



*Nina Parker
of the Black Heritage Museum*

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“When you leave this place, may you be more understanding, sensitive and appreciative of your heritage and others.”

This Strikes Us ...

A Sojourner's Truth Editorial

The Toledo Board of Education reached a decision on a new superintendent for the district last week and, in a move that surprised just about every observer, they selected William Harner, a U.S. Military Academy graduate who, after a career in the Army, opted to enter education in the role of administrator.

The surprise was not only the selection of Harner but also the fact that John Foley, interim superintendent and long-time employee of the Toledo Public Schools, was passed over for the job.

As the moment approached for the behind-closed-doors final deliberations by the school board, rumors abounded over who on the board wanted whom for the position even to the point of some folks behind those closed doors leaking information about the deliberative process.

Nevertheless, we have our candidate. And if all goes smoothly in the negotiation phase of the process, Harner will be on board in time to start early work on the list of problems TPS faces over the next few years.

First, and of greatest importance, on that list is the budget deficit that has been looming for a few years now and finally has reached crisis stage. A \$12.7 million deficit is projected for next year.

One of the reasons for selecting Harner is his experience in dealing with such budget deficits. He is presently working on a \$73 million deficit that the Philadelphia, PA schools face.

It is pretty difficult to imagine, however, that the deficit Harner will have to overcome when he arrives in Toledo can be surmounted without raising revenues immediately, and raising revenues means placing a levy on the ballot in the immediate future. We would like to think that the deficit can be eliminated merely by decreasing expenses, however, we have not seen any realistic proposal that could turn around that situation only by addressing the expense side of the ledger.

Harner's second challenge, and one of the long-term solutions to the decrease in revenues, is to stop the erosion of the student population. TPS has just over 29,000 students enrolled due to the challenge that state-funded charter schools have presented public schools and due to the fact of Toledo's overall loss of population.

Harner and his new administration will have to adjust to the new realities of both situations. TPS needs to make sure that its product is competitive but the district also needs to let the public know what the city's schools are doing and keep them informed of the level of success they are having.

Of course, it is tempting to say that the district cannot do much to prevent the slide of the city's population but in the long term, the health of the city's public schools cannot help but impact the choice of many who are seeking a place to live or who are grappling with the decision of whether or not to stay in the city.

And, finally, Harner's last big challenge is to maintain, and continue to improve, the level of educational achievement.

Toledo has moved up, in the State of Ohio's report card, to the continuous improvement category. It's a nice start, but just a start.

Drop out rates, particularly among the central city schools, are still abysmal. And achievement scores still reflect a horrendous gap, as in the rest of the nation, between white and African-American/Hispanic students. Toledo has a very long way to go to close that gap, increase the high school graduation rates and move more of its students, especially minority students, into institutions of higher learning.

In order to accomplish these feats, Harner needs to hit the ground running and he needs an unprecedented level of cooperation from students, parents, teachers and other citizens of Toledo. He especially needs to have a board of education that can put its internal dissensions behind it and work with the school leader with some semblance of coordination.

It's a daunting challenge for the retired military officer. Of course, people who go to West Point and then, for a second career, enter educational administration, must know what challenges are. That was, we suspect, the key reason for his selection.

We are going to assume that the school board knew what they were doing with this pick. Unanimously, the board opted to offer the position to Harner after a process that was as long and as painful as they could have possibly made it.

It's essential, we feel, for everyone in this area to get on board with this selection and work in unity to make Harner's stay a success.

The Sojourner's Truth

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Community Calendar

February 27-March 1

• Mid-Winter Revival: Upper Room Tabernacle; Service 7 pm nightly; Pastors Shaim Hampton, Louis Savage, James Sherman; 419-691-7233

March 3

• "Shekinah in the Maumee Indoor Theater:" A gospel event; Variety of local gospel talent, praise dancers, musicians, poets and actors; 7 pm: 419-290-7443

March 4

• Richard Meeker and the Meekettes: Barada Restaurant; Celebrating 45 year birthday; Men of Color Project benefit; Special musical guests include Ramona Collins and Eric Dickey; 5:50 to 8:00 pm: 419-255-4475
• Strawberries, Stilettos & Lingerie Fashion Show: Diva Restaurant; 9 pm to 2 am; 419-989-6856

March 4-11

• The City of Zion, Mt. Zion Baptist Church: Pastor Talmadge J. Thomas' Seventh Year Appreciation; Sunday (Mar. 4) at 10:30 am, Bishop David Thomas from Temple of Deliverance in Cleveland; Friday (Mar. 9) at 7 pm, Pastor Raymond Bishop and the Mt. Pilgrim Church; Saturday (Mar. 10), Banquet at the French Quarters at 6 pm; Sunday (Mar. 11), Pastor Michael Harrison and Union MBC

March 7-10

• Phillips Temple CME Church: "Leadership Training Retreat" - Mar 7-8 - and "The Cleveland/Pittsburgh District Conference" - Mar 8-10: 419-242-7906

March 9-11

• Women With Purpose: Clarion Hotel; Guest speakers Dr. Wanda Davis Turner and Evangelist Yvonne Drake: 419-243-6101

March 17

• Gamma Phi Delta Sorority, Inc Beta Phi Chapter: "Hats Off to Aspiring Young Artists;" Annual artist of tomorrow scholarship fundraiser luncheon; New Life Center; 12:30 to 3:30 pm: 419-367-3234

March 25

• Operation Re-Seed Christian Ministries: Ministry workshop "Ministering in a Nursing Home;" 9 am to Noon: 419-297-3530

April 14

• Toledo Interfaith Mass Choir: "Yesterday;" Stranahan Theater: 7 pm: 419-241-7332 or 419-241-3330

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My View

By Jack Ford
The Truth's Political Columnist

As a long-time social worker, who served a stint as Toledo mayor, I have experienced my share of community forums, block watch and senior citizen meetings where inevitably some citizen would say, "we need activities for our youth" or "we need a new organization for our kids."

I have believed for some time that another youth organization is the last thing we need in Toledo. We have too many organizations now and not enough coordination and cooperation.

The recent tragedy involving the slaying of Toledo police detective, Keith Dressel, brings this lack of coordination into full focus. It appears that one or both of the suspects could have well benefited from timely intervention by one or more of the many programs available for youth in the greater Toledo area.

If you were to ask the average Toledoan how much

money is spent on youth services each year, you would expect to hear amounts ranging from \$5 million to \$25 million. Some years ago, I conducted a study on this question out of my office in the Ohio legislature.

We started with the annual budgets of well-known organizations such as the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Clubs, the Lucas County Children Services boards, the Fredrick Douglass Community Center, and so forth. We stopped counting when the local budget total hit \$63 million per year.

That was nine years ago, so the figure is much greater now in 2007. Where does over \$60 million a year go on youth programming in Lucas County? Why would we have any huge service gap for youth with this kind of money being spent each and every year?

The reason for such high costs and low return is duplication of effort, turf issues and a failure to communicate among sister agencies.

The slaying of Detective Dressel should be a clarion call that dramatically changes the way we do youth business in greater Toledo. I propose several steps which will place us light years ahead in coordinating youth services.

First the mayors of Toledo, Maumee, Sylvania and Oregon should meet with both the Board of Lucas County Commissioners and the leadership of the Greater Toledo United Way in a youth summit to wrangle out coordination at their level. These entities, along with the State Department of Youth Services, are the king pins of funding and social service policy in greater Toledo. They have the raw political power of the purse to jawbone just about everyone into line. After they reach an agree-

ment on an across-the-system overhaul, the next step can be taken.

The next step entails a new protocol where Toledo area agencies agree to work cooperatively by written contract – signed, or re-signed, annually. The carefully written protocol can take care of most of the confidentiality questions inherent in any multi-agency, joint venture.

And, remember, every client can release his or her own information if based on truly informed consent. In addition, a well-crafted protocol granting a qualified privilege to a limited number of people with access to confidential records will meet any federal standards including the code of federal regulations.

Finally, a new over-arching case management system for youth should be tried. In this way, every youth in Toledo in need of some services – say, Big Brother's mentoring or Adelante's drug counseling – would be enrolled and monitored weekly or daily, depending on the case plan for compliance. Some position of high authority, reporting to a controlling board, would be empowered to work with the courts and private agencies to ensure compliance. The present complete lack of coordination is where the system fails time and time again. So this position must be given the tools and authority to get the job done.

I believe that more than



Jack Ford

enough money is already on the table. Any good consultant worth his salt can look at our "system" and see the gaps, including the excess dollars. We need to find the political will to truly change our youth treatment delivery system.

Contact Jack Ford at jack@thetruthtoledo.com

The Sins of Our Fathers

By Jan Scotland
Guest Columnist

The sins of our fathers come back to haunt us. This simply means that bad decisions made generations ago can show negative results today.

Twenty years ago when I was on City Council there was a debate on where to put the area police firing range. I sided with the then president of the Police Patrolmen's Association, Mike Collins, who wanted it built in the basement of the old downtown YMCA.

The idea was to rehabilitate the facility that had two large gyms, an Olympic-sized swimming pool and other recreational facilities. The Police Patrolman's Association would set up a Police Athletic League for inner-city youth upstairs while handling the needs of the officers firing range in the basement. Police and youth would become familiar with each other in a positive environment. And the officers would also have a place to stay in shape.

