



Emerson Ross

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"I like to do anything I can do to help them help their communities. But I realize that you are only as good as the advice you get. I have been lucky in that my mentors have included Judges Robert Penn and Robert Franklin, C. Allen McConnell and Charles Doneghy.

This Strikes Us ...

A Sojourner's Truth Editorial

Do we still need affirmative action programs?

Regrettably, yes we do.

We can try to envision a future in which people will be so tuned in to the sensibilities of others, they will under any circumstances do the right thing. Not going to happen.

But before we go into the discussion of why we need affirmative action, let's be clear about a few definitions.

The City of Toledo's affirmative action office has served primarily as the clearing house for employee grievances and complaints about unfair practices in the workplace. The office has not been focused, as much, on whether or not quotas or guidelines are being met or whether diversity is reflected in the city's workforce.

We certainly want diversity and we know the office pays at least slight heed to that factor but ultimately such an office can only use its powers of suggestion to try to ensure that diversity is maintained.

The real power of the office is in ensuring that employees are treated fairly throughout the workplace. The real problem in a bureaucracy of any sort is that not all supervisors are necessarily fair. There will always be problems of gender and race conflicts. Put those aside for a second. There will always be problems of personality conflicts.

In the current dust-up over what happens to the office of Affirmative Action, the mayor has said that he wants to place the office under the Department of Human Resources in order to help close a budget deficit. We are unconvinced that such a move actually saves money unless it is accompanied by staffing cuts.

And if the affirmative action staff is trimmed to cut money – which it already has been – then we are unconvinced that the office cannot still stand alone, retain its autonomous status, even with a depleted staff. The logic eludes us.

Initially the AA/CC office lost a secretary and then two of its four remaining staff members were pink slipped. All the while the administration planned to place the contract compliance part of the office under the Finance Department and the AA portion under Human Resources.

From a staffing standpoint, as we understand it, the plan was to drop two of the original five people, regardless of where they ended up working. We doubt that three employees could have handled the workload. That office, as we noted earlier, monitors diversity in the workplace, handles employee grievances and tries to enforce guidelines designed to ensure, through contract compliance, that minority contractors are given an opportunity to bid on city projects.

We believe that splitting the office, in the face of these cuts, will make the job, from a workload standpoint, of handling all three functions all the more difficult. For that reason alone, we urge City Council, if City Council does indeed have any say in the matter, to prevent such a division.

But more importantly, we believe the department should maintain its independence.

Now, we may be kidding ourselves if we think that the office is truly autonomous when the person in charge reports directly to the mayor's office rather than to another department head. That, in essence, assumes that the mayor's conduct in such matters will always be flawless.

We can't construct a perfect arrangement for such an office. We do know that the fewer obstacles the bureaucracy places on those who have to monitor the bureaucracy's practices, the more effectively the monitoring agent can perform its duties.

The question of whether City Council has any power to keep the AA/CC office intact is a matter of debate. But if it does have that power, we urge council to keep the office as independent as is humanly possible and to keep the various functions under one roof.

City Employee Still Uncertain of His Status

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Dwayne Morehead, co-director of the Youth Commission, is on sick leave at the moment but he expects to return to work within a week's time. Exactly what job he is returning to is a bit up-in-the air at the moment.

Morehead, in a conversation with The Truth over the weekend, said that he was called into Mayor Carty Finkbeiner's office during the previous week to speak about a change in job status.

At that time the mayor informed Morehead that he would be working in two departments. He would be performing his duties in the Youth Commission and also serving as the youth leader in the Board of Community Relations.

"I said 'If you're planning on doing that and I'm doing two jobs, there has to be an increase in there,'" said Morehead. "The mayor told me that 'you're not going to lose any salary, but there will be no increase.'"

On that Friday evening, said Morehead, he received a call from the mayor who expressed his displeasure over the recent events regarding Perlean Griffin (see full story on page 6).

"The mayor told me he would fire me if I didn't stop talking to Ms. Griffin," said Morehead.

On Monday, during another conversation with the mayor, Morehead said he was informed that he would indeed be losing salary, approximately \$2,000 with the move.

Those conversations, said Morehead, prompted him to file a complaint with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission in which he alleges that the move, the demotion and the salary decrease is retaliation for his actions. "I wasn't going to stop talking to Perlean," said Morehead, "I needed protection and I saw what had happened to Ms. Griffin when she didn't fall into line."

Morehead, who was an ardent Finkbeiner supporter during the mayoral campaign, told The Truth that he has no regrets about his course of action. "There is no doubt in my mind that I did the right thing."

Community Calendar

March 16

- Fundraiser Dinner and Dance: BGSU Generation Next Award; Wyndham Hotel; Honoring two generation next leaders from Cornerstone Church; Silent auction; 6:30 to 10:00pm: 419-372-0343
- Amazon Lodge No. 4: Fish Fry; 11 am to 5 pm: 419-531-7079

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 3:30pm: 419-367-3234

March 18

- Indiana Avenue MBC: 42nd Pastoral Appreciation for Rev. Dr. John E. Roberts and First Lady Bernice Roberts; Guests are Rev. Robert Wormley and the Southern MBC; 4 pm

March 25

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

March 29

- YWCA Milestones: A Tribute to Women; SeaGate Centre; co-sponsored by the YWCA, WTVG and ProMedica Health System: 419-241-3235

March 29-31

- Second Annual Women of Worth Conference: "Called to be Doers;" Genesis Dreamplex Hotel & Conference Center; Thur and Fri evening open session at 7 pm; Friday 8:30 am to Noon; Saturday 9 am to 1:30 pm: 419-472-2316 or 419-944-1033

March 31

- Landlord Advocacy Seminar: Property management and legal issues discussion; 8 am; The Catholic Center: 419-244-6711 ext 417 or 425
- United Missionary Baptist Church: "The Challenge of the Cross;" Presented by the Transportation Ministry
- National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc: Annual Luncheon to celebrate National Women's History Month and to honor six great women of Toledo; 11 am; Botanical Gardens: 419-244-5390

April 1

- Indiana Avenue MBC: 42nd Pastoral Appreciation for Rev. Dr. John Roberts and first Lady Bernice Roberts; Guests are Rev. Dr. John Williams and the Eastern Star Baptist Church

April 14

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

April 15

- Indiana Avenue MBC: 42nd Pastoral Appreciation for Rev. Dr. John Roberts and First Lady Bernice Roberts; Guests are Rev. Dr. John Heckard and the Mt. Calvary Baptist Church of Mansfield, OH

April 27-29

- Calvary Baptist Church Women's Retreat: Deadline for registration is March 11: 419-865-0019 or 419-531-9443

The Sojourner's Truth

Toledo's Truthful African-American Owned and Operated Newspaper

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My View

By Jack Ford
The Truth's Political Columnist

Say what you will about Perlean Griffin's "nuclear attack" on Mayor Carty Finkbeiner last week but at least she's consistent. Six years ago, during a campaign kick-off speech, I rhetorically stated that I was going to work so hard on developing legislation and in implementing fairness and diversity that one day there would be no longer be a need for an affirmative action office.

I thought I was recalling Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's "I Have a Dream" speech but Perlean obviously didn't see the similarity and has held a sour grudge for what she thought was an "anti" affirmative action address.

The fact that my sentiment was just the opposite of her interpretation meant no difference to her once she put her sights on me. This time, however, Perlean is wholeheartedly correct in that the office of Affirmative Action should remain autonomous in order to be effective in its role of implementing city-wide practices. Lately, it has become clear to me that the office would never put itself out of business.

Griffin realizes that once affirmative action is quietly tucked into Human Resources, as proposed by

Mayor Finkbeiner, it subsequently becomes just one of many city functions that are mandated to occur without the direct supervision of the mayor. Thus, the current mayor is deciding to delegate effective authority that I literally created and valued.

Obviously someone has convinced columnist Roberta BeBoer that affirmative action is merely about "hiring" practices. An independent affirmative action office actually holds a strong mayor accountable for prioritizing all city practices in accessibility, opportunity and dignity of all of its citizens. Transferring the office is an invitation to reviving the insidious effects of racism and sexism.

The current administration was hoping that no one would shout or even notice the quiet attempt to couch the independence of the affirmative action office. As a female writer, with many constituents, it is alarming that DeBoer is focusing on style rather than substance when reflecting on Griffin's brave stance.

DeBoer might do well to research the oratorical styles of the suffragettes she should be beholden to ... it's called "dramatic pause" and it's

rarely scripted. It comes from within. It can be quite effective. It worked for Dr. King and Mahatma Gandhi, to name a few.

Even the witty female columnist doesn't get it. Right smack in the middle of women's History Month, DeBoer excluded women (the largest minority group in the city to be affected) from the 16th paragraph in her Sunday column. Her female constituents ought to encourage her to study the male-female ration of city employees, vendors and contractors, including the archives, of the streets and bridges division, the civil engineering office, the law department, the ranking of officers in police and fire and the cabinets of former mayors. Enough said.

To her credit, Griffin did not go quietly into that good night. She pushed the button and gave every indication that she has a support system that is not going away. Do not dismiss her coalition - Francis Dumbuya, Ben Williams and Twila Page, among others. It doesn't matter who they supported for mayor, they recognize a rip-off when they see it. Ouch! Furthermore, don't be surprised when the black ministers, along with Johnny Mickler of

the Urban League, jump into the fray.

In closing, and for the record, the Ford administration transferred a balanced budget to the Finkbeiner administration. Check the record. This mayor is like a kid in a candy store with your wallet. The mayor wrecked the budget as soon as you paid your taxes and he's already asking for more hoping that you will enable him. Why not? He gets results, doesn't he?

Here's what he picked out for you while on his latest

spree: 17 new forestry workers, a pension pick-up that's worth about \$8 million, and let's not forget that unadvertised baseball coordinator's job that has gone do empty for so long. Let's hope the shower keeps everyone comfortable of the 22nd Floor because "you ain't seen nothing yet."

As for the recent poll between Finkbeiner and myself, the only poll that matters is the one on election day. Always, always, always check the records and not the promises of prospective leaders



Jack Ford

and when someone says that they get results, check and see if they are the kind of results you can live with and afford.

Contact Jack Ford at jack@thetruthtoledo.com

Random Thoughts on Random Topics...

Guest Editorial
By Life Tolliver

Let's all get out our crying towels and on the count of three, let's all weep and moan together over sight of Queen Fran Lawrence and the current interim school superintendent John Foley shedding crocodile tears.

They are booing and babbling about the number of pupils that are deserting the public schools like rats off sinking ships and attempting to get vouchers to attend schools that have some semblance of what it means to teach a child.

Duh! This problem of the public schools being in the drink is old news and every time there is plan to "fixit", Queen Lawrence and her union minions scream and holler and beam basics like parental involvement, principals being in charge of their schools and getting rid of the scurrilous Toledo Intern Plan.

Except for more available funds, I am at loss as to why the Toledo classrooms are not now practically deserted considering their achievement rates and dismal chance for recovery. Until Queen Fran is dethroned and the Toledo Federation of Teachers union reined in, the classroom exodus will not be abated. Cry on Fran. We are not impressed.

The Honeymoon Is Over!...Already?

I already like William E. Harner, Ph.D., the next super of the Toledo Public Schools. He appears to be ready to wave the battleaxe and regain the lost ground that was given up by prior superintendents to Queen Lawrence in order to "keep the peace."

Harner indicates that he plans to visit the schools and classrooms to make sure that teaching is taking

place. Good luck. Harner, please clear this provocative act of war with Queen Lawrence before she busts your knee caps with her babble about, "we the teachers rule the roost."

