



Press Kit

The inspiring real life
story of a small
struggling school that
forever changed
Civil Rights in
New Orleans and the
Nation.

a limited series podcast
presented by



About

EXCHANGE PLACE is a podcast series that tells the story of a school, The Adult Education Center, whose mission was to train mostly African American women in the skills they needed to integrate the secretarial offices of the Deep South between 1965 and '72.

Those offices were not just segregated, for the most part they were completely off limits to women of color. And many were fighting to ensure the workplace would stay that way for years or decades to come. Over the course of the school's history, it was shut down multiple times and constantly under duress from forces conspiring to defeat it. Nevertheless, the school survived to become one of the most successful programs of its kind in the War On Poverty, lauded on the front pages of national newspapers like The Wall Street Journal and the subject of an Emmy Award-winning documentary in 1968 titled, appropriately, "The School That Would Not Die."

The first season of this podcast follows the inspirational biographies of four of the school's graduates who changed the moral skyline of New Orleans -- how they did it -- and how the school's teachers and supporters struggled to overcome the massive forces arrayed against them. Learn more at www.431exchange.org/podcast.

About



MYA CARTER, Narrator

Mya Carter is a professional actor from New Orleans, LA. She spent her college years at SUNY Purchase where she received her BFA in acting. Upon graduating, she stayed living in NYC to pursue her career and landed her first television roles with NBC and Comedy Central. Currently Mya is back home in New Orleans, where she recorded all of her work for “Exchange Place” and is able to spend time on some personal projects inspired by her hometown.



JEFF GEOFFRAY, Co-Host, Executive Producer

Jeff has produced or served as an executive on more than 150 feature films representing more than \$1 billion of production, including award-winning shorts, documentaries, and podcasts. He is co-founder of Storywarrior Media, Inc. where he and his partner, Amy Taylor, are producing their first independently financed animated feature to be available for worldwide acquisition in 2023. He co-founded the non-profit scholarship fund based, The 431 Exchange.



JEANNE GEOFFRAY, Producer

With a highly successful, 50-year career that broke gender-based boundaries in sales, customer service, and management, Jeanne Geoffray, all but traded it in for a dream she'd had for years: to bring her mother's unparalleled social justice accomplishments in New Orleans to life. Jeanne co-produced the book and podcast of her mother's story, as she and her brother, Jeff, broke ground with their nonprofit, the 431 Exchange, to provide scholarships to adults in Louisiana determined to rise above poverty through education.

About



EDIE CLARKE, Co-Producer & Co-Editor

Edie Clarke is a Remote Video Producer, Video Editor, YouTube Strategist and Coach. She has worked in production for over 20 years, starting out in high school when she got her start working at the local tv station. She then moved on to work as a casting assistant on Hollywood programs filmed on the islands before relocating to Los Angeles where she worked at post-production, production, and eventually visual effects companies as a production coordinator and art department manager. Married with one son, Edie lives in Brooklyn, NY.



TROY PIERRE II, Director - Narration

Troy is a multi-hyphenate artist, director and film photographer from New Orleans, Louisiana. With primary focus in visual related art, written works and creative direction, he's grown to craft meaningful work in various mediums, including photography and film. His short film, "The Reckoning," has won several festivals in Brazil and Greece for its screenplay and performance. "The Tide's Turning," a photographic collage, was featured in downtown New Orleans on a billboard and he has also had work shown in The Presbytère .



KEVIN GULLAGE, Music and Score

At 24-years old, fast-rising star Kevin leads his band of veteran players, The Blues Groovers, with the poise of a seasoned performer. His impressive blend of soulful singing and dazzling blues piano infused with the experience of his bandmates is leaving audiences in awe. At age 18, Kevin was selected as the pianist for the 2017 Thelonious Monk All-Star Sextet performing alongside jazz legend, Bobby Watson. In 2019, Kevin & the Blues Groovers became a resident artist at B.B. King's Blues Club, New Orleans. With a resounding demand from their growing fan-base, Kevin recorded his first EP entitled Blues for the City. Kevin signed with the Grammy-winning record label Basin Street Records in early 2022.

"essential figures in history that uniquely fought the battle"

-Screencraft

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www.431exchange.org/podcast



Synopsis

EPISODE 1: SCHOOL IS IN SESSION

Run time 15:02

On a cold December day in 1965, an experimental school known as the Adult Education Center started its first day of classes. Little did they know that over the course of the next seven years, 431 graduates of mostly African American women would go on to make history by integrating the secretarial offices of the Deep South and other parts of the United States.

EPISODE 2: HILDA JEAN SMITH FROM GED TO PHD

Run time 1:06:50

A day after her wedding, sixteen-year-old Hilda Jean Smith's mother dies, leaving her the responsibility of raising 10 younger siblings. Though she eventually drops out of high school to do so, Hilda never loses sight that education was the most important stepping stone to a better life. In this interview with Hilda, we hear her incredible story.



Then and now:
Hilda Mosley with her class in 1970 (top, far right)
and today, Hilda Jean Smith.



