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**WYES' NEWEST DOCUMENTARY IS 'LOUISIANA INVENTORS & INNOVATORS'**  
*Homegrown Stories of Business Success in Louisiana are Highlighted in WYES' Newest Hour-Long Documentary*

**New Orleans, LA**— It begins with a spark, a lightbulb moment or an idea that inspires an invention or an innovation. From the minds of six Louisiana visionaries profiled in the new WYES documentary **LOUISIANA INVENTORS & INNOVATORS** came businesses and ideas which in many cases revolutionized industry and provided livelihoods for hundreds and thousands of people.

The new hour-long documentary, produced, written, edited and narrated by **Dennis Woltering**, features stories of success by people who almost certainly had no idea they would one day be called visionaries. **LOUISIANA INVENTORS & INNOVATORS** premieres on **Wednesday, January 17 at 9:00 p.m.** on WYES-TV, and will stream on [wyes.org/live](http://wyes.org/live) and on the WYES and PBS apps. For additional airdates visit [wyes.org](http://wyes.org).

The six inventors and innovators featured in the program became titans of the oil, shipping, manufacturing, restaurant and beauty businesses. One innovator and marketing master, **David Oreck**, had his name emblazoned on more than 10 million vacuum cleaners sold worldwide. Another innovator, Louisiana native **Ruth Fertel**, forged a global fine dining empire with a sizzling idea for what became the Ruth's Chris Steak House chain.

Also profiled in **LOUISIANA INVENTORS AND INNOVATORS** are **J.M. Lapeyre**, the inventor of machines that revolutionized the shrimp industry and other fields; **Alden "Doc" Laborde**, who built a revolutionary rig that led to modern, international offshore drilling; **Jerome Goldman**, who transformed international shipping and offshore oil drilling and left his designs on the New Orleans skyline; and Louisiana native **Madam C.J. Walker**, who overcame poverty and Jim Crow era discrimination to become America's first self-made female millionaire.

"These are success stories that celebrate the power of creativity and the human spirit," said Woltering. "Through their hard work, intelligence and persistence, these inventors and innovators turned their ideas and dreams into reality. There is something we can all learn from in that."

**LOUISIANA INVENTORS & INNOVATORS** is made possible by the following generous sponsors: Laitram, MECO, The Alden & Margaret Laborde Foundation, Laborde Marine Management, LLC and the WYES Producers Circle.

**ABOUT WYES:**

WYES is the storyteller for New Orleans, southeast Louisiana and the Mississippi Gulf Coast. For 66 years, WYES has earned a reputation for quality PBS programming, award-winning local documentaries and cooking series. Thank you for making WYES a vital source of education, information, and entertainment - on air and online. For more information, call (504) 486-5511 or visit [wyes.org](http://wyes.org). Like us on Facebook ([wyes.neworleans](https://www.facebook.com/wyes.neworleans)). Follow us on Twitter (@WYESTV) & Instagram ([wyestv](https://www.instagram.com/wyestv)).

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