Someone needs to pull Harner's short coattails and inform him of the way that "things are done in Toledo." In Toledo, the principals are mere flunkies at their schools and all matters are taken via the building rep and then to the union in order for Queen Lawrence to either kiss the deal or to kill the deal.

Harner will need all of his West Point tact and training to avoid going ballistic when he discovers the 'real deal' as to how dysfunctional the schools operate and how the local unions dictate who gets porridge or not.

Harner means well but... "Toto, this is not Kansas."

What's All this About the MUO's...?

Get your head wrapped around this biscuit. Debbie Barnett, school board president, is saying that any publicly-funded matters such as MOU's (memorandums of understanding) that the school board had with the various unions is private stuff so butt out Mr. and Mrs. Public!

Those MOU's are not privileged confidential documents. They affect the public and the taxpayer's monies. If they are withheld, the affected parties should file a Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) and expose what is in those juicy agreements.

What you will find out in those MOU's is that prior superintendents and city administrations were in cahoots in shortchanging the public regarding how the public money was or was not spent in regards to the schools and the unions.

Not intended for bedtime reading. Too many night-

mars.

Come On, Perlean, Surely You Were Not....

Oh well. Perlean Griffin, the friend of Carty and one of the few remaining city officials with any discernible backbone, has been fired for doing her job.

This nonsense about budget cutbacks being the reason for her untimely dismissal is the cover story that Carty would have you believe. Truth be told, Perlean slapped one of Carty's buddies with charges of maintaining a hostile work environment and when confronted by Perlean, the city did not want to do the right thing ... so this cabal got together and gave Perlean the old "drink the hemlock or jump out of the window choices."

For the public it is stylized as a merger not a dismantling. What a crock from Carty. For all practical purposes, the Affirmative Action Office and Office of Contract Compliance have been shot to pieces. And Carty wonders why the youth leave this city for cities that have more than two brain cells to rub together.

Want to consider diversity with Carty? Check out who rules with him on the 22nd floor of the government center building. All salt ... no pepper.

Perlean ... I gotta ask you one question. "Did you really think in your heart of hearts that Carty considered you a friend?" Come on, you can tell me.

Why for the life of me so many black, misguided voters think Carty is a slab of baby backed ribs and a pint of Johnny Walker Red rolled all in one is beyond me. Let me repeat: CARTY IS NO FRIEND OF BLACK FOLKS.

Life Tolliver, Attorney

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Ten Little Indians Sitting on a Fence: Or As Marvin Gaye Would Say "What's Going On"

By Warren Woodberry

With too much time on my hands I started to notice a pattern that was emerging in Toledo. That pattern was the firing, moving or reduction of the image of diversity among African-Americans in positions of leadership in the City of Toledo.

This pattern to me, started to unfold within the last two to three years. I also began to realize that not only were these brothers and sisters being marginalized, fired or voluntarily riding off into the sunset, it appeared to have a pattern and a rhyme and reason.

I then began to recall what I thought was a children's rhyme back in the day that was supposed to help children learn to count. But as I researched it, the rhyme took on a much more sinister plot. That rhyme was "10 Little Indians Sitting on a Fence." You would have to be in my age group to remember this rhyme or have parents from the old school. After a while, I discovered this from Shakespeare's Mother Goose for Julius Caesar:

X Roman soldiers in a battle line; One tripped on his spear, and then there were nine. IX Roman soldiers staying up late; One drifted off to sleep, and then there were eight, etc

I further discovered that it was the title of Agatha Christie's best-selling novel named *Ten Little Indians* ending up as *And Then There Were None*.

Ten little Indians went out to dine; One choked his little self and then there were Nine.

Nine little Indians sat up very late; One overslept himself and then there were Eight, etc.

But the original title by Christie was *10 Little N (the N word) Boys*: "Ten little N boys went out to dine; One choked his little self and then there were nine. Nine little N boys sat up very late; One over slept and then there were eight. After the tragic elimination of all nine little N word boys, the rhyme ends like this; One little N boy left all alone; He went out and hanged himself and then there were none."

In compiling lists of African-Americans who have in my opinion been in motion on the civic, political and educa-

tional scene, I have put together the list below. I thought that a list would awaken some of us to alarming news stories about the refusal to fund African-American projects (Scott High School especially), the attack on affirmative action and the removal of African-Americans in some cases for personality conflicts, power plays, nepotism and because some folks in politics are just down right ornery. Some of this ornery gene probably is at the root of all the conflicts.

I am not one for a conspiracy theory, but like Katrina, Martin Luther King, Garvey, red-lining, school segregation, job discrimination cases and the criminal justice system, it would be reasonable to re-think whether or not there is something to the conspiracy theory here in Toledo.

Since I am not privy to all the details the Perlean Griffin/Affirmative Action case, I will let those closer to the principals figure it out. But it seems as though something is not right downtown. Toledo should be proud of the good-looking politicians here in Toledo, Ohio. This group of great looking politicians is what we all saw before the elections. Most of them were all over the hood, smiling, kissing babies and draping arms around our shoulders.

Cameras flashed, but were out done by the smiling white teeth of the potential candidates. Some knew the names of various potential voters in the neighborhood. "Hey, Twakwana, how's the baby?" This candidate never waited for the answer from Twakwana or they would have heard that her son was at Scott HS and the building was deteriorating and the classes and facilities were outdated and that it should have been the first school to receive attention and not the silent treatment when asked about the building schedule and that the academic standards were scraping the bottom.

They would have probably heard that there are no jobs for our youth and that more money is spent to send them to prison than is spent on the schools. But with golf

Dear Editor:

During the past 44 years I have been called many things – some good, some bad – but never during the entire time have I been called a "racist."

During that same period of time, this Caucasian man has worked side-by-side with many, many men and women of color. By my choice.

As an assistant football coach at The University of Toledo, I coached Don Baker, Henry Burch, Richard Early, Dave Daniels, Jimmy Gray, Al Griffin and Willie Loper. No one called me a racist!

I then worked for EOPA, the Federal anti-poverty program where 90 percent of my co-workers were African-American, including Roma Blunt, Bill Bryant, Joan Coleman, Betty Amison, Faye Dinnwiddie, Bob Sciplin, John Jones and Wayman Palmer. No one called me a racist. In fact, many of those colleagues became good friends and we remain so today.

In 1979 I was elected to Toledo City Council. Since then I have been associated with Mike Bell, Bill Copeland, Pete Culp, Harold Garner, Yolanda Jackson, Theresa Gabriel, Juanita Greene, Rev. Willie Perryman, Ed Sherman, Lola Williams, Tony Reams and Jack Ford. None called me a racist.

Over the years I have befriended, assisted educationally and found jobs for young African-Americans such as Marcus Fobbes, Keith Triplett, Willis Barringer, Jon March, Carlton Mathis and many others. No one called me a racist.

Recently, as a result of a \$12 million city deficit, I had to make some personnel cuts and staff re-alignments. Some of the persons cut were friends, but they had only worked for the City for one year and that lack of seniority placed them first in line to be cut. Seventy-four percent of these men and women were Caucasian – 26 percent men and women of color.

We also trimmed our top staff and re-aligned personnel – again to save money. Perlean Griffin was placed as a commissioner of Affirmative Action at Human Resources, paid \$67,000 annually. She refused to work under an African-American woman, Theresa M. Gabriel, the director of Human Resources. She was talked to – literally begged – to take the job. She refused and was fired.

Another city leader, Dwayne Morehead, was assigned to work at the Board of Community Relations under an African-American woman, Juanita Greene. He is being paid \$45,000, nearly twice his previous salary under Mayor Jack Ford.

I am not a racist. I am a person who embraces men and women of color and enjoys lending a helping hand, if that is sought. I lead the City of Toledo team, expecting us to work together and respect each other – and give your best effort! If you do that, you'll have no problem with Carty Finkbeiner – and I don't care what color you are.

One final note – Affirmative Action is not being dismantled. The office is now led by Calvin Brown, an African-American man working under Theresa Gabriel, an African-American woman, who will be strong, visible and supported by myself and the Finkbeiner Administration. I believe in Affirmative Action and Minority Contract Compliance. Its promise is bigger than any individual!

Sincerely

Carleton S. Finkbeiner, Mayor

shirts and shirt sleeves rolled up to the elbow, they worked the streets, the parks and the pulpit, glad handing and slapping high fives.

Those were the good old days, when we thought for sure that once elected, we would see changes in our schools and in our communities. Or, that representatives from the community would be able to share in the ideas that would move this diverse city forward. But after the election, Scotty must have beamed most of them up as they all but disappeared behind closed doors and we now discover what to some appears to be a vendetta against people of color in high profile positions.

They will be back come election time, rolling up the same sleeves and visiting the same pulpits, hoping that once again all is forgotten and forgiven, and convinced that they can again send out their puppets to get your vote. Hoping that you forget the broken promises once again.

They will hope that you forget that African-Americans are being excluded systematically from positions of power for petty reasons like disagreeing with policies destined to rollback the gains of hundreds of years of torture and sacrifice by our elders. They would rather that the city pay legal and settlement fees than to have their authority questioned.

These people are so in
(Continued on Page 15)



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Human Resources Specialist: FT (one year of HR experience required)
Cardiovascular Institute Administrator



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Mayor Carty Finkbeiner's True Colors Emerging

Carty is a passionate man. That we know. However, there is a distinction between being passionate and stupidity, between being passionate and being racist. This mayor is racist. I have known Mayor Finkbeiner for a very long time, and I have come to conclude from my years of knowing him that he is a closet racist. This is the man who calls black preachers a bunch of pimps.



Francis Dumbuya

At one time, I recalled him expressing his frustration over their continuous visits to the 22nd floor of the Government Center as them being a bunch of pimps - always begging with their hats in their hands. This is the only man who would let go someone because others perceive him as lazy; demote someone because he doesn't have a college degree, when the head of his Human Resources department does not have a baccalaureate degree. In a nutshell, this mayor has no tact in dealing with others, and enjoys making light of derogatory remarks about others. He is quick to say "no offense to my African American friends," when he is ready to insult others.

On the issue of dismantling the Office of Affirmative Action/Contract Compliance, I am sure you'd agree with me that the integrity of that Office can only be maintained with its complete autonomy. This is what we're fighting for. As I stated in the press conference, he can call it a merger of two departments or offices, but in reality, the AA/CC's oversight capacity to vigorously investigate cases will be highly compromised.

Also, what makes the issue of Mrs. Griffin so poignant is that the city's savings after the so-called merger would be negligible even if Mrs. Griffin were retained. That's what makes the mayor's actions such suspect. In fact, let's assume the office were left alone, it is unconscionable for a mayor who professes to be strong on AA to reduce such a meager budget from \$206,000 to \$150,000 while carrying an advertising budget which jumps from \$500,000 to \$900,000.

I think the key in all this is for the community, especially the black, to stand united. We cannot let this mayor cause us to be mad at white people nor let him divide us. I do not believe the majority of our community supports the way he treats people. And, with all due respect to Theresa Gabriel, I cannot see, if Mr. Finkbeiner's decision was more thoughtful, how he could have someone with the education, experience, and knowledge of AA as Mrs. Griffin, to report to Ms. Gabriel.

The point I am making is the issue is not about Mrs. Griffin not being able to get along with Ms. Gabriel, but rather about the vindictiveness of Mr. Finkbeiner. If this is a personality issue as the mayor alleges, why as a part of this proposal did Mr. Finkbeiner propose that Mrs. Griffin be reduced in rank and salary, going from a Director to a Commissioner?