The result was a vote to send the firing range to Wood County. And the old YMCA? Well it was turned into a very useful high-tech jail for juveniles.

Since that time recreation in this city has taken a back seat. Every time there is a budget cut, the city reduces the size of the recreation department and eliminates programming for kids. Youth crime has increased significantly and violent crimes by youth have skyrocketed.

This week a police officer was gunned down in the streets by a 15-year old youth. Let me take this opportunity to send my condolences to Officer Keith Dressel's wife and family. Toledo owes a lot to our police and fireman who put their lives on the line to keep us safe.

Let me also make it clear that I have no sympathy for youth who commit violent crimes. I am not a proponent of the idea that socio-economic conditions or a tough upbringing always result in a kid going wrong. There are too many of us who grew up with little and made good lives for ourselves. I believe that although we can't chose the lives we were born into, we can chose what we do with it. No matter your walk in life, you still have to make the decisions that guide your future. Youth who travel on the wrong side of the law must answer for their actions.

My concern is for the kids who haven't gotten in trouble yet. It is politically sexy to spend money on drug and gang task forces. We spend millions to increase the number of cells to incarcerate youth. We establish curfews, minimum sentences and zero tolerance laws. We provide rehabilitation programs, job programs and federal assistance for those in trouble. But in doing these things we are addressing the symptoms of the problem while taking money away from the possible cures.

We must work with youth in a proactive way. We must program for their involvement in positive activities in safe environments. We must give



Jan Scotland

them alternatives to drugs, gangs and violent behavior. We must spend much more money before they get in trouble or there will never be enough money to pay for the police, fireman and criminal justice system we need after.

It will be interesting to see how this City Council reacts to this tragedy. Will they take the easy approach by rattling chains and sabers or will they show real foresight in solving this problem? Will they do what politically sounds reasonable or will they take leadership and do what this community needs?

How about dedicating money to a citywide athletic and youth enrichment effort in the name of Officer Keith Dressel? Do this by utilizing coordinated efforts like Toledo Community Recreation, whose membership includes the major family centers. Associate his name with something that may actually make a difference. Commit to the long term solutions to the problems of our youth while staying tough on youth crime. Work to offset the sins of our fathers instead of haunting our children and grandchildren.

Contact Jan Scotland at jan@thetruthtoledo.com

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Robinson Middle School: School Building Project Brings Controversy to the End

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

Robinson Middle School opened shortly after the holidays with a great deal of fanfare. Somewhat lost in the midst of all the excitement about the new facility in the central city is the fact that Robinson represents the first of three school-building projects completed by an African-American owned general contracting company.

JL Judge Construction Services, LLC, a Detroit-area based minority-owned firm, has attempted to become a major player in northwest Ohio with the Toledo Public Schools projects and a few others nearby. Their move into this market has not been accomplished without a degree of opposition – opposition because of their out-of-state status, opposition because they are not exclusively a union shop and opposition, dare they say it, because it is a black-owned firm.

JL Judge is the creation of Joseph Louis Judge, a Tampa, FL native who earned his undergraduate degree from Central State in construction technology before moving on to Eastern Michigan University to obtain his master's degree. Judge spent 10 years as a project manager for The University of Michigan Hospitals.

JL Judge has a core staff of around 25 employees and an additional 60 full-time union carpenters and boasts an "A" list of clients in the Michigan area: Comerica Bank, General Motors, the Detroit Public Schools, Wayne State University, General Dynamics, The De-

troit Metro Airport, to name a few.

The company first bid on the Robinson project in the spring of 2005, breaking ground in June of that year. The school was scheduled for completion in time for the 2006-07 academic year. JL Judge missed that deadline by several months, and therein lies the source of a great deal of the controversy that has swirled about the company.

"From my perspective, it's been a good job to work on," said Joseph Judge during a recent tour with The Truth of the facility.

The general contracting CEO took The Truth on a tour of the three distinct areas that comprise 80,000 square feet, two-level Robinson Middle School: the main classrooms, the library, skill room and administrative offices and the facilities – back of the house areas.

Judge particularly singled out members of the present and the former school administration for praise: Eugene Sanders, Gary Sautter and Dan Burns, all of whom have moved on to run the Cleveland Municipal School District. Judge also commended Dan Romano, the current TPS chief business manager, for his fairness.

Judge, however, does not comment on the TPS construction manager, Lathrop/Gant/Barton Malow (LGB), with the same degree or warmth. "They simply didn't want us here and ended up doing their damndest to prove themselves right," said Judge. That included a rec-

ommendation that LGB forwarded to the State of Ohio to terminate the JL Judge contract.

"With that termination letter, Dan Romano gave us a hard date to get this done and, of course, we were able to achieve that," said Judge of the completed Robinson school.

And part of the conflict with LGB, said Judge, stems from their dissatisfaction with the company's project manager Najeeb Isaac. LGB, said both men, have been plotting to get Isaac off the job and have been resisting the contractor's plan to move him to the Leverette Middle School site to oversee completing of that project.

"We're constantly fighting battles," said Isaac, "it's comical the way it's ended up."

Not surprisingly, LGB takes a different viewpoint of the dustups that have bruised so many feelings. Roosevelt Gant, the "G" in LGB, noted that the construction manager is well pleased with the finished product. "It's a great design and a great building," said Gant.

"The problem I have at the end of the day is that I don't think the right questions are being asked," he said. "They have three projects... I would ask 'what was the original schedule for them to be completed and what was the level of issues compared to others?'"

Gant stressed that the school projects other contractors have worked on have been completed on time. "When I'm talking 'on time'

... if the Ottawa River school was scheduled to open in the fall of 2005 ... it opened. Rogers was scheduled to open in 2006, it opened; Oakdale was scheduled to open in mid year 2006, it opened. But Robinson was scheduled to open in the fall of 2006, it did not open and Gunckel (Libbey Middle) was scheduled to open in mid-year 2006, it will not open then."

Judge, for his part, spoke of a myriad of problems the company has encountered during construction including the site not being prepared on time, a 60-day delay in the issuance of the contract, vandalism and theft of property belonging to non-union participants in the project and the communications system not being complete (that would be subcontractors who do not fall under the supervision of the prime contractor).

"Whatever might have



Najeeb Isaac and Joe Judge in Robinson's gym

happened with the scheduled," countered Gant, "or in change orders, exists on every project. Every contractor has challenges."

Judge is most proud of the fact that he and his people plowed through the difficulties they encountered, such as building drawings that were incomplete.

"We are proud of the finished product" he said even as he noted that the involvement of a minority firm in the schools' projects had not drawn much attention, particularly positive attention, in the area.

"You would think they would be touting our involve-

ment because of the large number of African-American students in these schools," said Judge as he also pointed out that the company has become involved in the community and has striven to be good corporate citizens here in Toledo.

There may still be time for that, however. As Judge noted as he finished last week's tour, he anticipates that Robinson will be part of Toledo for some time to come in spite of the problems in actually getting the structure up and running. "This building will last 60 to 80 years easily," he predicted.

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Nina G. Parker: Her Vision of Diversity Has Changed the Face of Findlay, Ohio

By Alan Abrams
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Are you looking for something new to think about other than the weather? Then ponder this: Why does Findlay, Ohio, seated in the heart of conservative Hancock County and with less than two percent of African-Americans in its population, have both a major downtown artery named after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and a world-class award-winning Black Heritage Library and Multicultural Center?

The answer to both questions is the same – Nina Parker.

Parker's amazing legacy of accomplishments in Findlay becomes all the more impressive when you consider that neither Toledo nor Lima, both with significantly

higher African-American populations, have not succeeded in efforts by their respective black communities to have a street named after Dr. King.

But nor does Toledo or Lima have Nina Parker.

On Feb. 22, the Black Heritage Library & Multicultural Center celebrated its 25th anniversary. Leaders in Findlay's business, government, educational and religious communities came together and paid homage to the museum and its founder in a heartwarming tribute that was very much of a communal love fest to a woman with a dream and the vision and determination to make it become a reality.

The Black Heritage Library & Multicultural Center

begun humbly in Feb. 1982 as a lending library of books on black culture and history in the back of the small Mason Chapel AME church. Along with her mother, Stella Sherard, Parker named the facility the Black Heritage Library.

Parker told Margaret Dwigings, family editor of *The Courier*, Findlay's excellent daily newspaper, that she and her mother were concerned about how "black children in Findlay were still shouldering the burden of racism. She (Parker) felt that she could eradicate some of the prejudices that she'd encountered by educating others about black history and culture," wrote Dwigings the morning after the anniversary dinner.

For all of Findlay's remarkable diversity and tolerance today, and despite the role it played as an important stop in the pre-Civil War Underground Railroad, black children like Parker remember being taunted with the N-word and being called "Sambo" by their classmates. While it would be folly to think that racism in Findlay has been totally eradicated by Parker's educational efforts, it is not an understatement to recognize that she – single-handedly – has made a difference.

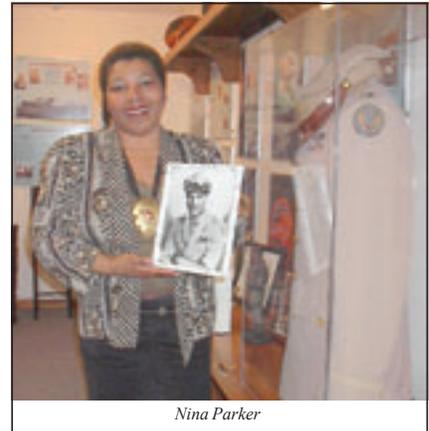
Parker later reminded this reporter of the message she chose for the sign in the library that reads, "When you leave this place, may you be more understanding, sensitive and appreciative of your heritage and others."