EPISODE 3: WHY NOW, WHY US

Run time 38:11

Jeanne and Jeff Geoffray are the youngest children of the Adult Education Center's Director, Alice Geoffray. As frequent visitors to the Center between 1965 and 1972, they witnessed the extraordinary transformation in their mother brought on by her work with the 431 alumnae, which set the stage for her career as the "Mother of Career Education" in Louisiana.

EPISODE 4: MS. LORRAINE WASHINGTON TEARS LIKE RAIN

Run time 21:04

Lorraine Washington suffered through the worst forms of segregation, intimidation, and voting prohibitions during the Jim Crow era. However, the promises [and failures] of job programs during the War on Poverty were equally frustrating. Graduation from such a program -- a nursing school -- apparently only qualified her for janitorial work at a local hospital.



Lorraine Washington in 1970 after winning the Alice R. Geoffray Award.

EPISODE 5: TWO PATHS CROSS

Run time 35:17

The Adult Education Center was the brainchild of a young, dashing, charismatic outsider – a Dominican Priest from Illinois. Father Timothy Gibbons reached out to the award-winning teacher Alice Geoffray, a 41-year-old mother of seven, because of her reputation as “the best” business education teacher in the city of New Orleans.

EPISODE 6: MS. LINDA PHOENIX OVERCOMING GRAVITY

Run time 1:23:16

Linda Phoenix Teamer was 19 years old in 1970, the year after Neil Armstrong became the first man to walk on the moon. One of Teamer’s wistful teenage dreams was to become NASA’s first African American female astronaut, but first she had to come to grips with the mysterious forces of social gravity. Although she didn’t go to space, she did however break barriers by landing a highly coveted position with the President of Shell Oil and eventually went on to become one of the first African American flight attendants at Delta Airlines.



Linda Phoenix Teamer now serves as the Scholarship Committee Chairperson for The 431 Exchange.

EPISODE 7: ECONOMIC APARTHEID

Run time 29:01

The Adult Education Center was the inspiration of Father Timothy Gibbons. But, at every stage, Gibbons was guided by one of New Orleans' most influential educators and civil rights leaders, Norman Francis, the future President of Xavier University. It was Dr. Francis who encouraged Father Gibbons to focus on a vocational school to train women as secretaries because he believed, if it was training Black women for any other profession, no matter how talented those women were, they would simply be handed a mop and broom by an intransigent business community.

EPISODE 8: DR. SANDRA O'NEAL AFTER DEATH COMMUNICATION

Run time 29:01

Sandra O'Neal was a star student until her sister fell ill. While her mother tended to her sister full-time, Sandra decided to go to work. From that point on, the distraction of proms and other adolescent events lost their meaning. In her search for continuing educational opportunities, Sandra met Alice Geoffray, the Director of the Adult Education Center, and they formed a lifelong bond.



Dr. Sandra O'Neal in 1968 with Congressman Thomas Hale Boggs Sr.
Today, she serves on the Board of The 431 Exchange.

EPISODE 9: HULLABALOO

Run time 40:54

Scores of landlords turned Father Tim Gibbons and Alice Geoffray down as they searched in vain for a location for the Adult Education Center while steering through uncharted and hostile territory. On top of all those challenges, Gibbons was unexpectedly forced to leave his post in New Orleans for causing a political “Hullabaloo.” In a shocking twist, he nominates Alice, a 41-year-old mother of seven with no administrative experience, and no appetite for political upheaval, to take over the program.

EPISODE 10: THE COLE SISTERS AN AMERICAN FAMILY

Run time 59:17

Pam Cole was the youngest of four sisters to graduate from the Adult Education Center between 1965 and 1972. Her sister, Carol Cole, was a graduate of the first class who became one of the first African American secretaries at a major oil company. The AEC played a pivotal role in the life of her family, but the real story of the Cole sisters, and their ideal parents, is a testament to the strength and resiliency of the New Orleans African American community itself.



Carol Cole talking with Marie Zacaese, Secretary to the President of Trans World Airlines, NYC in 1967.

EPISODE 11: MS. PAMELA COLE WORKING LIFE

Run time 1:02:54

The musical score of Pam Cole's teenaged years included the mellifluous sound of her sister Carol Cole practicing typing while Pam fell asleep in the adjoining room of their small, shotgun house in New Orleans' storied 7th Ward. After graduating from the Adult Education Center in 1971, Pam uses her typing skills to achieve independence as a secretary in the Virgin Islands, New York, Houston, and Atlanta. In company after company, Pam is the only, or one of the few Black women.

EPISODE 12: A COWARDLY LION

Run time 30:34

Season 1 of Exchange Place culminates with the story of a single mom named Alice Geoffray, the first Director of The Adult Education Center. With seven children back home and no administrative experience, Alice courageously stepped into the role of a lifetime as widespread antipathy against educating women of color brewed in the wake of a newly desegregated Deep South.



Alice R. Geoffray teaches a class on typing at
The Adult Education Center.