On another serious note, the very person that Mrs. Griffin ruled against in a probable cause finding as a result of a discrimination complaint has now been promoted by the mayor even as he proposes budget cuts, while Mrs. Griffin was demoted. What is equally difficult to understand in all this is how the mayor can justify hiring Bob Reinbolt's family member while slashing the salaries of others like Robert Torres, a Hispanic male, and Marisol Ibarro, also a Hispanic female? He also is now proposing a salary reduction for Dwayne Morehead who filed a discrimination complaint with the Civil Rights Commission.

The truth, however, is there has never been any diversity in this administration and that's troubling for this city. The mayor's top-level cabinet is comprised of all Caucasian males: Robert Reinbolt, chief of staff; Dave Moebius, safety director/assistant chief of staff; Tom Kroma, assistant to the assistant chief of staff; and Brian Schwartz, public relations/assistant to the mayor.

The Economic Development is also headed by a Caucasian. Finally, one of these top-level administrators, Tom Kroma, has been charged with discrimination by Perlean Griffin, AA Director. How will be mayor resolve this? This makes the whole thing smell. I see major problems looming in city hall.

Francis I. Dumbuya, Ph.D.

President and CEO

Personal Achievement and Professional Development Institute

Page #	Acct. #	Expenditure	2005	2007	Increase
p. 31	2110	General Fund - Office Supplies	158,263.50	192,344.05	34,080.55
p. 31	2115	General Fund - Computer Supplies	28,042.21	115,653.95	87,611.74
p. 31	2890	General Fund - Misc. Supplies	75,673.77	107,329.25	31,655.48
p. 31	3110	General Fund - Travel Expenses	17,972.20	40,612.62	22,640.42
p. 32	3130	General Fund - Education & Training	47,171.73	153,591.88	106,420.15
p. 33	3765	General Fund - Membership Dues	108,861.10	157,515.94	48,654.84
p. 32	3750	General Fund - Advertising	53,577.00	94,621.48	41,044.48
p. 33	3783	General Fund - Temp. Service	38,195.97	43,293.75	5,097.78
p. 33	4120	General Fund - Office Furniture	3,292.17	10,163.08	6,870.91
p. 33	4160	General Fund - Computer Acq. Initial Cost	1,904.00	22,322.96	20,418.96
p. 68	1110	Office of Mayor - Base Salaries & Wages	637,985.95	910,099.01	272,113.06
p. 68	1310	Office of Mayor - Pers Contribution	104,201.26	191,747.42	87,546.16
p. 68	1710	Office of Mayor - Workers Comp.	15,894.55	42,901.35	27,006.80
p. 68	1740	Office of Mayor - Medical Ins.	78,091.61	135,942.92	57,851.31
			849,032.64		
p. 68	2110	Office of Mayor - Office supplies	2,520.54	8,488.39	5,967.80
p. 68	2130	Office of Mayor - Publications	138.2	2,479.87	2,341.67
p. 68	2320	Office of Mayor - Food	1,888.73	5,886.47	3,997.74
p. 69	3750	Office of Mayor - Advert.	36.66	17,895.93	17,859.27
p. 69	3782	Office of Mayor - Intern Service	2,563.91	30,296.87	27,732.96
p. 69	4120	Office of Mayor - Office Equip.	2,624.41	6,605.25	3,980.84
p. 75	1110	Taxation Dept. - Salaries	705,432.76	885,340.52	179,907.76
p. 78	1110	Demolition - Base Salaries	289,773.22	361,263.37	71,490.15
p. 79	1110	Purchasing & Supplies - Salaries	201,829.46	240,303.82	38,474.36
p. 80	1110	Transportation - Salaries	34,279.97	84,964.63	50,684.66
p. 73	1110	Youth Commission - Salaries/Wages	138,002.81	189,241.24	51,238.43
p. 74	1110	Finance Admin. - Salaries/Wages	164,450.04	246,795.28	82,345.24
p. 74	1110	Finance Admin. - Severance	0	42,540.41	42,540.41
p. 74	1110	Treasury Dept. - Base salaries	149,425.13	206,812.64	57,387.51
			473,948.80		
p. 75	1110	Taxation Dept. - Salaries	705,432.76	885,340.52	179,907.76
p. 75	2110	Taxation Dept. - Salaries	13,117.30	40,575.10	27,457.80
p. 75	2130	Taxation Dept. - Publications	4,892.60	7,926.30	3,033.70
p. 76	3570	Taxation Dept. - Maint. Of Computer Equip.	0	70,656.76	70,656.76
p. 80	1110	Transportation - Base Salaries	34,279.97	84,964.63	50,684.66
p. 81	1120	Refuse Collection - P.T. Salaries	474,198.29	616,000.00	141,801.71
p. 82	3110	Refuse Collection - Travel Expenses	173.40	2,208.04	2,034.64
p. 82	3740	Refuse Collection - Professional Services	693.05	17,929.48	17,236.43
p. 82	3741	Refuse Collection - Contract Services	49,064.68	73,921.24	24,856.56
p. 84	1110	Envir. Services - Salaries	64,826.71	102,255.62	37,428.91
		Recreation - (Cutting ball Diamonds)	401,000	592,000	191,000
		Parks & Forestry	533,000	588,000	55,000
		Parks Admin. - Salaries	112,000	184,000	72,000
			873,998.93		
			TOTAL: 2,196,080.37		

Grid provided by Councilman Michael Ashford

Dear Editor:

As you know, the City of Toledo is facing a budget crisis. On February 28, the Council received the proposed Mayor Carty Finkbeiner budget. As a taxpayer and fiscal watchdog on Toledo City Council, I believe there are some things that you should know about the Finkbeiner budget, and how I plan to approach it.

First of all, I want to be on the record that I vehemently

oppose the mayor's proposed budget, for the following reasons:

- Cuts in police and fire classes will compromise public safety.
- The proposed garbage fee will hit our most vulnerable citizens hardest.
- Closing all city pools will leave children in our community with fewer options for productive ways to spend

their summer.

• Dismantling of the Affirmative Action/Contract Compliance office represents a step backward for the cause of diversity and equal opportunity in Toledo.

I have a fiscal responsibility to the citizens of Toledo to ensure the budget is balanced and that it reflects prudent expenditures. As a first step in that process, I have identified \$2 million in expenditures that can only be called "pork." I propose that these items be cut first, before cutting into programs that so deeply affect the safety and quality of life of our community.

Finally, the biggest tragedy of all might be that City Council received the budget so late that we will not have ample opportunity to engage the public and get their input into how their money is being spent. I am confident that if we had had that public input, we would find that the mayor's ideas are very different from those of the average Toledoan.

Even given the short time frame, I hope people will still participate in the Council's budget hearings, and that citizens with concerns will contact me so that I can be their voice in this budget process.

Sincerely

Michael Ashford
Toledo City Councilman

Hospice helped our family reach a final goal.

Having my dad at graduation made my wish come true, too.

HOSPICE
OF NORTHWEST OHIO

"My husband, Willie, found out nothing more could be done for his cancer. He still had one last goal: to see our daughter, Joya, graduate from nursing school - which was nearly a year away.

"Hospice of Northwest Ohio provided care for Willie, right in our home. I believe their expertise helped him live to see the graduation, and made a lot more good days possible for him along the way."

Laura, Willie's Wife

"Whenever we had questions, Hospice explained every answer. They knew what to provide even before we knew what to ask for. And the staff connected on a personal level, too. My dad's nurse was like part of our family.

"Hospice made all the arrangements to get dad to my graduation, including the wheelchair and portable oxygen. Having dad see me cross that stage meant the world to me. Now that I'm an RN, I know great care when I see it. My dad had the best."

Joya, Willie's Daughter

Hospice can help make the end of life meaningful and fulfilling.
To learn more, ask for our FREE brochure series, "Hospice Answers."
Call 419-661-4001 or visit hospicenwo.org.

Answers for Living the Last Months of LifeSM

Tempest Over Toledo: Former Affirmative Action Director Calls Mayor a Racist

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

Perlean Griffin received a letter from Mayor Carty Finkbeiner last Tuesday afternoon at about 2 p.m. thanking her for her years of service and friendship, criticizing her for her failure to agree to the proposed restructuring of the Office of Affirmative Action/Contract Compliance and requesting her resignation by 4 p.m.

A few minutes after Chief of Staff Bob Reinbolt handed over the letter to Griffin, she lashed out with a vengeance, granting interviews with numerous local media questioning the mayor's commitment to affirmative action and, ultimately, in a press conference on Friday called by a community activist three days after her termination, labeled the mayor a racist.

The mayor struck back. Finkbeiner held his own press conference just hours after the one attended by Griffin and denied that his actions were motivated by anything other than a desire to eliminate a budget deficit.

The drama started when Griffin went on the record at the end of the previous week to voice her opposition to the mayor's plan to downsize and split the office of Affirmative Action/Contract Compliance. The mayor's realignment called for Affirmative Action, including Griffin in a reduced role of commissioner reporting to the Director of Human Resources, Theresa M. Gabriel, rather than in the role of director reporting to the mayor's office, to go in one direction and the contract compliance function to move to the Department of Finance under the purchasing division.

Along with that office's downsizing is the proposed realignment of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry, the combining of the duties of fire and police chief and the elimination of 124 city jobs, meaning 23 immediate layoffs. Those pink slips were handed out as Griffin was starting to wage her battle to save the AA/CC office and the terminated individuals included seven African-Americans and one Latino.

And in order to raise revenues, the mayor has proposed a \$6 a month garbage collection fee.

According to the city charter, the restructuring of the departments and the garbage fee must be approved by City Council. (Section 102: "The Council may change, abolish, combine and rearrange the departments and divi-

sions of the City government and combine and distribute the functions and duties thereof upon the written request of the Mayor.")

By Monday of last week, the matter had come to a boil. Griffin declined to go to the mayor's office when summoned to discuss the matter of whether or not she was willing to work under Human Resources. On Tuesday morning, Reinbolt went to Griffin.

That meeting, also attended by Gabriel, and as reported last week in this paper, demonstrated only that the warring factions were at a standstill – the mayor would have his way about the realignment; Griffin would stand on principal and decline to acquiesce to the new arrangement.

Then followed the letter demanding her resignation.

And on Friday at 1 p.m., a press conference on the steps of Government Center was called by Francis Dumbuya, Ph.D., a professor at The University of Toledo and a community activist associated with the Urban Coalition, a Toledo Public Schools watchdog group. In attendance, in one of the major ironies of the whole imbroglio, were numerous members of the Urban Coalition, one of whose member groups, the African American Parents Association, on October 14, 2005, had endorsed the Finkbeiner candidacy for mayor citing "his stance on the issues," "his challenge to the status quo," and the fact that he could "bring a spark back to Toledo."

This time the mayor's spark has appeared to ignite a controversy that will not be easily brought under control.

In answer to a question about the mayor and his motivation for trying to downsize the AA/CC Office, Griffin, who was also, along with her husband Rev. Alvin Griffin, an ardent Finkbeiner booster during that campaign, said of her former friend and political colleague: "I am calling the

mayor a racist."

That charge brought a swift retort just hours later from the mayor who cited a personality conflict as the reason Griffin had given him for her refusal to go to work in the Human Resources Department. "To then blame others for her decision, is to refuse to look at the truth, which almost every upper level employee of the City knows to be the fact."

Finkbeiner also addressed charges that had been filed with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission by Dwayne Morehead of the Youth Commission earlier in the week. Morehead had been informed that the city would be reducing his compensation package by \$1,600 as a result of a new assignment that would place him both in the Youth Commission and the Board of Community Relations.