In 1983, Parker founded and became president of the Black Studies & Library Association, which is today the parent organization for the Black Heritage Library. Her mother, Stella, who was at the anniversary celebration, was vice president. Parker's sister, Tracie M. Sherard (who died in 1992) was founding secretary. Nanette Griffith of the church was treasurer, and a board of directors comprised of community members was named.

As the collection grew, a vacant building next to the church was purchased to house the library. But the focus of the library was also expanding from that of solely a black library to a multicultural center honoring the mosaic of nationalities and cultures represented in Findlay.

The Library, which now comprises upwards of 3,000 volumes, does not receive any governmental funding and exists solely upon donations from individuals and corporations as well as grants. Thanks to Parker's expertise in fundraising and her ability to reach out to Findlay's corporate leaders, the Library moved in 1994 to its current location at 817 Harmon Street.

Although she often spent as much as 50 hours a week working in the Library, Parker also held down a responsible



Nina Parker

— Photos courtesy Nancy Abrams

day job in the state auditor's office. She had to relinquish that position in 1998 when she was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Fortunately, it was benign, but the experience sparked a greater awareness and recognition of the role played by God in our lives. Always deeply spiritual, Parker and her husband Darnell, whom she met while both were students at Defiance College, are greatly committed to their faith.

The Parkers have two sons, Darnell Jr. and Burgess.

The groundwork for Parker's determination was laid by both her mother and her father, Will Jimmy Sherard. Stella, her mother, who is now confined to a wheelchair, was raised in Mississippi where like many blacks in the 1940's she received only a rudimentary education. However she went back to school at the age of 60 to get her G.E.D. and then went on to the University of Findlay where she earned a degree in political science and main-

tained a 3.8 GPA.

The anniversary banquet was held at the First Presbyterian Church and was attended by more than 190 guests including Lima councilman Derry Glenn and his wife Judie. The keynote speaker was the remarkable singer and civil rights activist Dr. Kenneth Anderson of Bath, NY. He enthralled the audience with his renditions of spirituals and closed his performance with a rousing tribute to the memory of the immortal Paul Robeson including his signature song, *Old Man River*.

Earlier, a number of awards were presented by Parker, including the prestigious Diversity Education Award to Mark M. Butler, the Manager of Diversity for the Findlay-based Marathon Petroleum Company. Butler appeared on a *Sojourner's Truth* cover in October 2005.

The Community Service award was presented to Findlay's Mayor Tony Iriti by Darnell Parker.

Iriti, a remarkable politician (Continued on Page 7)



Lima City Councilman Derry Glenn and Findlay Mayor Tony Iriti

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Dr. Alvin Poussaint Recalls the Civil Rights Era at UT's Annual MLK Scholarship Banquet

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint, Harvard Medical School psychiatrist, distinguished author and social critic, was the keynote speaker for this year's annual University of Toledo Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship Benefit Dinner held on Monday, February 19 at UT's Student Union.

Dr. Poussaint, who has been at Harvard since 1969, proved to be an appropriate choice to speak on an occasion honoring King since he spent a good deal of his time during the 1960's participating in marches with the civil rights leader.

In addition to celebrating the life of King, the annual benefit also raises money for the MLK Scholarship Fund which was created by the university in 1969. This year three students received scholarships: LaShara Tanice Morris, Shawna Aiesha Simon and Robin G. Reid.

Morris, a 2003 graduate of Libbey High School, is a senior majoring in communications in the College of Arts and Sciences. She has participated in a variety of campus activities in addition to maintaining the grade point average necessary to receive the MLK Scholarship - Miniya, NAACP, the Black Student Union, the Youth Opportunity Program, among others. She is also a tutor and a mentor in the S.T.R.I.V.E. program.

Simon, a 2004 graduate of Whitmer, is majoring in political science and has been on the National Dean's List, the University's Dean's list, the Honor's Program and has received the Tower Prestige Scholarship, the DiSalle Scholarship and the Diversity Leaders Scholarship. She is also involved in Miniya, the Black Student Union and the University Symphony Orchestra, among other activities.

Reid is a New York native who attended CUNY Hunter

College. A non-traditional student, Reid is pursuing a degree in social work. Her scholarship was sponsored by the College of Health Science and Human Services.

Kristian Brown, weekend anchor and reporter for TV 13ABC, served as the evening's mistress of ceremonies for a program featuring musical selections by Shanita Williams a UT junior, an invocation by Brandon Tucker, president of the BSU and a rendition of the famed MLK "I Have a Dream" speech by sixth-grader Tanasio Loudermill.

Then followed remarks by Dr. Poussaint.

"If you want to see death at your door, and if you are a black person, go into a segregated hospital," said Dr. Poussaint as he recalled one of the many reasons why the Civil Rights Movement gathered such momentum in the 1950's and early 1960's.

Born in East Harlem, Dr. Poussaint attended Columbia University and earned his MD from Cornell. He received his psychiatric training from UCLA and, from 1965 to 1967, was the Southern Field Director of the Medical Committee for Human Rights in Jackson, MS, providing medical care to civil rights workers and aiding in the desegregation of hospitals and health facilities throughout the South.

Dr. Poussaint has written numerous books including *Why Blacks Kill Blacks*, *Raising Black Children* (with Dr. James Comer), *Lay My Burden Down: Suicide and the Mental Health Crisis Among African Americans* (with Amy Alexander). He has written over 100 articles for lay and professional publications. During the 1980's Poussaint served as a script consultant for The Cosby Show providing advice on psychological and educational issues.

"I would like to take you through a little journey,"

Poussaint told his audience at the onset of his speech. "I want you to get a feel for Dr. Martin Luther King and the movement."

Dr. Poussaint did not disappoint.

His speech was indeed a journey, a chronicle of one of the 20th Century's signature moments, accompanied with a power point presentation of photographs that he took during such marches as the Selma to Montgomery trek in March 1965. That march, which was led by King and took participants over a 50-mile course for four days, attracted 25,000 marchers during its final leg including a number of celebrities such as Harry Belafonte, Pete Seeger, Mary Travers, Odetta and Tony Perkins (actors and musicians whom Dr. Poussaint captured on his Kodak).

The purpose of the Selma/Montgomery march was to press the federal government to enact a voting rights bill and President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the 1965 Voting Rights Act, perhaps the most significant and effective piece of civil rights-era legislation, that summer.

Poussaint's involvement in that march, and one the next year in honor of James Meredith, was a result of being asked to lead a team of medical personnel in order to monitor the health and well-being of the marchers. Local hospitals were simply out of the question should a marcher need immediate medical attention.

When marchers did need such help, and needed more attention after Dr. Poussaint's team had done all that could be done in the field, they had to be whisked away to one of a very few hospitals in the South that would accept African-American patients at that time. And, as Dr. Poussaint recalled, such hospitals were invariably understaffed and lacking in adequate equipment and material.

That dearth of adequate medical facilities and care for blacks, said Dr. Poussaint, was a direct result of a systemic lack of concern for black lives. In the post Civil War era, said Dr. Poussaint, "a black life was not worth as much as a white life - it's all in the culture ... it's unconscious."

The psychiatrist's slides supplied personal observations of some of the luminaries of the time: King, Jesse Jackson, Sr., John Lewis, Ralph Abernathy, Roy



Robin Reid



Dr. Alvin Poussaint and Mark Chastang



Shawna Aiesha Simon and LaShara Tanice Morris

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Dr. Poussaint and photos of the 1966 march following James Meredith's shooting

Nina G. Parker: Her Vision of Diversity Has Changed the Face of Findlay, Ohio

(Continued from Page 5)

cian of *Profiles in Courage* caliber, has publicly acknowledged he encountered intense internal opposition from some members of Findlay's council to the proposal to rename the city's Central Parkway as Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

Let's face political facts. Iriti did not take his courageous stand because of the number of black or liberal votes it would get him in the next election. He says he did it because "it was the right thing for us to do."

But Iriti is not satisfied to merely rest on his laurels. He

took advantage of the presentation to announce an upgrading of the heavily traveled connecting artery between downtown Findlay and the outlying commercial areas. The banners that commemorate the city's observance of Martin Luther King Day will soon grace and beautify Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

It is worth noting that it was Iriti who spearheaded the successful move to have Martin Luther King Day declared a full government holiday in Findlay. He also brought in Mark But-



Mark Butler and Darnell Parker (BSLA board member)

ler to teach a diversity course to his new administration while it was in the transition stage.

Iriti also announced that the Findlay City Planning Board had approved the much-needed installation of a stoplight on Harmon Street to help regulate traffic to and from the Black Heritage Library.

Another award was presented to the talented pianist Alsbrooks Smith, Jr., who accompanied Anderson in his musical presentation.

How unique is the Li-

brary? It is the only repository outside of the parent institution in Washington, D.C. to have the permanent Black Wings exhibition which pays tribute to the courage of the Tuskegee Airmen and other black aviation heroes and pioneers.

The Black Heritage Library & Multicultural Center is well worth a visit to Findlay, which is 45 miles south from Toledo via I-75. To make arrangements for a tour, call the Library at (419)957-0590. Donations are always welcome.



