Terrel A. Delphin
Godfather of the Creole Renaissance

BEFORE there was the internet, the Creole Center, Facebook, Creole conferences and conventions, there was Terrel A. Delphin

In an increasingly multi-cultural, multi-racial, world, people like Terrel Delphin are rare. The ability to weld together people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, to speak for people who often feel unrepresented in a wider society, is his gift. Through his legislative efforts, public service, and personal sacrifices, he has managed to organize and energize virtually the whole Creole population of Louisiana, an effort that has spread across America. He addresses the complexities of multi-racial and cultural identity that have often left people with a deep need to be “who they are” and not lost in the bipolar racial system of earlier America.

Mr. Delphin’s 1997 impassioned plea for the establishment of NSU Creole Heritage Center at Northwestern State University to the Louisiana Board of Regents was met with resounding and unanimous approval. This was a complete validation of his dedication toward the continued research, documentation and education regarding the Creole culture. A special tribute to his abilities to cross racial/cultural lines and encourage multicultural interaction was paid by the City of Natchitoches who declared March 29, 1997 as “Terrel Delphin Day”. This is only one example of the many such honors and acknowledgements he has received. He is known statewide as an expert and noted lecturer on topics concerned with the Creole culture and its relationship and contributions from other ethnic groups.

Mr. Delphin encourages the preservation of identity, pride, and harmony with all the groups with whom he works. Through his efforts, young Creoles of Color are beginning
to write, paint, photograph, and participate politically. In order to do that, he has had to literally change history so that the world can be seen as the rich, complex place it is - so people can gain their own voices. By serving on the governing boards and/or partnering with historical societies, the NSU Creole Heritage Center, the National Parks Service, the National Register committee, the National Heritage Area, the National Center for Preservation, Training and Technology, he has made all of Louisiana and the nation aware of its rich material heritage. Buildings, artifacts, and cemeteries as well as the rich cultural history of the Creole people are protected and developed because of his activism and boundless energy.

Mr. Delphin has also promoted the inclusion of the study of the history and culture of the Creole people within the educational system. He has worked with various state legislative and educational groups in developing means to enhance the historical teachings of the Louisiana schools to show a more accurate and complete description of the Creole culture. To put it mildly, Mr. Delphin has done more for the recognition and revitalization of the Louisiana Creole culture and history than any other individual in America.

NOTE: 2010 – Mr. Delphin is currently ill and unable to pursue his efforts toward the continued promotion and preservation of the Creole culture. There is a overwhelming hopefulness by all who know Terrel that he will once again be able to take up this courageous and important venture. Your thoughts and prayers are gratefully welcomed.