During his press conference, Finkbeiner referenced the numerous acts of generosity he had extended to Morehead who was also a core member of his 2005 campaign team.

In a conversation with The Truth over the weekend, Finkbeiner elaborated on the Toledo tempest.

"One mistake that people make, and Perlean made this mistake, is that they think, because I like people and am close to people, that I will blink when it comes to matters of business," said the mayor. "I think Perlean thought I would blink because of friendship. Nobody owns me."

Finkbeiner addressed the issue of the budget problems noting that there are several small departments – AA/CC, the Board of Community Relations and the Youth Commission – with five or fewer staffers that claim the status of departments. It is economically more efficient, he said, to bring these offices under the control of full-fledged departments. And although he admitted that he was in no mood to carry that fight to the BCR, he did indicate that the Youth Commission would not exist for much longer as a

separate unit.

"I can understand Perlean's ego about the role of her department," said Finkbeiner. "But it went too far."

The mayor also repeated that he is fully committed to the cause of affirmative action. "Some need a leg up because it is not always an equal race."

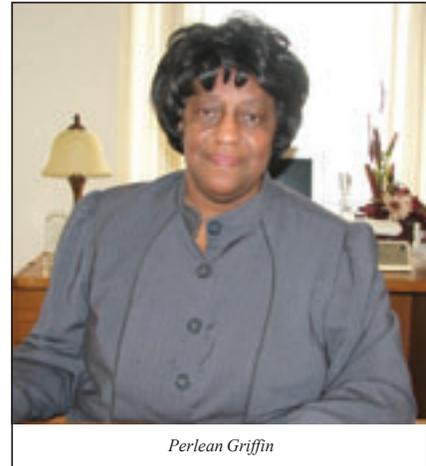
The controversy shows few signs of abating anytime soon. Next up – a City Council debate on the merits of the proposed fees and expense cuts that must be completed by March 31.

But even after this storm passes, the next few years promise more of the same. Finkbeiner believes that it will be necessary to trim another several dozen jobs before this year's end in order to deal with whatever deficit looms for the next fiscal year.

"This is just the first step," he said.

The drama continues.

Contact Fletcher Word at
fletcher@thetruthtoledo.com



Perlean Griffin



Councilman Michael Ashford

Audition Application Form

"TOLEDO IDOL" YOUTH TALENT SEARCH

AUDITIONS

Date: March 24, 2007
Place: Frederick Douglass Center
1001 Indiana Avenue, Toledo, Ohio
Times: 9a.m. to 12noon (grades 1st through 6th)
2p.m. to 5p.m. (grades 7th through 12th)
FEES: \$15 non-refundable fee (cash only)

TALENT SHOW

When: Sunday, April 29, 2007 @ 4:30p.m.
Where: Frederick Douglass Community Center,
1001 Indiana Avenue, Toledo, Ohio

I would like to apply for the "TOLEDO IDOL" YOUTH TALENT SEARCH. I agree to abide by the rules established for this program and by the decisions of the judges.

NAME _____ PHONE (_____) _____

AGE _____ GRADE _____ SCHOOL _____

PARENTS NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ (Street) _____ (City/State) _____ (Zip code)

TYPE OF TALENT TO BE PRESENTED _____

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT NEEDED _____ (THAT YOU WILL PROVIDE)

ALL APPLICATIONS, CONSENT FORMS, AND FEES MUST BE COMPLETED AND TURNED IN DURING AUDITIONS ON MARCH 24TH.

Parental Consent & Release from Liability

I (we) hereby give consent for _____ my (our) child to audition and participate in the Toledo Idol Talent Show that will be held at the Frederick Douglass Center. (S)he will be able to attend the mandatory rehearsals on March 31st, April 7th, 21st, & 28th.

I (we) on behalf of my (our) child and myself (ourselves), waive the right or cause of action arising as a result of my (our) child's participation in the talent show from which any liability may or could accrue against the Frederick Douglass Center or the event Administrators and Coordinators collectively or individually. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, I (we), on behalf of my (our) child and myself (ourselves), agree that this waiver shall include any rights or cause of action resulting from personal injury to my (our) child and/or damage to my (our) child's property sustained in connection with my (our) child's activities for this event.

Child's Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent(s) Name: _____

Parent(s) Signature: _____

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES

- Each participant must complete an application
- Each participant must hand in a completed parental consent form at during the auditions.
 - Acts can be no longer than 2 minutes
 - Only the parent and/or guardian will be able to watch your audition
 - No lip-syncing.
 - Must be prompt! Lateness will not be tolerated.



Members of the AAPA and Mayor Carty Finkbeiner during more congenial times

Kevin Powell's Return to UT Inspires His College Student Audience

By Naki Akrohetoe
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Even though the events and celebrations of Black History Month have come and gone all over the city of Toledo, *The Truth* would be remiss if we failed to report on the speaker/political activist who graced the campus of The University of Toledo on February 26, 2007.

Many at UT know Kevin Powell as a writer, entrepreneur, poet, journalist, editor, music producer and hip-hop historian of some note. This being Powell's second visit to the university, his arrival was greeted with much anticipation from the student body population as well as the faculty and staff.

David Young, interim director of the Office of Excel Program at UT and longtime friend of Powell had the opportunity to briefly introduce the speaker. But before Powell took the mike, he asked Young's wife, Brenda Young, to sing a song. "His Eye is On the Sparrow" was the selection she chose and her voice and presence moved the audience so completely that, following her rendition, she received a standing ovation.

After both the heartfelt introduction and spiritual music selection, the audience was prepared for what was ahead. Powell came to the stage with ease and familiarity, starting his speech off with a bit of humor to get the audience adjusted to his style.

He briefly spoke on his past and the upbringing which contributed to the man he is today. One key point that Powell addressed was his spiritual life and how influential and important it is to know the difference between religion and spirituality.

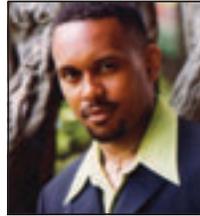
Having grown up in the church and then converting to Islam and now back to Christianity, spirituality still remains the source and important element in Powell's life. "Spirituality is a deeper connection and recognition of God," said Powell as he educated the audience on religion and spirituality.

Powell spoke briefly on six key points that he felt the African-American community needs to focus more on: 1. Creating a spiritual foundation. 2. Developing political awareness. 3. Nurturing cultural growth/ being proud to be African-American. 4. Starting a

plan for economic empowerment. 5. Black America is sick/ knowing health issues. 6. Moving toward mental wellness/ self-love.

He spoke on how black leaders need to build communities to be accessible to African-American people. But most importantly, he stressed, this all begins with self. "Without self-love, there will be no black on black love, without black on black love, there will be no black relationships, without black relationships, there will be no black families, without black families, there will be no black communities, without black communities there will be no black possibilities."

Powell is noted for writing about hip-hop and he revealed his thoughts about the current evolution of the modern day hip-hop. He believes there should be a distinction made between hip-hop the culture and hip-hop the industry. The industry is a market and focuses mainly on that economic aspect of hip-hop and not necessarily the message portrayed in the music. It's all about what sells. Powell, by the way, is



Jan Scotland, Edward Gordon, Emmanuel Brown, First Lady Linnie Willis, Pastor James H. Willis, Sr.

St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church 2007 Annual Men's Day

St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church celebrated Men's Day on Sunday March 11 with a dual service and a theme of "Christian Men Rising to the Occasion," from Proverbs 3:5-6. "Again, this is demonstrating efforts on your part to continue to work together for God," said Rev. James H. Willis, Sr., pastor of St. Paul.

The morning service featured guest speaker Minister Emmanuel T. Brown of Columbus, OH. A student at Otterbein College, Brown conducts workshops across the country while serving in the College Senate, the Student Life Committee, the Judicial Council and the Administrative Council. He is also active in a host of off-campus organizations.

The afternoon service featured musical selections from the St. Paul MBC Male Chorus, the Toledo City-Wide Male Chorus and First Creation.

Jan Scotland served as chairman of the Men's Day Committee and Edward Gordon as co-Chairman.

He stated there needs to be a call to action.

The young college students who packed the room listened attentively throughout Powell's speech. The prevailing mood as they filed out was that his advice will not go

in vain and that he had helped to empower both young and old.

Powell's presentation recalled for some a quote by Langston Hughes: "The prerequisite for writing is having something to say".



You are Invited
to the Greater Toledo Urban League's
10th Anniversary Banquet
"Ten Years: Staying the Course"
March 22, 2007

Wyndham Hotel
Reception at 5:30p.m.
Dinner at 7p.m.

For ticket information, please call (419) 243-3343

James Murray, Chair, Board of Directors
James Hartung, Executive Vice Chair
Johnny M. Mickler, Sr. President/CEO
See our website: www.gtul.org

"A Decade of Staying the Course"

Greater Toledo Urban League Celebrates 10 Years of Service

In October 1994, a group of Toledo residents started the campaign to bring an Urban League affiliate to this area. That effort was finally rewarded in August 1996 when the National Urban League established the Greater Toledo Urban League (GTUL).

Johnny Mickler arrived in town shortly thereafter, in August 1997, to become the first president and CEO of the affiliate. Mickler, now a 20-year veteran with the Urban League, had spent the previous four years in a similar position in Madison, WI.

In celebration of 10 years of service, the Greater Toledo Urban League will host its 10th annual banquet on March 22, 2007. The theme for this auspicious occasion will be "A Decade of Staying the Course."

After 10 years of building the Toledo office, Mickler, not surprisingly, has some thoughts about what has been accomplished and how far this affiliate has come over the past decade.

"When I started, we had one site—this office," Mickler said last week during an interview in his offices in the Fifth Third Bank Building in downtown Toledo. "Now we have four sites all with computer banks. We had no vehicles and now we have four vans."

"When I came here, we were charged with raising from \$50,000 to \$100,000 in unrestricted dollars," he continued. "Now we try to raise about \$200,000 to \$250,000."

Unrestricted funds are those that can be used for any programs as opposed to grants that are written for specific purposes.

"When I came here, we started with one program—job placement—in which we served about 120 to 190 clients per year. Now we serve between 1,500 to 1,800 clients per year in 10 different programs. We have served over 7,000 and placed more than 1,200 clients in our job placement program during those years with wages and salaries totaling over \$15 million."

And the list of accomplishments has grown in all facets of the GTUL program efforts.

When the GTUL took over the J. Frank Troy Senior Center, said Mickler, the center was servicing about five clients per week. That number has grown to between 50 to 65 clients per week.

GTUL programs impact a wide variety of individuals in the northwest Ohio area during all seasons of the years. They are:

- The Community Advocacy Program: promotes com-

munication, discussion and awareness of the concerns of GTUL constituents; maintains contact with local, county, state and city government and also maintains close contact with Toledo Public Schools, Bowling Green State University and The University of Toledo to help maintain and implement initiatives that impacts constituents.

- The Minority Contractors Program: provides assistance to employers, (state, city and local) who are involved with construction projects; helps each project with minority contracting and subcontracting and helps clients with job opportunities.

- The Job Placement Services Program: provides job readiness skills, pre-employment training, job placement and retention services to Title III clients, welfare clients, dislocated workers and walk-ins.

- S.T.R.I.V.E. (Success Through Review Incentive Vision Effort): a summer enrichment and tutoring program that is designed to improve homework and grades and to provide students with the tools and skills needed to excel in school. This program is a joint project with the Toledo Police Department and is housed at Scott High School serving students from elementary to high school.