Kenneth Anderson



Members of the Toledo Chapter of the National Association of Negro Business and Professionals Women's Clubs, Inc. spent Saturday morning, February 17 at the Toledo Seagate Food Bank as part of their Black History Month volunteer project to give back to the community. Assisting the club members were some of their youth group.

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www.ci.toledo.oh.us

Dear Ryan,

I am trying to get in shape for my wedding coming up in May. I would love to lose about 15 pounds by the time I walk down that aisle. I have a few women in my bridal party who would like to drop some weight also. First, I want to know if it's possible to lose 15 lbs in that amount of time and, second, what's the best way to do it and do you give any specials to a group of people?

Thanks in advance
Bride 2B



Dear Bride 2 B

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding. It is very reasonable for you to lose 15 pounds, plus more, by your wedding in May. Shoot for two pounds of fat loss per week. I want you to be aware that if you are weight training, which you should be, that the scale may discourage you.

Remember that muscle weighs more than fat does. The thing I would want you to do is go by how your clothes fit and how you appear in the mirror. NOT THE SCALE!! Your eating is obviously going to be the key to your progress and it will be no surprise to you, I'm sure, that sugars and fast acting carbohydrates should not be part of your eating plan. Eat five small meals per day and consume a majority of your calories earlier in the day. Eat only lean meat and veggies in your last meal.

Actually if you can tolerate it, white fish and two cups of veggies are the best thing to eat at night time for fat loss. Don't forget to drink lots of water.

Your workouts can be total body workouts three days per week followed by 20-30 minutes of cardio or you can do cardio on the days you don't weight train. As far as deals go, of course I will give you a price break if you come in with a friend and train at the same time. I do not want to train more than two people at a time because it takes away from the attention that I can devote to your sessions.

At times, however, I do classes of five or more that I run a bit differently than I would if I was personal training someone. Well I hope I answered your questions well enough. Good luck and I hope you have a happy long successful marriage.

Ryan Rollison
Dream Bodies
1240 W. Sylvania Ave.
Toledo, OH 43612
419-476-3494
mydreambodies@aol.com

**Owens Phi Theta Kappa
Student Organization Hosts
Domestic Violence
Community Forum, March 5**

Area residents interested in learning about issues related to bullying, domestic violence and sexual assault against women and children are encouraged to attend a free community forum at Owens Community College on Monday, March 5.

Sponsored by the Owens chapter of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society, the community forum will begin at 7 p.m. in College Hall Room 100 on the Toledo-area Campus. The event is free and the public is encouraged to attend.

"The community forum is a great opportunity for individuals to learn how to take initiative and intervene or seek additional help when a bullying or domestic violence situation occurs," said Brenda Walton, Owens student and Phi Theta Kappa community forum coordinator. "The ugliness of violence rarely

involves just physical abuse. Violence can scar beyond the visible. Owens' chapter of Phi Theta Kappa is proud to sponsor an event which brings such issues to the forefront."

Serving as the forum's guest speaker will be Laurence Mitchell, an advocate for the prevention of social violence and co-founder of MASEV (Men Actively Seeking to End Violence) along with Brenda Walton, a domestic violence survivor. MASEV was established with the overall mission of informing and motivating the community to respond proactively to issues of domestic violence.

The focus of Mitchell's presentation will address the idea of developing a stronger dialogue between parents and children about ethics, respect, accountability and making good decisions. The dialogue will challenge any existing perceptions that bullying, domestic violence and sexual

assaults are acceptable.

In addition, discussion topics will include learning how to challenge bullying behavior and refusing to remain an innocent bystander during a violent situation.

The overall mission of Phi Theta Kappa is to recognize academic excellence among two-year college students, provide opportunities for leadership training and an intellectual climate for the exchange of ideas and ideals. In addition, the society continues to promote among its members the four standard hallmarks: scholarship, leadership, service and fellowship. Owens' chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society, which includes more than 350 members, is one of the largest honor societies in Ohio.

For information about the community forum, call (567) 661-7209 or 1-800-GO-OWENS, Ext. 7209.

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“Come Together” Brings Elements of Gospel Plays and Legitimate Theatre Together In Entertaining New Play

By Geneva J. Chapman,
Sojourner's Truth Drama Critic

When I came to Toledo in 1988, there was not an African-American community theatre in the city. So, in 1990, I founded Toledo BlackStage Theatre Company, debuting my original drama with music, *JUNETEENTH*, that featured Roberta Bacon and Joanna Gabriel from SPEC-TRUM (a women's music group I sang with for over six years), in the leading roles and my best friend, Karen Flowers, Ph.D., (deceased) and myself in supporting roles.

Things have changed since then. Imelda Hunt, Ph.D., and New Works Writers Series have enriched and enlightened our community since 1990, bringing some of the best African-American plays being written in America today to Toledo, including one by Toledoan, Janice Liddell, Ph.D., “Who Will Sing for Lena?”

Pajil Wiggins-Hancock, who was a member of Toledo BlackStage in the mid-90s, founded Da Coloured Gurlz Collective in 1995, providing a stage for her tremendous acting and writing talent.

We also have a budding gospel play industry right here in the Glass City with some of the best playwrights writing in that genre in the country (no exaggeration!), including Bonita Adams, Patrice Tolbert and Deniece Williams. Now, a talented young man joins all of us female dramatists in writing, directing and

producing plays.

JaJuan Turner, dubbed “the next Tyler Perry” by his fans (including me) has a vision. But even though I tease him about emulating Tyler Perry, I really think Turner's talent goes beyond the limited genre of ‘chitlin circuit’ plays, as do those of the previously mentioned gospel playwrights. These people aren't just doing plays, they're doing drama. I have a title for a play in this popular genre if I ever decide to actually write it: “Honey, This Ain't No Play! This is Drama!” That's the way I feel about Toledo's crop of gospel playwrights and their work.

Turner's latest production, “Come Together,” was featured Friday and Saturday,

February 23-24, 2007, at the Maumee Theater. I liked his first play, “The Game of Life,” that premiered at the Ohio Theater last year and thought it was a good first effort. However, his latest offering is a much tighter, much more commercial production.

The taut, fast-paced play has all of the elements of the gospel play genre: a ‘sassy’ old lady with stereotypical looks, voice and manners; the ‘bad’ girl and the ‘bad’ boy; the mini sermons and the obligatory gospel song.

I know, this sounds like the usual tripe you pay all that money to see at the Stranahan. However, what Turner does with these all-too familiar elements rises above the cheap slapstick comedy routines, melodrama and predictability of those so-called ‘professional’ plays. He writes witty, youthful dialog for his young cast, but he's not just trying to get laughs. Turner teaches with theatre.

In “Come Together,” a social studies high school class is learning about African-American history juxtaposed to a saintly, but earthy “Granny,” whose spiritual mysticism centers around a pot of stew that she ‘seminades’ for days. His best characters are the high school students, each of whom emerges as the play unfolds as a three-dimensional individual, unlike the one-note “Granny” (that's the problem with stereotypes; they can't be developed into full-blown characters).

I was thoroughly impressed with the young cast and remember each of them distinctly. Best of all were Jerrell Mayo (“Ahmad”), who has a future as a serious dramatic actor (take note, Sylvia Carter, Toledo's equity-professional – actor/director); John Burden (“Scott”), the kind of energetic, versatile performer directors pray for; Chate' Lesley (“Chenelle”), whose natural talent just oozes from her pores; Kay'lah Hayes (“Sabrina”), who's pretty enough to be an ingénue and talented enough

to play the ‘bad’ girl to the hilt!; Brandi Robinson (“Brandi”), formerly of SETT, Ms. Robinson is a solid good actress with a bright future in theatre and Keith Russell (“Devin”), as comically gifted as Mayo is dramatically gifted – expect to see him on stage a lot in Toledo.

Also, notable were Mickeya Moore (“Tierra”), whose diction was perfect and who projected so well she could be heard when the mic went out (which happened frequently); Damien Washington (“Verdell”), who did a lot with a relatively small role; Melvin Johnson as a panhandler, performing his classic original poem, “Bar-B-Que” to a new audience (folks in poetry circles know it well!); Steven Hatcher as a police officer with a message; Tyrone Brock (“Mr. B.”), the wise and beloved teacher who's taught his students more black history than any teacher I've ever known; JaJuan Turner (“Tony/Tonae”), who played a drag queen wearing pink suede boots – here's a man who's secure in his manhood! - and Turner's daughter, Courtney Bryson-Turner (“Destiny”), who stole every scene she was in, making Nikesha Gill's hammy performance as “Granny” bearable.

Like Moore, Gill and little Courtney used perfect diction. Gill is also an excellent singer, bringing the house down with a rousing gospel number at the end of the show. I'll have to see her in a different role before I can judge her acting talents.

Other cast members included Sha'Nice Steele (“Shannon”), Abigail Noonan (“Rachel”), Devon Sturdivant (“Marcel”) and Janaye McClendon (“Twyla”). This talented ensemble undertook a formidable task bringing to life a drama that covered issues like racism, teen pregnancy, gangsta rap, affirmative action, abortion, gun violence and reparations for slavery.

The title suggests that things will all work out in the end, but Turner doesn't tele-

scope his ending. There's enough conflict between the characters - particularly “Scott” and “Ahmad,” and “April” and “Chenelle” – to make the audience wonder if these teens can ever co-exist in the same school or even the same neighborhood.

