of a two-year term and BART made no admission of wrongdoing.

Again, of course I'm being facetious. However, as I look at what is happening all across the U.S., it seems as if Black families are being forced to accept cash settlements as a substitute for real accountability and payouts as an alternative to true justice.

Read the rest of this story at
TheSkanner.com

Remembering Vernon Jordan, the Rosa Parks of Wall Street

“ Don't just give us money, and don't just show up for the Equal Opportunity Day dinner. That is not enough when you look at Black consumer power in this country. It's not enough for you to come and shake our hands and be our friends. We want in.” — Vernon Jordan, National Urban League President 1971 -1981, on his message to corporate executives

The National Urban League recently released our annual report on the social and economic status of people of color, the State of Black America®.

This year's edition, "Locked Out: Education, Jobs & Justice," was especially significant because it marked the 40th anniversary of the report, first issued in 1976 by Vernon Jordan.

In a video message Jordan recorded for the State of Black America® release, he recalled the tears he wept the night Barack Obama was elected President

"It dawned on me that my tears were not really my tears, but they were the tears of my grandparents and my parents. They were the tears of all those black people who toted that cotton and lifted that bale," said Jordan. "The



Marc H. Morial
National
Urban League

notion that Obama was going to be President, or that any black person was going to be President, is stunning."

While we reflect this year on how far we've come since Jordan first issued the State of Black America®, Jordan's own life is a vivid illustration of

“ He realized that the first phase of the modern civil rights movement was fighting legal segregation, but the roots of racism were fundamentally economic

the progression of civil rights throughout the latter half of the 20th Century and into the 21st.

"He is kind of the Rosa Parks of Wall Street," Harvard historian Henry Louis Gates, Jr., told Bloomberg.

"He realized that the first phase of the modern civil rights movement was fighting legal segregation, but the roots of racism were fundamentally economic."

According to the Bloomberg profile, published on the occasion of his 80th birthday last year: "As a young man in Jim Crow Georgia, his first job was chauffeuring a White banker who was shocked that he could read. Now he counts some of America's most wealthy and powerful citizens as friends and CEOs of Fortune 500 companies are proud to call him a mentor."

Jordan himself often recounts what he calls his earliest political memory, listening to Georgia's segre-

"Here were Negro parents, both of whom had grandparents who were slaves, who to some extent were conditioned to the southern way of life," Jordan told author Robert Penn Warren in 1964. "They could never quite adjust to the idea of their boy even being in Green Castle, Indiana, the only Negro in a class of 400 students, and they felt their boy, their baby, their prize, would be happier and have less frustrations if he went to a predominantly Negro institution."

But his parents came to realize the significance of Jordan's choice the night a White classmate came to stay at the Jordans' home.

"In the middle of the night, my father got out of bed and came into my room and turned on the light and stood there with tears in his eyes, put the light out and went back to bed and said to my mother, 'You know, this democracy thing is really here, and it's right here in my house.'"

Having struggled in college due to his sub-standard segregated education in Georgia, Jordan determined upon graduation to pursue a career in civil rights.

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