- The J. Frank Troy Senior Center: the center exists to improve the health and quality of life for senior citizens. The elderly receive assistance in the areas of social service, professional health services, daily living experiences and those educational and social issues that affect them.

- PASSPORT After School Program: this program is funded in part by the Lucas County Jobs and Family Services and the United Way of Greater Toledo and is a joint project with TPS and BGSU. It has been designed to help improve elementary students reading, writing and computational skills in preparation for proficiency testing. The program combines educational, cultural, social, civic and recreational experiences to help students develop academic and social competencies. The program operates out of Cherry and Pickett Elementary Schools and serves second, third and fourth graders.

- NULITES Program: developed to achieve high performance skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening along with decision making, problem solving, reasoning, taking responsibility and self-esteem.

- Summer Mentorship/

Basketball Program: designed to serve 200 or more youth between the ages of 10 and 13 who are referred from 10 elementary schools in the central city. The goal of the program is to provide youth with an opportunity to interact with police officers and others in a non-confrontational way and to promote total community service.

- F.O.T.I. (Fathers of Tomorrow Initiative): The Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) program was established out of a need to help non-custodial parents obtain employment, enhance their parenting skills and begin to pay child support. The overall purpose of the program is to ensure that these men and women will begin to take an active role in the lives of their children, not just financially, but spiritually as well. The program is funded by Jobs and Family Services.

- LEAP II and STEP-UP Program: the purpose of the LEAP II and STEP-UP Program is to provide Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and to provide eligible persons, especially minorities and female, access to the significant economic and social opportunities created in the building and construction industry.

Mickler, of course, is not alone in these endeavors. In 10 years, GTUL personnel have grown from two staff persons in 1997, including Mickler himself, to its current level of 21 in those four sites. And, during the summer months, an additional 45 are hired—including several dozen certified teachers for the S.T.R.I.V.E. Program—on a temporary basis.

The first year's budget was \$160,000. Now the annual budget exceeds \$1.1 million.

And, in addition to the staff, Mickler is assisted by a board of directors and an executive committee that reads like a Who's Who of distinguished Toledoans including Board Chairman Jim Murray, president of Ohio Operations—FirstEnergy Corporation; Executive Vice Chairman Jim Hartung, president of the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority; Judge C. Allen McConnell; Bob LaClair, president of Fifth Third Bank; Bill Mangrum, director of the Frederick Douglass Community Center; Billie Johnson, director of the Northwest Ohio Area Office on Aging, among many others.

Paul Hubbard, partner in Church's Chicken and Captain D's, is one of those on the executive committee who was instrumental in obtaining the affiliate for Toledo 10

years ago. At that time, Hubbard was economic development director for the City of Toledo.

"His boss, Mayor Carty Finkbeiner, wanted to see the Urban League here as well," recalled Mickler. "Carty was intimately involved with the move to bring the affiliate in."

Hubbard, with the assistance of others, was the driving force behind the effort. That was an effort, by the way that had failed several times in the past because the National Urban League was unimpressed with the level of commitment they saw in the Toledo area. "When I came here in the mid 90's I found that the city did not have an Urban League," recalled Hubbard. "There had been one in the 1940's that had been de-certified by the national office and there had been two previous attempts—in the 1960's and the 1980's to start an office."

"We put together a sponsoring committee," he added. "Jim Huffman from Key Bank and Bob King from Fifth Third led the charge in fundraising



Johnny Mickler and Paul Hubbard

and they were key to bringing in Owens Corning and Dana Corporation... those four companies were instrumental and we were able to bring together fundraising and leadership. People such as Charles Penn and Inez Nash, along with Jack Ford and Debbie Barnett were im-

portant as well. We got our first \$20,000 from the city through a block grant. So Carty [Mayor Carty Finkbeiner] and the city were very helpful, especially Edna Brown and June Boyd who were on City Council at the time."

(Continued on Page 11)

Among The Stars

February 27, 2005



Debra Woodberry-Shaw



August 10, 1958

"FOR ONE YEAR GOD HAS HAD THE USE OF
OUR PRECIOUS ANGEL WHO HAS TOUCHED
ALL OF OUR LIVES."

Education Section • Education Section

Emerson J. Ross, Jr.: Putting His Corporate Experience to Work for the Community

By Alan Abrams
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

"I still have the letter in a scrapbook," says Emerson J. Ross of the one and only offer he received to become a pro football player after four outstanding years on the Maryland State College football team.

The school had one championship team during those years, and Ross played with and against several future big-name pro football stars such as Roger Brown, later a member of the Detroit Lions "Fearsome Foursome," and Emerson Boozer.

So why didn't Ross go that route as well, even though it might have meant playing for the more obscure Hamilton Tiger Cats?

Ross reflects for a moment before replying. "Back in those days, a pro football player only made about \$6,000 a year. And the pro teams, just like some of the college teams, were still pretty much segregated. So there were fewer options to consider. But my dad's advice made up my mind for me. I was already taking pre-law courses. My dad said I should just continue with my education and go on to law school.

"I graduated with my bachelor's in social science with English minor. Basically, I was a history teacher," says Ross with a chuckle.

Ross soon made another

fateful decision that would change the course of his life. It would also positively impact the lives of thousands of people living in northwest Ohio and the entire state.

Instead of law, Ross chose to follow a career in business. That in turn led him to numerous high-profile board memberships, both in the business world and in the community, as well as a third career played out mainly behind-the-scenes in politics.

Today, Ross serves as a Member At-Large on Ohio's State Board of Education, a post to which he was first appointed in Oct. 1995 by then-Gov. George Voinovich. He has been regularly re-appointed since, and his current term expires on Dec. 31, 2008.

Born in Toledo, his parents were Ruth and Emerson J. Ross. Both were originally from Mississippi. He has one brother, James, who lives in Toledo.

Ross graduated from St. Francis de Sales High School where he was a member of the first four-year graduating class. He earned his college scholarship as an outstanding member of the St. Francis football team.

"St. Francis had a championship team by time I was a senior, but I think their first really great team was the year

after I graduated" recalls Ross modestly. "We played Libbey – they were the city champions then – and Macomber and Rogers. I don't think Rogers was part of the City League yet. And we played Elyria, Fremont, Bedford, Maumee, Perrysburg and Lima Central Catholic."

Ross came home to Toledo after he graduated from Maryland State College. "My first job out of college was with Owens-Illinois. Then I became a civil rights consultant for the State of Ohio. I also learned a lot while I worked for Ohio Bell as a communications consultant," he recalls.

But it was at Owens-Corning that Ross made his mark in business. He started the Fortune 500 company's affirmative action program and served as its first manager. He then worked in human resources for 16 years, becoming a specialist in corporate compensation. He retired from Owens-Corning as manager of corporate community relations.

Ross also became politically active starting in the mid-1960s. A Democrat, he first became involved with voter registration campaigns. His reputation for community work eventually was recognized on the state level. His first state appoint-

ment came during the administration of Gov. Richard Celeste. He has received an appointment from every governor since Celeste.

Ross was appointed to the Development Financing Board of the State of Ohio and as vice-chairman of the then-Medical College of Ohio. But it was a Republican governor, current U.S. Senator George Voinovich, who offered Ross the State Board of Education appointment.

The board, which oversees primary and secondary education in the state, is now comprised of 11 elected and eight appointed members. During the Voinovich administration, the governor successfully pushed for passage of legislation allowing gubernatorial appointments to sit on the board.

"He wanted more business people to sit on the board," says Ross of Voinovich, "so he got permission for eight appointees. He didn't want them to all be from rural areas and he didn't want them to all be Republicans.

"So the governor went to the business community in each area for recommendations. There were three candidates from Toledo, all business types. Although I was not actively involved in education, I had worked very closely with the Owens-Corning Foundation on Community Giving, which helps schools.

"I had that in my favor plus I was from northwest Ohio. Plus I had business backing. And I guess he needed a black. I was the only black among the original eight appointees," says Ross.

The appointees were given staggered terms. But eventually, the board was caught up in the term limits movement, and term limits were applied to the elected members – although the appointed members were exempted. Somehow in the ensuing process, Ross was



given an extra term. "I'm now in my last term – I think," he says, laughing.

Ross is one of only two original members still serving on the board. The other is the board president.

Ross is a legislative liaison for the Board, utilizing skills he honed at Owens-Corning. He also participates in the Urban Initiative, serves on the Achievement Committee, the School Readiness Task Force and the Territory Transfer Process Subcommittee.

He has also played an active role with the Toledo Public Schools. He is a mentor at Chase Elementary School and co-chairman of the Lucas County Right from the Start collaborative.

Ross has held executive level positions with the Lucas County Democratic Party. "I

ran Peter Ujvagi's campaign for mayor of Toledo, and served on the Celeste for Governor and Jim Williams for Lt. Gov. election campaigns," says Ross.

He was first appointed to the Board of the then-Mid-America Bank in the 1980s. He continues to serve as a member of the Executive Board of Sky Financial Group.

He is exceptionally proud of the many civic and community boards on which he has served including Neigh-

borhood Housing Services of Toledo, the Greater Toledo United Way, the Greater Toledo Convention Center, the Advisory Board of the Toledo LISI, The Coalition for Voter Education, the NAACP, The Greater Toledo Urban League and the Waymon Palmer Y. In fact, he defines a large part of his persona by his community board memberships.

"I like to do anything I can do to help them help their communities. I bring them my corporate experience. But I realize that you are only as good as the advice you get. I have been lucky in that my mentors have included Judges Robert Penn and Robert Franklin, C. Allen McConnell and Charles Doneghy.

"I had the privilege of sitting on the Toledo Civil Service Commission when Judge Penn was chairman. We spent a lot of time putting money and resources where people needed it the most," recalls Ross.

He is also a past chairman of the board of the former Riverside Hospital. "That was one of my most rewarding board experiences," remembers Ross. "What was very unique is that they actually trained the board members about the business. I sat on several medical committees there."

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Education Section • Education Section

Lincoln's All Pro Dads' Breakfast Welcome Moms

Sojourner's Truth Staff

The Lincoln Academy for Boys' monthly All Pro Dads' Breakfast took a turn last month as the academy welcomed students and their moms' for the early morning event.

In the year and a half since the breakfasts' inception, the tradition has been to bring in fathers and father figures to share a meal with their sons as they listen to an inspirational speech by one of Toledo's luminaries.

The breakfasts, the brainchild of Mark Robinson, a school-based mental health professional with Connecting Point, usually draw about 75 to 80 for the preschool-day meal provided by local McDonalds.

"We want you to know how important it is for the father of your children to be involved in their lives," said Robinson in his welcome address.

The February 22 breakfast brought the boys and their mothers together to hear, appropriately enough, Shenikwa Stratford, local NBC24 anchor, who is rapidly approaching motherhood herself. She expanded on Robinson's theme.

"As a news person, I have to talk about current events," said Stratford referring to the recent shooting death of a Toledo police detective by a 15-year old youth.

"That young man had recently lost his father and

that makes me focus on the importance of having a male figure in your life," said Stratford. The news woman reached back into her own experiences and the loving relationship she had with her stepfather to emphasize her point about the importance of male adult influences on children of both genders.

"It was his presence and the way he talked to me," she recalled. "He dropped little jewels in my life ... he was there for me. You can't be a mother and a father, you have to allow someone to be in your life and I encourage you to allow 'angels' to come into your child's life."

Next month's breakfast



Shenikwa Stratford

— March 22 — will return to the traditional father/son theme. For more information on how you can support or make donations to the All Pro Dads' Day Breakfasts, contact Robinson at 419-244-5823 or 419-870-3829.