However, once the reason for their rancor toward each other (in the case of the young men, toward each other's race) is understood by the audience and most importantly by them, the path to unity is clearly seen. Turner's message is one of acceptance, forgiveness, cultural pride and racial harmony. That's a lot for one play to do, but he pulls it off in “Come Together.” And he does it without anybody getting killed, although “Mr. B.” does get injured in a car accident.

He also does it without too much preachiness. There are those mini sermons, of course, but most of them take place in a classroom and we all know how teachers love to lecture! Besides, most of what's said by the characters when they're on message is relevant. The police officer chides “Devin” for disrespecting young women, a message I heard earlier the same day I saw the play from none other than Albert “Coach” Powell, teaching from his new book, *Hip Hop Hypocrisy*.

Turner also kept things moving by having two sets on opposite sides of the stage. Local directors take note! There were no extremely long scene changes which will cause any production to lose momentum and most audiences to start losing interest. Despite a lot of technical difficulties with the mics (there was only one lighting miscue – way to go, lighting technician!), they were just annoying, not distracting.

Turner and New Life Productions have a good vehicle with “Come Together.” I recommend that anyone with a youth group book this play and don't wait until African-American History Month!

New Life is also currently

Arts Section • Arts Section

BGSU Dinner Theater "Back to the 90's Part II"

-Photos courtesy Bob Midden



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Symphonic Poem: The Art of Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson is organized by the Columbus Museum of Art and Arts Midwest in partnership with the Ohio Arts Council.



St. John's Jesuit's Real Talk 2007

By Ashlee Austin
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

'Tis' the season for change.

St. John's Jesuit High School hosted its first annual Real Talk 2007 on Sunday, February 18. In light of Black History Month, a group of students organized a "Real Talk" forum program to challenge several issues facing the inner-city youth and bring positive change to Toledo. Real Talk 2007 featured several discussion topics such as rap, the culture of hip-hop, gang violence, leadership, decision-making and relationships.

Although the intended audience for the program included high school students, teens and young adults, people of all ages came out Sunday afternoon to support the group's effort for positive change in the commu-

nity. Before the program began, the guests were divided into to four different rooms to discuss topics such as the difference between rap and hip-hop, ways to end gang violence, leadership skills, building relationships and 'hating.' Each room was constantly filled with tension and heated debate among the guests as they deliberated the controversial issues.

According to Mario Harris-Rosser, one of the program coordinators, "The purpose for Real Talk 2007 is to bring people from our community and surrounding areas together to discuss issues that are challenging our youth and leading to destruction in our city." Other goals included "raising the aware-

ness level of problems in the community, preventing becoming a 'lost generation,' and showing people that there is a way out of and away from destruction," said Harris-Rosser.

The program was free of charge to the community and was sponsored by St. Johns Jesuit High School and several local businesses, while local radio stations and newspapers also assisted the group by promoting the event to the city.

Real Talk 2007 also featured several carefully selected special guests who have a positive influence and relate to the youth in the community. The group of special guests included DJ King Keyser (97.3 FM), Cornell Smith, Ph.D., (former NFL player) and Gary Edwards

(Jamil from *The Barber-shop*). Live poetry, the Libbey High School Dance Team and the House of Adonis Dance Team entertained the guests between discussions.

According to Harris-Rosser, the St. John's students were extremely satisfied with the outcome of Real Talk 2007 and pleased that people came out to participate and support the event. "This proves that our community hasn't given up on us," said Harris-Rosser.

The group of St. John's students is hoping to create a movement, which will improve the community and spark positive change. Real Talk was just the beginning, the first of many positive events currently being developed.

Battle of the Bands to be held at UT

Leadership Toledo will host a battle of the bands on Saturday, March 3, in The University of Toledo's Student Union Auditorium on the Main Campus.

The purpose of the event is to raise funds for Leadership Toledo's Youth in Philanthropy Encouraging Excellence (YIPPIE) program, which is a youth organization that raises money for grant programs that benefit youth throughout the community.

Ten popular acts from northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan will participate in the battle of the bands.

The schedule of bands is as follows:

- 6 p.m. Mind Riot;
- 6:30 p.m. As They Fall;
- 7 p.m. 64 South;
- 7:30 p.m. The Unforgiven;
- 8 p.m. Black Swamp Revolution;
- 8:30 p.m. Bearsmith;
- 9 p.m. Prolonging the Miracle;
- 9:30 p.m. Strength in Numbers;
- 10 p.m. Vinyl Roots; and
- 10:30 p.m. No Cash Value.

Each year attendance has grown at this event, and there were more than 400 people present last year.

The public event will begin at 6 p.m. and will run until 11:30 p.m. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$5 in advance and \$6 at the door.

Sponsors for the event are The University of Toledo, Strawberry Fields Recording Studio, Peeler Music and Prodigy Music.

For more information, contact Cory Dippold at 419.241.7371 or e-mail cory@leadershiptoledo.org. Learn more at Leadership Toledo's Web site at www.leadershiptoledo.org.



PLEASE JOIN TOLEDO CHAPTER JACK AND JILL OF AMERICA, INC. FOR A SAFETY WORKSHOP

Saturday, March 3, 2007
1 - 4 pm
Mott Branch Library
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Officer Earl Barry from the Toledo Police Department and Detective Regina Lester from the Toledo Police Department - Special Victims Unit Will discuss

Personal safety, internet safety and safe/unsafe touches with our children

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Toledo Children's Hospital joins the National Center for Adoption Law and Policy and Columbus Children's Hospital to offer unique "Adoption Academy"

Toledo Children's Hos-

pital, in partnership with Columbus Children's Hospital and The National Center for Adoption Law and Policy at Capital University Law School, will host the **Adoption Academy**, a program that offers prospective adoptive parents an objective source of information about the process of adoption. Funding for this series of telecasts is provided through the Ohio State Bar Foundation.

The course consists of three four-week tracks, each of which can be attended independently or as a complete series of 12 classes. All classes are held at Toledo Children's Hospital.

The CORE Track, an introduction to the adoption process featuring an overview of the process, a discussion about home study and the cost of adoption begins on Wednesday, March 7, and will meet each Wednesday for four weeks.

The Academy's Domestic Track, which covers the step-by-step domestic adoption process, the cultural aspects of adoption and preparation for the arrival of an adopted child, will meet each Wednesday for four weeks starting April 4, 2007.

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Arts Section • Arts Section

How I Spent My Weekend

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

This weekend, I wasn't even on any crusade to prove that the city does have some culture to it, I was just doing a few of the things to do.

Friday night, February 23, I was on deck as Rhonda Sewell and her Queen of the Night productions got down for another successful event.

I haven't really seen that whole planned-wardrobe type of party really hit in the 4-1-9 yet, but leave it to Rhonda to find a way to get all the patrons in team jerseys.

Look out for future Queen of the Night events coming soon.

Saturday, February 24, I was in the place to be at Maumee's Indoor Theatre to

support JuJuan Turner on delivering his theatrical achievement *Come Together*.

Oh yeah, my little sister played April in this stage play so of course I was there to support her. The Sojourner's Truth own Geneva Chapman was there to do her thing so I won't comment too widely on the play itself but I have to give that cast another shout out because some of those people are just born actors. When you got it, you got it.

We've all grown up seeing plays that call for an end to black violence that usually involve a quick solution on the racial divide in this country... but JuJuan aims to make people see the same

subject with a renewed approach. Saturday night, I thoroughly enjoyed the production.

Sunday, February 25, I was fortunate to be in the audience as one of the great leaders and speakers of our time addressed what could possibly be his last audience.

I was ready to shell out however much loot it took to get me there, but my mom secured my ticket to Saviour's Day 2007 at Ford Field as part of her birthday present to me and I couldn't be more thankful.

First off - you haven't heard the Black National Anthem until you've heard it sung by Anita Baker. I mean it was stirring, it was vibrant, it was completely moving.

The Nation of Islam has always had a special place in my heart when it comes to positive forces in our community. All of the dignity, poise and grace that is naturally a part of being black is restored into the lives of the men, women and children who have embraced Islam and it shows so effortlessly.

And all of the Christian brothers and sisters were here as well and made to feel welcome, just to hear the words.

Minister Louis Farrakhan was once painted as a hate monger or whatever, but the truth is actually quite different. He speaks of inclusion where so many others speak of exclusion.

He speaks of empowerment, where so many others willingly give away their power to others.

Yeah, I saw the Muslim brothers and sisters with their vending booths selling everything from books to dishwashing liquid made of

natural chemicals and I overheard a young brother say "Maan, these people always trying to get my money" - and his boy laughed.

Then I looked these cats up and down to bear witness that they seem to have had no problem giving their money to Nike, Timbaland, and whoever makes cheap and tacky looking black mink coats. Why not be in control of our own dollar destiny?

Usually Minister Farrakhan would speak on economic power, but instead he touched on how the media has tried to portray him as already dead or dying and how inaccurate they were. But he did admit that as a good leader he's already prepared someone to step in and take his place. His message on this day was mostly based on some of the Bible's most widely read books concerning the subjects of war and the end times.

Hespoke of how America's tyranny and reckless use of power all across the planet is the reason why everyone is aiming at us right now.

It wasn't all doom and



Green and Sewell (front) with jerseyed audience

gloom though, because something that I truly needed to hear was when he touched on the importance of thinking positive thoughts even in the midst of a situation you see as negative.

