



NEWS RELEASE

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Leona Tate Foundation Celebrates Louisiana Public School Desegregation U.S. Marshals Eastern District of Louisiana Reflects on Agency's Historical Role

NEW ORLEANS – The Leona Tate Foundation and U.S. Marshals Eastern District of Louisiana celebrated the annual anniversary of public school desegregation in New Orleans with a commemorative ceremony at the Lower Ninth Ward Living Museum on Nov. 18.

The McDonogh Three – Leona Tate, Tessie Prevost, and Gail Etienne – were the first African-American students to attend a previously all-white school escorted by deputy U.S. marshals. The 6-year-old girls required tight security in response to strong opposition to the Brown v Board of Education verdict which reversed the “Separate but Equal” doctrine and instituted statewide integration within the Louisiana public school system.

Many years have passed since that fateful day in 1960, but Tate, Prevost, and Etienne continue to preserve history through the Leona Tate Foundation. All three were in attendance at the celebration and provided commentary during a round table panel discussion and shared vivid details, recalling their experiences during their time at McDonogh 19 Elementary School. A recurring sentiment shared by all three women was their admiration and great sense of gratitude they had for their deputy U.S. marshal escorts.

“We weren’t even allowed to walk through a door without a U.S. Marshal,” said Leona Tate. “Thank God for the U.S. Marshals.”

“The Marshals Service has a long and rich heritage,” said U.S. Marshal for the Eastern District of Louisiana Genny May. “There are many memorable events that highlight our agency’s historical timeline, but this moment in our history is one I’m particularly proud of.”

Additional information about the U.S. Marshals Service can be found at www.usmarshals.gov

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ANNUAL ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
OF DESEGREGATION DAY OF
LOUISIANA PUBLIC SCHOOLS