Lake Erie Academy Presents Program to Culminate Month-Long Study of Black History

By Geneva J. Chapman, Sojourner's Truth Reporter

The large auditorium of Lake Erie Academy was abuzz with activity, Thursday evening, March 1, 2007. It was not only the first day of the school's enrollment drive for this year, but the day chosen for the presentation of a Black History program, "Diversity in Living Color," that the entire school had worked on for a whole month: Black History Month.

"I have not seen any of this," said school leader, Beverly Baker. "The children are very excited. A fifth-grade teacher in charge of the program, Tommie McGhee, had all of the students participating assemble on stage to lead the audience singing "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

McGhee gave a brief history of the song and its composer James Weldon Johnson, who was inspired by the words of a poem written by his brother J. Rosamond Johnson when asked to compose a song for a very special occasion in 1899. "That song was not written for black people — to become our anthem," said McGhee. "It was written for Abraham Lincoln's birthday. But after the black churches got the song, the rest was history." Periodically, through-

out the program, there were "news breaks" during which seventh and eighth-grade students gave "Black History News Blurbs" highlighting the accomplishments of African-Americans.

While learning about Black History in February, L.E.A. also held a school-wide spelling bee. The winners at each grade level were announced at the end of the program. Speeches by the winners of an oral contest held at the school at each grade level were also given intermittently.

Most outstanding was Michael Green, who memorized his speech about Muhammad Ali and used a pair of boxing gloves as a visual aid. An all-around student, Green also led the school's drumline, won the school-wide spelling bee at his grade level and participated in a dance finale at the end of the program.

The Lake Erie Academy (L.E.A.) cheerleaders spelled 'unity' in formation, thrilling their parents and schoolmates. Kindergartners wowed the audience singing "Get on Board," while holding trains decorated with their individual names and colorful artistic efforts. The third graders pro-

duced their own play, "K.C.'s Dream," complete with set and costumes. The theme was 'Believe in Yourself.' Most impressive was the amount of material each of the young performers memorized.

A big crowd favorite was the L.E.A. Drumline, under the direction of Charles McDaniel. The cheers started the minute the drummers marched in, drumsticks in hand, and didn't stop until the final drumbeat. The applause thundered as loud as the drums as the young drummers left the stage.

Members of the seventh and eighth grade Poetry Society recited three poems by Langston Hughes, including one of his best known verses, "Mother to Child." L.E.A.'s first graders did a song and dance routine, "Rise Up!" with energetic enthusiasm. The second graders performed a couple of traditional African-American play songs, "Mary Mack" and "Hambone."

"Some of the hand-clapping songs you hear on the playground today can be traced back to slavery," said McGhee. Both songs were performed to the delight of an audience of adults nodding their heads in remembrance of

(Continued on Page 11)

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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.



Jackson Foundation Lends Parents a Financial Helping Hand

Sojourner's Truth Staff

The James A. Jackson Foundation lent parents a financial hand last Monday afternoon by doing a little shopping and giving every student at Nathan Hale Elementary School a pair of boots or shoes.

In collaboration with Q3 Development and the Danielle Vincent Agency, Public Relations, the Foundation's "New Shoes in Schools Pro-

gram," brought over 450 pairs of shoes to the central city school that Jim Jackson, and his business partner Rodney Neely, attended in their youth.

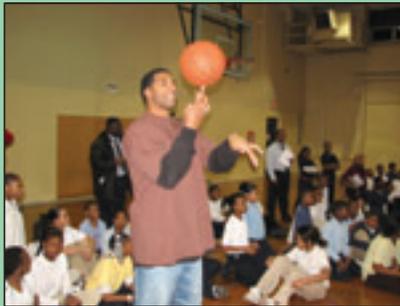
The Foundation's program was assisted by corporate sponsors such as Shoe Carnival, Meijers, SkyBank, Wal-Mart, Rudolph Libbe, Dynamic Contracting, Napper Development Group, Marine Max and Pay-Less

Shoes.

"We understand the challenges you have," Jackson told the auditorium full of students. "This shows that people do care. Hopefully you'll be in a position some day to give back to the neighborhood."

Jackson stressed that the students could do anything they wanted to do as he pointed to the teachers and staff gathered in the gym and commended them on the job they were doing.

After his speech, Jackson conducted what he called "a game of honesty" as he pulled all of the students around him and conducted a hand-clapping exercise. Then the shoes and boots were distributed on the spot to several classes. More boots arrived during the rest of the week for the entire student body.



Sky Bank's Shannon Loar-Tenney, Sherika Love and Jim Jackson

Lake Erie Academy

(Continued from Page 10)
singing them in their youth.

This writer portrayed Harriet Tubman after L.E.A. social studies and language teacher, Victoria Furr talked briefly about Toledo's connection to the Underground Railroad and the historic Lathrop House.

The program's finale was the highlight of the evening. Seventh and eighth graders performed an African dance with synchronized perfection. It was choreographed by 17-year-old Joshua Ellis and included authentic dance steps from Ghana and movements that symbolized saying farewell to Africa. Male and female students moved through the dance effortlessly, showing the results of hours of rehearsal, not missing a beat or a turn. Although most of the steps were simple, there were some complicated combinations that required the students to really pay attention and they did, creating a beautiful dance performance that was wildly appreciated by the 200 or more parents attending the program.

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DECA Bulldogs Go To States

Special to The Truth

Not only is Scott High School's athletics known for going to "states," but Scott DECA members are too! DECA, an international association of marketing students, held state competitions March 9 thru 11 in Columbus, Ohio. This was a prestigious event for all DECA members who competed because students had to earn the right to participate by placing at the district level or by writing a manual. Toledo Public Schools had approximately 100 students from four different schools compete.

Scott High School's DECA chapter alone had 13 members compete at states. This was an extraordinary event for Scott's DECA members considering each student worked hard to place at the district level. In fact, last year Scott DECA had three students compete at states and one, Brandi Hampton, placed first in Restaurant and Food Services and earned the right to compete at DECA's International Competition in Dallas, Texas.



Scott DECA members after competing!

This year's DECA members competed in many areas of marketing including marketing management, hotel and lodging, restaurant quick serve, retail merchandising, hospitality, and sports and entertainment. Jochele Davis, Tish Easter, Renessa Warren, Jordan Toller, Donnell Revels, Austin Dye and Montrece Braddy were seven seniors who represented Scott along with six juniors who included Jenelle Jones, Allen Ward, Adrian Payne, Janisha Taylor, Chenelle Johnson and LeQueta Wright. DECA's national theme is "Let the Adventure Begin" and Scott DECA members were excited to let their adventure begin at states.

In all, four students placed in the top 10 in each of their events. Jordan Toler, competing in sports and entertainment marketing, competed against approximately 45 other students and was awarded a medal. Donnell Revels and Allen Ward interviewed managers at Michael's Bakery and Bravo Cucina Italiano to develop their business operations projects and Austin Dye interviewed a marketing senior consultant for his career activity project. In all, members of Scott DECA represented themselves and the DECA program with professionalism and were proud to have had the opportunity to compete at the state level.

The Educational State of Black Toledo

By Ashley Moore
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

On Saturday March 3 and Monday March 5, the Toledo African American Student Achievement Gap Taskforce and African American Parents Association held a two-part meeting titled "TPS Impact on the State of Black Toledo: Why We Need Change" with a dual focus on academics and discipline.

Specifically the meetings were held to introduce the public to the academic and discipline gap that African-American students in the Toledo Public School district encounter. The meeting was open to the community and parents as well. Saturday's meeting was conducted by Cheryl Catlin and the focus was academics.

About 20 people turned out for the community forums at the Kent Branch Library.

"Toledo needs to have a serious community conversation about education," Catlin said at the onset of her presentation. She used a mountain of statistics to make the point that African-American students in the Toledo area currently at a vast disadvantage in educational attainment compared to their white counterparts.

Out of 12 districts in northwest Ohio, the Toledo Public School district is rated the lowest and many schools within the district continue to not meet annual yearly progress. There are currently 11 Toledo public schools on

academic watch or emergency, some of those schools include Scott, Libbey and Woodward High Schools.

Statistics also show the African-American males are doing worse in subjects such as reading and writing. At Grove-Patterson 73.9 percent of fourth graders passed math, where as 7.7 percent of the fifth graders at Marshall passed math. But it appears, according to Catlin, that as black students get older their scores drop. The overall passing rates rise by the 11th and 12th grade scores because the students who were not able to keep up in school have dropped out.

Monday's meeting was conducted by Twila Page and the topic was discipline. Page

turned her attention to the discipline procedures that place African-American students at a severe disadvantage, again compared to white students. There are three forms of discipline, according to Page. Those include BIC (Behavioral Intervention Center); suspension, which is from one to 10 days and expulsion, which is from 11 to 80 days.

In the 2005-2006 academic year, there were 6,781 suspensions and 1,520 school arrests. It appears that the schools with the larger populations of black students are the ones where more suspensions are just handed. A parent at the last Monday's meeting suggested that perhaps the problem is since more than 70 percent of Toledo Public School teachers are white females, maybe they don't know how to deal with African-American boys. Instead of addressing and assessing the problem they would rather have them suspended. There are only 200 African-American teachers in the Toledo Public School

District but there are over 1,000 white teachers, said Catlin.

Parents should be well informed of their child's rights when it comes to suspensions and expulsions, said Page:

* If you do not receive a notice within 24 hours informing you of a suspension then parents may request for the suspension to be overturned.

* For expulsions a formal hearing should be scheduled no sooner than three days but no later than five. Removal with intent to expel a hearing should be held no later than 72 hours. They must give you a time and place as well as a reason as for the intended expulsion.

* The student has the right to be represented by one person.

If these procedures are not followed correctly then a parent should be able to overturn a suspension or an expulsion.

As an example of the disparity in punishment meted out to students, Page related

the following two tales: A white sixth grader at Reynolds was caught with a bag of marijuana and was suspended for two days. An African-American senior at Start, however, was caught with the last bit of a joint – also known as a roach – and was expelled. Such suspensions and expulsions stay on the permanent record.

During both meetings many suggestions were made, both by the facilitators and the audience members, as to what can be done to combat many of these problems such as: developing a strategic plan with short and long-term goals that are measurable; making a commitment to significantly reduce the high suspension/expulsion statistics for African-American students, and committing to more parental involvement and less police involvement.

For more information on The Toledo African American Student Achievement Gap Taskforce and African American Parents contact (Cheryl Catlin) at cecatlin@gmail.com.

College Resource Night At Main Library March 26

The Toledo-Lucas County Public Library presents College Resource Night, a free program designed for students, parents, and educators scheduled from 6-8 p.m. on Monday, March 26 in the McMaster Center at Main Library, 325 Michigan St.

Mary Plews, the Library's Teen Specialist, will provide invaluable information on available resources concerning careers, colleges, scholarships and financial aid . . . everything that's needed in planning your educational future. You don't want to miss this important program.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms (fafsa.ed.gov) will be available for participants to take home. Mrs. Plews will provide beneficial information all about FAFSA. Registration is required.

For more information, please call 419.259.5297.

Student Research, Keynote Speaker Highlight Africana Studies Colloquium

Special to The Truth

The Africana Studies Student Research Colloquium at Bowling Green State University marks its 10th anniversary on March 16 with "Perspectives on Race and Place in Africa and the African Diaspora." Students from BGSU and other universities will present their research in three morning and afternoon sessions.

The colloquium is an annual event that gives students in all disciplines the opportunity to submit research papers addressing topics related to Africa and the African diaspora for presentation in an academic setting.