Like I said, ya'll, I really don't think we need a new black leader.

It would just place someone in the crosshairs.

What I love about all of our current black leaders is that they want to be the bridge between our relying on them for leadership and our using the tools they've given us to become a people who practice leadership.

Thanks to Mr. Muhammad, Brother Theron, Brother Washington and all of the extended staff and family of Self Express-

sion Teen Theatre for making it all possible for some of us from the Glass City to make that trip up I75 to bear witness to a great man.

So that's how I spent my weekend, ya'll.

Topped off by taking Monday off from a hectic and drama filled 9-5 so I can welcome my 29th birthday in good spirits.

Thank you for all the emails and all the love, I appreciate it.

If you're the type to get up and get out and do something, hit me up and tell me how you spent your weekend.

Toledo is only boring if it's full of boring people, be clear!

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Milestones in African-American Art and Music

1746
Lucy Terry, a slave, becomes the first black American poet. Her one known poem, "Bars Fight," was not published until 1855.

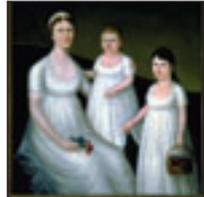
1764
Newport Gardner is the first black American to compose in the European tradition. He becomes the first black music teacher in 1783 and his "Crocked Shanks" is the first musical composition by an African-American to be published, in 1803.



1773
Phillis Wheatley publishes the first book of poetry by a black person (and the second by a woman).



1785
John James Audubon born in Haiti. He was taken to France at the age of four and studied drawing with Jacques Louis David in Paris at the age of 17. Audubon began his explorations of the American West in 1843. He completed his famous "Quadrupeds of North America" in 1845.



1795
Joshua Johnson, the first African-American artist in America to earn a living as a professional painter, is born.

1818
Frank John is the first black American to publish sheet music. He is also the first black to win acclaim in America and England, the first black to give formal band concerts and the first black to tour widely in the U.S. In 1843-44, Johnson

gave the first racially integrated concerts in the U.S.

1829
George Moses Horton becomes the first Southern black to publish a collection of poetry.



1842
Robert Scott Duncanson becomes the first African-American artist to win acclaim at home and abroad as a serious landscape artist.



1845
William Henry Lane (Master Juba) becomes the first African-American dance star. He took his stage name

from the African dance – the Juba. In 1845, Lane won the title "King of All Dancers" after three challenge dance contests. He toured with three white minstrels, receiving top billing.

1853
Elizabeth Taylor Greenfield becomes the first black concert singer. She gave a command performance before Queen Victoria in 1853.



1867
Edmonia Lewis, African-American female sculptor, completes "Forever Free," a sculpture in marble, in Rome and ships it home to the United States.



1873
The first black opera troupe (Colored American Opera Company) is formed in Washington, D.C.



1876
Edward Mitchell Bannister achieves full recognition in

America as a painter specializing in landscapes. He later founded the Rhode Island School of Design.



1878
James Bland composes "Carry Me Back to Ole Virginy" which became the official state song in 1940.

1891
Charles Bolden forms first jazz band in New Orleans.



1893
Henry Ossawa Tanner completes his most famous painting, "The Banjo Lesson." The next year he completed "The Thankful Poor," which would be auctioned by Sotheby's in 1981 and sold to William and Camille Cosby for \$250,000. That was the highest price ever paid for a work of art by an African-American artist. In 1927, he was the first black artist elected to the National Academy.



1897
First piano rag by a black composer, "Harlem Rag," is published.

1920
Mamie Smith becomes the first black woman to make a record: "You Can't Keep a Good Man Down" and "This Thing Called Love."

1924
National Urban League hosts a dinner to introduce black literary talent to New York's white publishing establishment. As a result, the dinner opened up a national market for black literature and music.



1934
Augusta Savage becomes the first member of the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors.



1988
Romare Bearden, collagists, co-authors *A History of African-American Artists, From 1792 to the Present*.



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March 11-17

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Admission is a donated non-perishable food item that helps support the Wood County Food Pantries service project.

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For more information visit www.gsmvc.org <<http://www.gsmvc.org>>

• Black History Month Special Issue • Black History Month Special Issue • Black History Month Special Issue •

Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance Celebrates Black History Month

By Artisha S. Lawson
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

African garments and accessories were the order of the day at the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance (IMA) Black History Month celebration at Jerusalem Baptist Church on Sunday February 18.

Deacons began the festivities with a praise and worship service that included traditional selections, Bible scriptures and prayer. Soon after, Bishop Nelson Clark of Power House Tabernacle stood in front of the congregation and led the service's

invocation. "God our father, we thank you for bring us together. Thank you for the City of Toledo leaders. Thank you for those that we honor today in celebration of black history, and help us to remember the sacrifices they have made for us. We ask in Jesus name, amen."

Three female praise dancers from Mt. Nebo Missionary Baptist Church graced the spectators with a presentation that spoke of overcoming life's obstacles.



They received a standing ovation. "It was great to see these ladies dancing for the Lord, praising in his name," commented Pastor William Lucas of Liberty Ministries COGIC.

The service also received a surprise performance from First Lady Debra Brock, of Mt. Nebo Baptist Church, when she serenaded the congregation with a powerful soulful selection. Her voice filled the sanctuary, and spectators rose to their feet in a standing ovation for First Lady Brock's selection. "She is truly an angle of the Lord, with her CD, *Release Me*, in stores now. Sister Brock is a bright shining star in her own light, after hearing her you may want to purchase the CD for yourself," explained Pastor Lucas.

Pastor Shirley Sparks of Walls Memorial Chapel had the duty to introduce the speaker of the evening, Pastor Willie Perryman of Jerusalem Baptist Church, but knew that the congregation was already familiar with him since



IMA Ministers

this was his home church. "I asked Pastor for a bio for tonight's service and he simply said 'I'm pastor of Jerusalem.' Dr. Perryman needs no introduction."

The 25-member choir dressed in African attire sang about having a good time in God and how the Lord is blessing them. After that, Perryman took the podium and spoke on the subject "A remedy for racism." Perryman continued through his preaching by referring to the Bible book of John and a

story of how Jesus the son of God openly spoke to a woman from another race when society said that it was wrong.

Perryman closed by saying that the sermon was not about racism, but about Jesus. "I'm not here to talk about racism, but Jesus. As I go to my seat, remember that Perryman said that God is the way, the truth and the light."

Celebrations concluded with Perryman thanking his congregation for participat-

ing in their third service for that day, while IMA President Pastor Cedric Brock informed Jerusalem that they are blessed to have Pastor Perryman. "Jerusalem you are blessed to go from one great leader [Pastor Crenshaw] to Pastor Perryman. Let's celebrate this pastor and the work he has done in this community. Jerusalem we know that you are in the rebuilding, but the pastors of IMA are behind your pastor. God is watching over him and his wife."

"Come Together" Brings Elements of Gospel Plays and Legitimate Theatre Together In Entertaining New Play

(Continued from Page 9)

seeking actors, singer, dancers, comedians, poets, musicians and songwriters. Anyone serious about performing (remember, you have to be able to attend rehearsals), call (419) 514-0668 for appointment.

The production crew for "Come Together" included: Dancene Buschmann, stage manager; sound engineer, Allen Wilkinson; Antoinette Campbell, vocal coach and Will Campbell from One D Productions, lighting technician and emcee for the curtain call. Jacquelyne Hatcher provided illustrations for the program and J.K. Grant composed the music. The song, "Come Together," sung by the cast at the end of the show

was written by the playwright, JaJuan Turner.

[Geneva Chapman has been writing, directing, acting in and producing plays for over 30 years. Her first play, "The Race," a musical comedy based on Aesop's fable "The Tortoise in the Hare," debuted in Wichita, Kansas, in 1978. Her plays about HIV/AIDS, including "B.R.AIDS" (Black Response to AIDS) were produced and directed by her brother James, touring the country with a Conference of Mayors grant in the early 90s and winning a \$10,000 Kool Achievement Award for HIV/AIDS education.

Chapman has also won inclusion in two "Ten-Minute Play" festivals at the Chicago-Dramatist Theatre in Chicago where a scene from "B.R.AIDS" and her

monologue about Sojourner Truth were performed by equity actors with professional direction. She has performed locally with Toledo BlackStage, New Works Writers Series, Da Coloured Gurlz Collective and in the musical "Lazarus."

She has also portrayed Harriet Tubman for the Lathrop House Lantern Tour and performed at First Night Toledo. Her play JUNETEENTH was featured in Toledo's first Juneteenth celebration at The University of Toledo in 1997 and at The Toledo Museum of Art's 2005 Juneteenth celebration. Chapman recently wrote a one-act play about Dr. King's last days titled "Moses at Gethsemane.]"



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Mt. Nebo's Annual Black History Month Banquet

By Ashley Moore
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

The third annual Black History Celebration, "Stepping out in Faith featuring the Silent Soldiers" was held Saturday February 25, 2007 at the Dreamplex Hotel and Conference Center. The event honored 13 men and women who are Silent Soldiers in their community and their homes.

The honorees and guests were dressed in designer dresses and suits in an array of colors; everyone was decked out in his or her Sunday's best. The honorees included Maxine Alexander, Antoinette Banks, Ora Bell, Lera Doneghy, Oscar Haynes, Mary Horton, Margo Jones,

Barbara Konop, Monica Perryman, Willetta Perryman, Ruby Pettaway, Donna Trail and Wanda Williams.

