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**ONE BOOK**

ONE NEW ORLEANS

A Campaign for Literacy and Community  
A Project of the Young Leadership Council

Media Contact:  
Megan Holt, Ph.D  
205-310-8537  
[meganholt715@gmail.com](mailto:meganholt715@gmail.com)

**\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\***

## **One Book One New Orleans Announces Fall Events Series** The Young Leadership Council's Literacy Campaign Launches Its 12<sup>th</sup> Year

**New Orleans**—One Book One New Orleans (OBONO), a project of the Young Leadership Council (YLC), is excited to announce its annual lineup of fall events. Inspired by its 2016 book selection, *The Baby Dolls: Breaking the Race and Gender Barriers of the New Orleans Mardi Gras Tradition* by Dr. Kim Vaz-Deville, OBONO brings a season of learning, community, and celebration, all focused on increasing awareness about literacy in New Orleans.

The book focuses on the origins of the baby dolls circa 1912, when a group of women in Black Storyville, frustrated with being excluded from mainstream society, decided to mask as Baby Dolls during Mardi Gras. Among their goals was demonstrating their own power and independence, directly defying those who treated them as invisible. In doing so, they founded a tradition that resonates with New Orleanians today. Modern-day Baby Doll groups continue to use masking as a way to gain a voice in their community, often dedicating themselves to improving the lives of those around them who also feel powerless at times. Vaz-Deville outlines this rich lineage and its connection to--among other things--Carnival and the history of Jazz.

This book celebrates an often-overlooked piece of our city's past and present, encouraging us to create a more inclusive, socially conscious future.

“We love making the book come to life at these events,” says OBONO project leader Dr. Megan Holt. “It truly is one of the most exciting parts of the project. Through panel discussions, entertainment, and art, we work to show members of our community how their stories fit into this reading experience.”

This year, the community programming begins on Monday, August 15, at the Ooh Poo Pah Do Bar (1931 Orleans Ave) from 6:00-8:00pm with **Red Beans and Read!: OBONO Kickoff**. Vaz-Deville will be present to sign books, and there will be a special guest appearance by the

Gold Digger Baby Dolls. In keeping with the much-loved New Orleans Monday tradition, red beans and rice and fried chicken will be on the menu.

After the kickoff, OBONO will hold six additional events in different neighborhoods to encourage citywide participation in its annual literacy initiative. See the list below for the full schedule of neighborhood events.

**Stories from a Baby Doll:** September 1, 6:00-8:00pm, Blue Cypress Books, 8126 Oak St; Alana Harris of the Creole Belle Baby Dolls will be our guest speaker

**The Next Generation of Young Leaders: An Evening with Dillard University:** September 8, 6:00-8:30pm, Dillard University Library Commons, 2601 Gentilly Blvd.

**Books and Brews: A Book Drive for Louisiana Books 2 Prisoners:** September 24, 1:00-3:00pm, Second Line Brewing, 433 N. Bernadotte St.

**Women Breaking Barriers: A Discussion with the Literacy Alliance of Greater New Orleans:** September 29, 6:00-8:00pm, New Orleans Museum of Cultural Arts, 124 Baronne St.

**Baby Dolls as Art: Opening Night of the Ruth Owens Exhibit:** October 13, 6:00-8:30pm, Xavier University Art Gallery, 1 Drexel Dr.

**See You Mardi Gras Day: OBONO Finale:** October 27, 6:00-9:00pm, McKenna Museum of African American Art, 2003 Carondelet St.

In addition to the above community events, OBONO community partner WRBH 88.3 Reading Radio will air readings of *The Baby Dolls*. Beginning September 6, tune in to their Best Seller Non-Fiction program at 9:00am to hear the book read aloud; there will be a replay at 7:00pm each night.

The YLC aims to celebrate its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary by contributing 30,000 volunteer hours to our city, and OBONO is excited to help meet that goal. OBONO welcomes volunteers not only during its events season, but year-round. To volunteer or to get more information, e-mail [onebooknola@gmail.com](mailto:onebooknola@gmail.com). Keep up with all the latest news by following One Book One New Orleans on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/onebookoneneworleans>. For more information on the Young Leadership Council and its many community projects, like OBONO, visit [www.ylcnola.org](http://www.ylcnola.org).

*Young Leadership Council is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, civic organization created to develop leadership through community projects. Through volunteer-created community projects, YLC recruits and retains young professionals to New Orleans, creating a positive impact on the quality of life in the region. The oldest, independent YPO (young professionals' organization) in the country, YLC has raised more than \$25 million to support community projects in and around the New Orleans area since 1986.*