"U.S.-Africa Relations in Time Perspective" will be the theme of a keynote presentation by award-winning author Dr. Toyin

Falola of the University of Texas, where he is the Frances Higginbotham Nalle Centennial Professor in History and a Distinguished Teaching Professor. Falola will speak at 12:30 p.m. in 228 Bowen-Thompson Student Union, following a luncheon.

Falola, who has received many awards for his teaching and contributions to the field of Africana studies, is the author of numerous books, including "Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies" and "Nationalism and African Intellectuals," both from the University of Rochester Press.

His recent book, "Modernization and Economic Reforms in Nigeria," won the Cecil B. Curry Award from the Association of Third

World Studies.

His award-winning memoir, "A Mouth Sweeter than Salt: An African Memoir," which captures his childhood, received the Herskovits Finalist Award from the Association of African Studies and the Hamilton Finalist Award from the University of Texas.

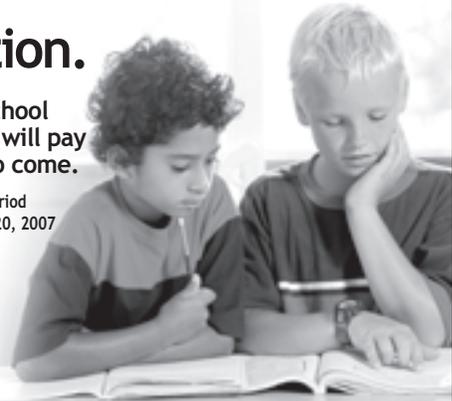
He is also a Fellow of both the Historical Society of Nigeria and the Nigerian Academy of Letters, co-editor of the Journal of African Economic History and series editor for three publications: Rochester Studies in African History and the Diaspora, the Culture and Customs of Africa by Greenwood Press, and Classic Authors and Texts on Africa by Africa World Press.

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Greater Toledo Urban League Young Professionals to join with National Amusements for the First Annual "Toledo Day of Pride"

Hundreds of youth, community and political leaders will gather to discuss issues related to youth boredom and violence in Toledo, when the Greater Toledo Urban League Young Professionals host the first "Toledo Day of Pride" on Tuesday, March 20, 2007 at 5:00pm. This community forum and exclusive advance screening of the Lionsgate film, PRIDE is being sponsored by National Amusements and will be held at Franklin Park 16: Cinema de Lux (5001 Monroe St., Toledo, Ohio). Entrance to the event is by invitation only.

The Toledo Day of Pride 2007 targets youth between the ages of 14-18 (High School students) with hopes of opening a meaningful dialogue that will focus on boredom, violence and how to resolve conflict with positive, non-violent alternatives. The Community Forum will be held immediately following the movie, at approxi-

mately 7:45pm, and will be moderated by King Keyser, the number one disc jockey on Hot 97.3 (WJZE-FM). At 26, Keyser is arguably the most respected young urban figure in the community. He has a genuine concern for the youth in his listening audience and says, "If I cause one kid to make a difference, then my mission is complete."

"Greater Toledo Urban League Young Professionals have done an outstanding job in creating this event and engaging the youth and city leaders to discuss this critical topic," said Wanda Whitson National Amusements director, corporate communications.

"We are proud to be part of this important initiative which we believe will have significant positive impact on the young people of this community."

With National Amusements as the generous sponsor and Westfield Shopping

Town as the gracious hosts, their collective goal is to create an atmosphere conducive to clear, honest and productive dialogue. The GTULYPWe each view this generation as a major force in addressing and finding solutions for these problems and when provided the opportunity, they will rise to the forefront. To that end, this event will not culminate with a "one day spectacle", but will continue with ongoing community forums and interactive programs that will help to model and shape positive behavior. You can view more about this event at www.toledodayofpride.myevent.com

"With the recent outbreak of violence, combined with a mounting budget crisis, a sustained discussion and program implementation is critical to the survival and safety of our most cherished and valued possession—the youth of Toledo", said John C. Jones, pPresident GTULYP.

Main Library Hosts Annual Teen Art Show

The Main Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, 325 Michigan St. is hosting the sixth annual *Connect to Creativity* teen art show. The show, on display beginning today, March 6 through April 28, is located in three areas at Main Library: in the gallery, located on the second floor, in the display area on the garage level, and in the Wintergarden, located on the first floor.

Connect to Creativity, presented in conjunction with Youth Art Month and celebrated annually in March, features more than 150 works of art - drawings, paintings, jewelry, and sculpture - from area youths, grades 6 through 12.

A reception for the teen artists and open house is scheduled from 3 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 28 in the McMaster Center and Lobby. The talents of the art show participants will be recognized and celebrated by their families and the community.

Connect to Creativity is open to the public during regular Library hours. Main Library is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday 9 to 5:30 and Sunday from 1 to 5:30 p.m.

For more details, please call 419.259.5207.

Omega's Conduct Free Prostate Screenings

Every year the local chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and the Toledo Council of Black Nurses conduct free prostate screenings during April as part of Minority Health Month at the Vince Davis State Farm Insurance Agency on the corner of Cherry and Sherman Streets.

The planning is already well underway for this year's event – to be held on Saturday April 7. Last week, fraternity members Davis and Sam Baldwin (of the Area Office on Aging) and members of the Council of Black Nurses – Donna Todd, president, Mary Gregory and Daisy Smith – met to iron out the final details.

This will be the 10th year of the program which provides free service to more black males than does any other agency in Toledo.

"A Decade of Staying the Course" Greater Toledo Urban League Celebrates 10 Years of Service

(Continued from Page 6)

Ten years later, Mickler spreads the credit for the GTUL's current standing on the national scene as evaluated by the National Urban League. In 2004, the NUL audited GTUL programs, management and administration and gave the affiliate a rating of 4.3 out of a possible 5.0 placing the GTUL in the top rank of affiliate effectiveness.

The GTUL has also formed two support groups during the past few years: the GTUL Guild, a volunteer organization which partakes in fund-raising activities and the GTUL Young Professionals, which is designed to take on the mission of dealing with Toledo's "brain drain" by mentoring and matching young professionals with established business and community leaders in addition to organizing their own events and forums.

"We have a good fit here and, by National Urban League standards, our agency is in good standing," said Mickler reflecting on the success the local affiliate has had over the past 10 years. "We've done pretty well, but it's been tough."

Along with a host of individuals that Mickler praised for the success of the GTUL are elected county officials. "The county has been a great supporter. Serving our clients without having to fight for dollars has been instrumental and that's been because Pete Gerken and Tina Skeldon Wozniak have believed in us."

"The Greater Toledo Urban League must give credit to the 5,060 volunteers who have given over 29,926 hours of dedicated service to the agency," said Mickler. "They're the ones who have empowered the League to help Toledo's most-needy help themselves."

The celebration of 10 years of serving those clients – "A Decade of Staying the Course" – will take place on March 22 at the Wyndham

Hotel. The usual banquet fare of having a guest speaker will be abandoned for this occasion. Instead, GTUL clients will be presented in live and taped testimonials to talk about what the affiliate has meant to them and how their lives have changed because of their interaction with Mickler and his agency.

Founded in 1910, the NUL is a premier social service and civil rights organization. The League is a nonprofit, nonpartisan community-based organization headquartered in New York City with 114 affiliates in 34 states and the District of Columbia. The mission of the Urban League is to assist African-Americans in the achievement of social and economic equality through advocacy, bridge building, program services and research.

For more information on the 10th annual banquet, please call 419-243-3343.

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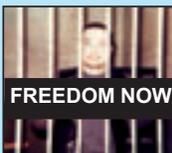
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IN MEMORIAM: Tyler Lamar Williams



Tyler Lamar Williams, age 19, went home to be with the Lord on Friday, March 2, 2007 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Several thousand came to Phillipian Missionary Baptist Church on Thursday, March 8 to remember Tyler who was one of five Bluffton University baseball players who died in a bus accident in Georgia when the team was on its way to Florida.

Tyler was born on Tuesday, June 23, 1987 in Lim, Ohio to Geneva Williams who survives in Lima.

Tyler was a member of the New Greater Grace Baptist Church. He was a sophomore at Bluffton University majoring in business. He was a 2005 graduate of Lima Senior High School. While he was a student at Lima Senior High School, he was an honor student, he played on the varsity baseball team, the varsity football team, the bowling team and the soccer team.

He also played drums for the Lima High School Marching Band and was a member of DECA, winning a state award for his marketing project.

While a student at Bluffton, he was a member of the varsity baseball team, he played on a Coast to Coast Baseball Team representing the USA in the Netherlands, he was a business manager for the university newspaper and a member of the African American Student Organization.

Tyler, when he was younger, also played in the ACME Summer Baseball League, bowled on a league at 20th Century Lanes, played Little League Soccer and Little League Soccer.

He was a Junior NBA Basketball referee and an avid drum player who created his own record label – No Gimmicks Production.

Besides his loving mother Geneva Williams, he leaves to cherish his precious memory, a maternal grandmother, Frances Williams of Lima, and maternal great grandmother, Geneva Williams of Athens, Alabama and eight brothers: Aaron S. Williams, Alonzo D. Williams, Justin R. Williams, Robert Manley, Jr., Craig Robinson and Marcus Manley, all of Lima, and DeAndre Manley of South Korea and Robert T. Manley of Cincinnati, OH. He leaves six sisters: LaShawna A. Williams, Charmell R. Williams, Shevon Pinn (Dimetrius), Jessica Williams, Latoya Manley and Tammy Manley, all of Lima. One niece, Ny'Awna Rowe of Lima and a nephew, Dre'ton Walton of Lima. His godparents are Lynn White of Lima and Sheila M. Cowan of Los Angeles, CA. His girlfriend is Sharon Begay of Lima. In addition there were a host of cousins, aunts, uncles, other relatives and many friends.

Tyler was preceded in death by his maternal grandparent, Howard L. Williams and maternal great grandparents, York and Hazel Chambers, Sr. and Tommie Williams.

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City and University Mourn Loss in bus Tragedy

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Less than two weeks after a bus tragedy that took the lives of five players on the Bluffton University baseball team, along with those of the two bus drivers, the Lima/Bluffton area has finally laid to rest its loved ones. Those who commemorated them noted that they will never be forgotten.

Numerous speakers took the podium on Monday night at the university to honor those who were lost in the accident that occurred in Atlanta, GA, as the team was on its way to Florida.

Zachary Arend was described as a fierce competitor, quiet off the field. David Betts was both an athlete and a musician and was considered to be the hardest working member of the team. Scott Harmon, of Lima, kind hearted but the type who would not back down.

Cody Holp, said his friends and teammates was outgoing, a youth who loved family and cared about the disabled.

And Tyler Williams, Lima resident, was more than just a baseball player and a teammate. Williams was a musician, an outstanding student, a youngster who lived, as his brother Aaron said during Tyler's funeral, lived as much in one week as most people lived in a month.

Along with the teammates who came to pay their tributes were seven who are injured themselves.

Ryan Baightel, the team captain, read the 23rd Psalm: "The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want."

Two people associated with the team, Coach James Grandley and player Tim Berta, are still hospitalized in Atlanta.

Anything to add to the Community Calendar?

Church or organization events ...

Auctions and fundraisers

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A Night at Diva: Strawberries, Stilettos & Lingerie Fashion Show Party

By Monique Ward
Special to The Truth

What visions come to mind when you hear the words strawberries, stilettos and lingerie? Do thoughts of chocolate-covered treats, hot red pumps, or sultry ladies in seductive nighttime attire cross your consciousness? All of these components and more are what made the Glass City's first official 'Lingerie Fashion Show Party' March 4, at Diva Restaurant, such a success.