Starting the evening off was Brother Larry Jones of Mt. Zion Baptist Church who served as the evening's comedic toastmaster. Rev. Theodis Horton gave the invocation and prayed over the meal. Following an elegant welcome by Debra Brock, Mt. Nebo's first lady, was a heart-felt rendition of the classic spiritual "I Won't Complain" sung by Deborah Garner. Mt. Nebo youth from The Dance of Praise team performed just before dinner was served and then guests enjoyed a gourmet-style dinner which included succulent chicken green beans, mashed potatoes, salad and an array of desserts.

"I'm my parents and, my parents are me" quoted Clyde Hughes writer/columnist for The Toledo Blade and president of the Northwest Ohio Black Media Association. Hughes served as the guest speaker for the evening's program. Hughes spoke of

how much his parents influenced, and helped mold him into the man he is today. He said while growing up, his parents did not make college an option, but rather an obligation. Hughes concluded his speech saying "We know the people making great contributions to our community, but tonight we get to honor the people behind the scenes."

That is exactly what this award recognition program is about; honoring the silent soldiers, the husbands and wives who are not often recognized for encouraging, supporting and praying for their spouses. The honorees are from various communities, organizations and churches.

"This celebration is a gathering of people to motivate us and carry on the good deed," said Pastor Cedric Brock of Mt. Nebo Baptist Church. Some of the proceeds from the program serve as a scholarships for University of Toledo students, and the other proceeds are used for the outreach programs which include a prison ministry, nursing home ministry, Jonah's for Education and a radio program called "The Voice of Hope" which airs on 95.7 every Sunday at 9:00 a.m. These are just a few of the outreach programs that Pastor Cedric Brock and Mt. Nebo Baptist Church offer.

This recognition program was started three years ago and continues to grow every year. There is a committee consisting of five member including Pastor Cedric Brock who nominate the honorees throughout the year. They look, in particular, at those who are making positive contributions to the community such as Pastor W.L. Perryman at Jerusalem Bap-



Pastor and First Lady Brock with daughter Kiarra



Willetta Perryman, Oscar Haynes, Mary Horton



Lera Doneghy, Antoinette Banks, Barbara Konop



Mary Horton, Monica Perryman and Margo Jones

tist, and Judge Charles Doneghy and then they look for the positive spouses who are behind the scenes.

All of the honorees expressed their enthusiasm to be receiving such a high honor. All of the honorees have also impacted their community in their own way, many are also educators, such as Lera Doneghy, who retired from the school system after 26 years of dedicated service, Antoinette Banks who is currently a school counselor at the Toledo Academy of Learning, Barbara Konop who also served as a teacher/counselor for several years before retiring

and Willetta Perryman who worked with the EOPA Toledo Head Start for 12 years, before leaving to become co-owner of the Preacher's Wife Hat Shop.

Monica Perryman who is president of Ohio New Life District, Margo Jones who serves as the choir director, secretary and Sunday school teacher for Christian Temple Church - Mary Horton, Oscar Haynes, Ora Bell, Maxine Alexander, Ruby Pettaway, Donna Trail and Wanda Williams - all are very influential in their community and took pains to thank their church families and friends for their continued support.



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The Lima Truth

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The Sojourner's Truth

February 28, 2007

Future Success – Education Is the Key

By Vickie Shurelds
Special to The Truth

Propelled by well-founded concerns over declining rates in high school graduation statistics and less than encouraging proficiency test scores, the State of Ohio developed an initiative with a lofty mission statement. The statement contains an impressive set of goals including: "raising the expectations for what all students should know and be able to do", and to "assure an accountability system that holds educators and students responsible for high academic achievement." (2007ohiocan.org).

The sheer numbers are staggering: take 10 Ohio high school students. Seven will graduate. Five will enroll in college. But only three will graduate from college within 10 years of receiving a high school diploma.

It was obvious. Ohio was losing ground in preparing people to acquire the knowledge they need to succeed. There was no choice. Something had to be done.

The Ohio Can program has two aggressive components: College Access and the Gear Up program. These components are operating in overdrive mode in both Toledo and Lima. Successful implementation can be a direct affect of the collaborative efforts between comple-

mentary entities. Understanding how and why these programs can benefit our communities by educational enrichment opportunities for students can mean the difference between staying as we are, and our children having a part of that dream Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke about so many years ago.

Primarily, these programs focus on accessibility for low income and first generation college families – but the mission statement is an inclusive one stretching out to whisper in every student's ear: You can go to college. You can succeed. We'll show you how.

Probability statistics for the positive impact of this program seem stronger than efforts in years past due mainly in its design to utilize a tapestry for student success as opposed to a "safety net." The anchor webbing of OCAN is the opportunity for collaboration. Current programs reporting some success in schools, community-based organizations and churches are intricately woven together with the resources provided by the state for strength.

Advisors are placed in the schools to guide students toward schedules that create a pathway to their educational goals. State monies are put

into motion to provide tutoring for those struggling with Ohio Graduation Test scores. School administrators in Lima, such as Jeff McClellan, principal of Lima Senior's High School of Multiple Intelligences, speak with their teams weekly on improving attendance, encouraging critical thinking, writing prompts and pushing kids to success using whatever it takes. MI works hand in hand with Knowledgeworks, the origin of the OCAN program, to pilot programs focused on student learning success.

State and federal grant monies are being used to place part and full-time adults in Lima's high and middle schools to increase the number of students and parents who understand how these programs will benefit them on educational, social, emotional and economic planes simultaneously.

Resource centers are in place – complete with advisors at the Lima Public Library, the YMCA and YWCA – with interlocking schedules to cover as much time as possible. These centers offer ACT preparation, career searches, computer access; they'll help with college applications, filling out FAFSA forms, additional financial aid and scholarships. They offer academic enrich-

ment trips that include visits to museums and college tours, parent workshops, college reality days – where students get hands-on opportunities to find out how it really feels to be a college student – early awareness programs exposing students K-8th grade to the vast possibilities for post-secondary education that awaits them.

And yes – they even offer scholarships! This year, Last Dollar awards will be given on November 4 with a drawing for high school seniors and first-year college students who attend the event! All you have to do is show up – and you could walk out of the event with a scholarship!

Still think you may not be able to go to college?

Yearly, Lima/Allen County's College Access program partners with a local credit union to provide an Education Day. They facilitate local college connections, round table discussions

and classroom presentations.

Director Angela Meyer says she would like to see an increase in parent involvement; she has a strong belief that closing that gap in the tapestry will lead to even better indications when success numbers for this program are viewed. OhioCan is the first statewide coordinating body for college access programs in the nation.

They're proud to cite an increase in the number of students and administrators who are aware of their program's components and an increase in the number of students taking ACT's.

An event tagged as "College Goal Sunday" is held at different locations statewide. They offer financial aid guidance for students and adults, and can provide hands on help with the FAFSA forms as well. This is also a great time for getting advice for those families who believe they may have special needs. The key

is to not assume college is not in a family's future. There are many program opportunities out there of which families may not be aware. It certainly won't cost them anything to find out – and it could be the difference in what the future really holds.

There are plans to increase the reach of these programs making them accessible to as many students as possible. In the interim, they'll keep searching out ways to support existing programs and develop opportunities for students in Lima and Allen County.

For more information on programs, or if a one-on-one counseling session would be more beneficial, you may contact them directly at their office within the Lima/Allen County Chamber of Commerce – or through your school's College Access or Gear Up advisor.

It's simple, really. Save a child. Save the nation.

Friends of the Library Book Sales Benefit Library

The Friends of the Library, a 3,000-member organization, has scheduled book sales to benefit the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library.

The sales are scheduled at 546 Southard, just two blocks north of Main Library in downtown Toledo. Books, CDs, videos, cassettes, and other materials will be available. A fresh inventory of materials will be added daily.

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Are We Losing Our Black Identity? Part 2

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

Over the weekend, I was flippin' through channels and came across *Money Talks* with Charlie Sheen and Chris Tucker. Where I used to laugh at Chris Tucker and think nothing of it, this time just watching a few minutes of his antics made me have an even deeper understanding of why Dave Chappelle walked away from Comedy Central.

Having said that, walk with me, fam, as I try to pick up where I left off last week.

On this last day of February, I would like to just close off this Black History Month by continuing to address situations that pertain to us as a people.

Forest Whitaker winning an Oscar for a legendary portrayal of an actual black historical figure says something about blacks in entertainment.

But what does it say about black people in general that we concern ourselves so much with collecting Oscars,



Forest Whitaker

Grammys and championship rings when college degrees are much more accessible yet we don't seem to push as hard to celebrate those things.

See, THAT'S part of black identity to me.

Focus on education.

I wish that I could say I was an "A" student all the way through, but I can say that I heard it loud and clear when all of my teachers would stress to us the importance of having a college degree if we were to have a better shot at a decent life.

No doubt, I can debate some aspects of that but educating our people and even changing HOW our people are educated is crucial to our survival.

Some people think that you are acting less black if you sit up and pay attention in class.

I mean it's like an actual civil war in these classrooms.

All the kids have to struggle with staying focused... it's hard learning information that doesn't seem like it's related to anything in your world, especially when it's being taught by people who may not really give a damn if you retain anything at all.

However, there's still one common divide in every classroom you could ever walk into.

You have those black students who are letting the class

whoop their ass.

They're disruptive or apathetic. They have the intellect but not the hustle to do the work.

They have identified with being a true nigger - loud, obnoxious and unfocused.

Trust me - I know this to be true because the niggas who used to flunk all the classes I was in, I still see them walking around flunking at life.

On the other side of the spectrum, you have black students who have bought into the idea that paying attention in class and doing the work is somehow in their best interests if they want a good shot at a stable future.

But look at the cost of such a revelation.

All of the kids who read my article and email me, all the teens I've worked with over the years say the same thing I felt growing up in the 90's... there is a definite price to pay for being the one in class with your hand raised.

Not only will you be teased and ridiculed, but your own black people will think you're selling out by trying to learn in a place of learning.

No doubt, making fun of so-called "nerds" is just part of the high school experience.

But it can cripple a group of people if they carry into adulthood an aversion to learning.

If I had my own State of

Black America address I would make it a priority that we begin to identify being smart with being black.

I would make it a priority that we identify being a successful student with being black.

I rode the fence yo, I would be in B.I.C. and on the Honor Roll at the same time - L.O.L.

But I never let anyone clown me out of doing the work I know I needed to do.

There's so much more that I could say about the problems we face when we face a mirror.

When black people address ourselves we have a lot of issues, but they won't get handled if people continue to get wrapped up in this "it ain't no black or white" mess.

Or if people continue to think that entertainment, sex appeal and pointless babbling (spitting game) are the calling cards of our people as a group.

Maybe I can't give you an idea of what your Black Identity should be, but I will use this column to urge you to THINK ABOUT IT.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A BLACK PERSON IN 2007?

How does it affect our access to essentials like healthcare, employment and education?

How does it affect what other races see when they

look at us on T.V. or in public?

How does it affect our priorities and spending habits?

How does it affect our interaction with law enforcement and this wack ass criminal "justice" system? (with the Afro Ball making a comeback, I think back on my first Afro Ball in '95 when Toledo police showed up and pepper sprayed every black face in a crowd of about 100 people right outside the Seagate Center because two people argued).

Hell, how does being

black even affect our rights to even be seen as human?

Life is precious, regardless of color.

But for BLACK PEOPLE... there are people who think NOTHING of whether you are informed or ignorant. There are people who think NOTHING of whether you are empowered or preyed upon. There are people who think NOTHING of whether you are dead or alive.

But the most important thing will always be, what WE think of OURSELVES.

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 Upscale beauty salon with 6 booths. Additional separate area for another business venture for extra income. New furnace & C/A,
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Community Support Provider

Progressive behavioral health care organization is seeking an energetic, dependable individual eager to provide support to severely and persistently mentally ill adults and their families. Requires Bachelor's degree in social work or mental health related field and experience working with SPMI adult population. Preference given to licensed candidate (Ohio LSW, PC). Duties include providing mental health services and crisis intervention, developing treatment plans, coordinating treatment with other providers, and providing linkage to community resources. Valid driver's license, good driving record, and ability to perform therapeutic holds required. Must be proficient and accurate in computer use. Submit resume, with cover letter and salary expectations, by 3-7-07, to

Harbor Behavioral Healthcare (CSP),
4334 Secor Road,
Toledo, OH 43623-4234
or fax to 419-724-9425
or e-mail to harborhr@harbor.org.
EOE.

Vocational Specialist

Energetic, dependable mental health professional needed to provide psychosocial and vocational assessments, and coordinate linkage between clients and employers. Requires Bachelor's degree in mental health related field plus 1 year vocational rehabilitation experience; or Associate's degree with 3 years vocational rehab experience; or 5 years experience providing voc rehab services to BVR, ODJFS funding sources. Preference given to licensed candidate (Ohio LSW or PC). Duties include assessing client readiness for employment, identifying client interests/skills, and evaluating worksite/employee job match. Must be proficient and accurate in computer use. Valid driver's license and good driving record required. Send resume with cover letter and salary expectations by 3-7-07 to

Harbor Behavioral Healthcare,
Attn: Human Resources (VS),
4334 Secor Rd.,
Toledo, OH 43623-4234,
or fax to 419-724-9425,
or e-mail to harborhr@harbor.org.
EOE.

Walkers/Talkers

NorthRiver Weed and Seed PlainTalk program is seeking 1 Walker/Talker. Walkers/Talkers are the primary messengers of the PlainTalk Program. The Walker/Talker is responsible for overall outreach, recruitment, engagement, and training of residents in selected community. Applicants must have survey experience with PlainTalk or be a resident of the Plain Talk community; have good interpersonal skills; have the ability to operate comfortably in both neighborhood and professional settings. Temporary to permanent position—starts at \$9.50-\$10.00/hr. Interested parties should send resumés to

NorthRiver Development Corporation,
725 Lagrange Street,
Toledo, Ohio 43604.

Deadline: March 2, 2006

Front Desk Scheduler/File Clerk

Progressive behavioral health care organization is seeking a competent individual to schedule appointments, check clients in and out for appointments and file clinical charts on a part-time basis. High School diploma or equivalent and 2 years recent office experience required. Duties include announcing client arrival, taking all incoming client calls regarding appointments, collecting payment from clients and filing open and closed clinical charts. Must be proficient and accurate in computer use. Send resume and salary expectations by 3/7/07 to

Career Connections,
Attn: Human Resources (JCD),
4334 Secor Rd.,
Toledo, OH 43623-4234,
or fax to 419-724-9425,
or e-mail to harborhr@harbor.org.
EOE.

Office-Based Therapist

We are currently recruiting for a full-time **Office-Based Therapist** to be a part of a multidisciplinary team. Responsibilities include: DSM IV, crisis intervention, group work, child and family therapy.

Requirements include: Ohio Licensure in Social Work or Counseling with Master's Degree preferred. Demonstrated clinical background in working with special populations a plus!

Interested Candidates may forward their cover letter, resume and salary requirements to:

Connecting Point
Attn: Human Resources
1212 Cherry St.
Toledo, OH 43608
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CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Make a Positive Difference in the Lives of Others

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc (ABLE), a non profit law firm providing high quality legal assistance in civil matters to low income individuals and groups in a 32 county area of western Ohio, seeks to hire a Chief Development Officer (CDO) to oversee the development and revenue enhancement activities of ABLE and its affiliate Legal Aid of Western Ohio, Inc (LAWO). These non profit law firms annually serve over 17,000 low income residents from 8 office locations.

This is a new position resulting from significant growth in the firms. The CDO is a key leadership position with significant responsibilities, including the supervision of a development team of 6. The CDO will be primarily responsible for establishing and implementing a comprehensive strategic development plan that will grow ABLE and LAWO's combined \$13 million budget and an endowment through the solicitation of major gifts, special events, planned giving, corporate and foundation support, government grants and contracts, and a major capital campaign. Position will be housed in ABLE's Toledo office.

The CDO must have a passion for and a commitment to ABLE and LAWO's missions and the principle of equal justice. The CDO must have a Bachelor's degree and preferably a Master's in related area. Must have a minimum of 7 years of experience in the area of major gift fundraising (gifts in excess of \$100,000) with a history of success. Experience with government grants and contracts highly preferred. Must have excellent communication skills, both oral and written, with the ability to engage and influence a wide range of donors and the building of long term relationships. Strong organizational and leadership skills required. Previous experience supervising development staff required. A flexible and adaptable style with the ability to work both independently and as a team leader in a fast paced environment with quickly changing development needs. Regular travel throughout the service area required. Proficiency with Microsoft Outlook and fundraising software required. Competitive salary dependent on relevant work experience. Excellent benefits. Send resume electronically in Microsoft Word format only, as soon as possible, to:

jobs@ablelaw.org
Subj: Chief Development Officer
or
CDO Position
c/o ABLE Recruitment Coord.
520 Madison Ave. Ste. 740
Toledo, OH 43604



Equal access to ABLE offices is available. Those applicants requiring accommodation in the interview/application process should contact the Recruitment Coordinator, at the address listed above. EOE

INVITATION FOR BIDS RE-BID

The Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority is seeking qualified contractors to furnish all labor, materials, and equipment for the following projects:

JOB NO. #27016
PROJECT Patio Removal & Concrete Work at McClinton Nunn Homes
WALK-THRU DATE March 6 at 10:00am
BID OPENING DATE March 20 @ 11:00am

Contract Documents and Technical Specifications will be available on **Monday, February 26, 2007**, at 201 Belmont Street, in the Modernization Department (419-259-9462), and will be provided upon request. A **non-refundable** fee of **\$20.00** will be charged for each set of plans provided. All bids will be publicly opened and read aloud in the 2nd Floor conference room on the dates shown above, in the Modernization Department.

Each bid will require a bid guarantee as described in the contract documents.

The prevailing wages for this locality, as established by the Department of Labor as Wage Determination OH20030028, as modified, must be paid all persons employed for this work.

All bidders shall be required to meet the Affirmative Action requirements and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements as described in Executive Order #11246. Each bidder must insure that all employees and applicants for employment are not discriminated against because of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, handicap, age, or ancestry.

LUCAS METROPOLITAN HOUSING AUTHORITY
MODERNIZATION DIVISION





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50%
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1.97
lb

WITH



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Red, Ripe

1 lb Pkg

1.77

WITH

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10\$10
for 10



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for 10



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and Salami)

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for 10



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