The event began on the main floor with women and men decked out in their finest for the 'Stiletto Social' which allowed singles to mix and mingle while signing up for speed-dating presented by Elevated Events. Guests were also privy to enjoy a special vegetarian menu prepared exclusively by Diva chef Ericka Rapp. Some of the savory entrees on the table were Chardonnay and Triple Cream Brie Fondue, Oven Roasted Cremini Mushrooms and, the theme delicacy of the evening, Dark Chocolate Dipped Strawberries.

As tongues indulged on those tasty morsels, each pair of eyes was in for a treat with the 'Lingerie Fashion Show' as the next main attraction. The crowd headed upstairs to fill the banquet room's wall-to-wall seating being extra careful not to step on the dazzling white lights that decoratively highlighted the runway. Modern tunes, by Soul Beat Music Group's D.J. M.P.R.E.S.S. played, until the mistress of ceremonies made her way to the microphone to announce the opening act.

Local R&B singer, Tracy of DanjaRuss Entertainment, christened the program with

an *cappella* solo – setting the mood for the night. Shortly after the conclusion of his performance began the first scene titled 'Red Light Special.' It was a sight to behold as beautiful female models in red ensembles walked out in unison like a human pyramid.

The impressive displays on the runway did not fail to captivate the audience. Each scene perpetuated its uniquely suggestive title such as 'Purr-fect Kitty' with model instructor Emily Kauffman dancing as 'Kat Woman' wearing a brown leopard-print garb provided by Torrid; Candy Shop' featuring statuesque model, Tasha Light, who wore hot pink hair with matching pink & black lingerie as she passed out lollipops to a few eager fans; and Kai'la Hayes playing a super seductive spider woman in her exclusive dance scene (Costume by Hajami Fashions).

The entire time the show was taking place, you can see the flashing lights from the camera of professional photographer Stanley Burt, who snapped each model as they made their way to center stage. They all looked fabulous with the majority of their hair and make-up done courtesy of Best of Toledo City Paper's '2003-2006' winner Shamas Salon & Spa.

After many spectacular arrangements of lingerie and costumes, the audience had the pleasure of enjoying a special guest artist from New York City, who humbly goes by the name of Soulful Jones. Born in Jersey City but raised everywhere, Soulful is a sultry entertainer as well as a

dynamic wordsmith. His first performance was an inspirational ballad called "Where Burdens Belong" speaking to the psyche of each listener.

Other out of town guests included Coko and Quin Lane, also from the Big Apple, who were new to the runway but stole the show with a plethora of poses and provocative outfits. Coko's solo debut was highlighted by a stunning performance accompanied only by a single long-stemmed rose. Her presentation was so captivating that the crowd was easily convinced that she must be a seasoned professional.

Alanna Gentry, aspiring model/actress and Michigan native, was another showstopper who made mouths water with her second appearance on a Glass City stage. Her entrance was a bit risqué as she starred as the 'Mistress of the Runway' slipping off an emerald green kimono to show off her black two piece undergarment. This was followed by Janelle McClendon playing a provocative Mafioso in "Sexy Gangsters of Chicago" alongside Lance Self who sported a custom tailored suit by Diamond's Men Shops.

After a brief intermission, the festivities continued with another heartfelt solo by Tracy titled, "If It Ain't You," followed by more jaw-dropping scenes. The crowd enjoyed "Forbidden Fruit" starring a tempted teacher played by actor/model Tyrone Brock with seductive "school girls" Paris Morgan and Rashonda Lynch in their uniforms; then "The Dom & the Dog," with first time model Janaye McClendon as a dominatrix and Brock as her dog; followed by 'Naughty Late-Night Nurses' which featured football player turned model O. Fatinikun as the sick-to-healthy patient with co-stars Kauffman and Reyonday Lynch as his sexy nurses. The room was pretty warm after the models left the stage.

The stir from spectators did not decrease when Jessica Harris made her appearance for her act titled "Jessica the Rabbit" in her pink Victoria's Secret outfit with white bunny ears and cotton tail to match. She passed out Easter eggs to the crowd with free raffle tickets inside which allowed two lucky guests to win a box of chocolates courtesy of Godiva and a teddy bear from Zales Diamond Store (Both located in Franklin Park Mall).

Preceding the finale of the fashion show, Soulful Jones' gave his new-found fans a second dose of his talents with a sensually-charged composition titled, "Soulmate."

Jones presented this piece to an awestruck young woman in the front row who, at the end of his set, received a plush rose and a soft kiss on her cheek which she welcomed shyly.

The lingerie segment concluded with the emcee asking all to hail "The Diamond Princess" also played by
(Continued on Page 16)

IN MEMORY: T'onna Da'Nelle Gregory

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

A couple weeks ago, I was eating lunch at work and I noticed the obit section on the table and before I even aimed to move it I saw a familiar face.

It broke my heart to recognize that it was one of the kids I had last year as a Group Leader for the National Youth Sports Program.

Group 5—the 12-Year olds. Or should I say "dreaded" 12-Year Olds to some, but they weren't as bad as they were reputed to be.

Management moved me from the Senior Group to be with the 12-year olds and I remember when I first got with them there was this girl named T'onna.

She was outspoken. If she felt a certain way, she said it with no hesitation.

And the other kids knew not to mess with her. But she was one of my favorites because she was one of those rare girls who wasn't chasing boys or trying to act cute. At football, she played hard.

At track, she ran hard. At softball, she played hard. In the classroom, she got down.

T'onna was often my example to the other girls when I wanted to show them the right way to be during our activities.

I don't even know the circumstances of her passing, but even though I was only around her for five weeks last summer it still pains me deeply to know she's no longer with us.

So, any people reading this who may remember this young girl please take another moment to reflect on her life while she was here.

I don't know her family or anything, but I'm more than certain she will be severely missed by all who knew and loved her.

You all have my deepest and sincerest condolences.

Ten Little Indians Sitting on a Fence: Or As Marvin Gaye Would Say "What's Going On"

(Continued from Page 4)

sensitive to the role of Affirmative Action that they would arbitrarily make a decision about its value and placement without fully discussing it with the community. Is it really more than saving money for the city or is this just a cover to de-fang the African-American community or is it a plot to cut blacks out of the future lucrative construction contracts that are on the board for the city of Toledo?

Someone smarter than me would have to answer that one. Hves the powers that be decided that they are

now where they want to be and they no longer need our political support? Has someone decide that they want a vanilla city and that we will all fall into line as usual come election time? Have the blacks who received positions of power failed to realize that some of them will get little sympathy from the hood as some of them "went along to get along," while never doing anything to help those in the hood?

Will members of City Council vote against the very same people who put them in office? Do they really expect us to forget come election time? Or am I being overly sensitive not realizing that there are probably other ethnic groups that are also suffering from this anger management, exclusion style of running our city?

This is my list of African-American voices who have carried the banner for us in the public arena while some carried it higher than

others. I am sure that there are many more.

- Jack Ford
- Jay Black
- Robert Davis
- Perlean Griffin
- Art Jones
- Nate Ford
- Ron Jackson
- Mike Bell
- Theodore Foreman
- Emerson Ross
- Karyn McConnell Hancock
- Cynthia Wizgen
- Dawn Rhodes
- Ken Dobson
- Delbert Williamson
- Jimmy Gaines
- Gary Daugherty
- Larry Cardwell
- DeLeatha Green
- Richard Brown

Such a blatant mis-use of talent. In Toledo the rhyme should be:

"More than 10 individuals sitting on a fence and if some have their way....there would be none ..."

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Reel Review

Black Snake Moan

Samuel L. Jackson, Christina Ricci, Justin Timberlake

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

Do you ever look at Samuel L.'s career and wonder?

The whole nation loves to see him cuss someone out, shoot at people and overcome obstacles onscreen.

But sometimes he just picks these roles that leave us scratching our head ... at first.

Deep Blue Sea, Snakes On A Plane... okay, maybe movies with killer animals are just a bad look for Sam Jack. Chaining a half-naked white girl to a radiator, though ... well, maybe that's somehow more acceptable. This entire film seems to tease around with the hint that these two characters are romantically involved.

It's called *Black Snake Moan* and the promotional material simply has the vision I mentioned before:

White girl. Half naked. Chained up by Samuel L. Jackson.

Hell, that would pique most people's interest if it doesn't disgust them for what they THINK this movie deals with. But for anyone who can appreciate theatre, anyone who can appreciate great films like *The Color Purple*... I would encourage those folks to mess with this.

Is that a big leap to mention *The Color Purple* and *Black Snake Moan* in the same breath?

Okay, if that Danny Glover/Oprah Winfrey film is too much of a stretch... how about likening *Black Snake Moan* to *Beloved*? Actually, that may be a better fit. Ay, there's the rub indeed.

If you remember the words from *Beloved*: "Touch me on the inside," you may not remember much else but you at least remember a young girl who was possessed in a way that sex was the only anecdote for her ailment. And if you have a mature appreciation of things, you can see that this isn't "freaky" or "kinky."

But it surely is bizarre. Before even dealing with the characters, the setting is one of the illest aspects of this film.

Movies set in the deep, deep South always have an inescapable aura about them.

Even TV shows. Remember "Heat of the Night?" The producers didn't want a Hollywood set that was made to look like a town called Sparta, Mississippi. They made Sparta out of real Mis-

issippi land.

And it just added weight to the whole set up.

The dirt roads, the miles and miles of nothing between every destination, and the overwhelming limbo waiting for any life that's not properly nailed down... all of those aspects of that deep South lifestyle are in this film and the cinematography is designed to ensnare viewers into feeling every inch of blandness you see onscreen.

If the locale doesn't anchor the whole concept for you, it only takes about one and a half minutes for the film to present its first of many antagonistic situations ... and this one is sure to leave you feeling some sort of weight. Lazarus a/k/a. Laz (Samuel L. Jackson) is going through a quite involuntary divorce.

Hell, it's not even a divorce. It's more like an abandonment with a small side of F&# You, courtesy of his wife of the last 12 years.

His world is falling apart and this is where Samuel L. Jackson does his best acting.

Yeah, Shaft is cool. Yeah, running around Bruce Willis is cool.

If you're into that whole *Star Wars* thing, I guess Mace Windu is cool too.

But for me, Samuel L. Jackson is at his best when he's riddled with issues.

Even his co-starring role as Gator in *Jungle Fever*, that joint was powerful!

Changing Lanes... remember how all the odds were stacked against him?

It's just easier to buy when his back is against the wall.

Speaking of someone's back being up against things ... fellas, how would you like it if you were deeply involved with the town slut and everybody knew but you?

When you see the press for this film and you see this white girl in underwear and a half tee shirt you might be inclined to think that's her nightwear or something, but no - that's basically how she walks around town.

Rae (Christina Ricci) is in love. But her boyfriend is leaving town because he's in the National Guard.

But he could be leaving town for a few weeks, or simply leaving the house for a few hours ... makes no difference. When she gets the itch, she has to have sex with the nearest man. Or she will go crazy.

This beyond being a



bopper. It's like a crack whore without the crack.

The film doesn't focus on all of her exploits or give sickening details.

Part of the sheer genius of *Black Snake Moan* is everything that it says without actually saying it.

It's in her walk. It's in her sickly demeanor.

Honestly, it's a testament to the utter despair of the Deep South that this girl could be desirable to anyone.

If seen, Christina Ricci look somewhat all right in other flicks but in this one she is like the most diseaseridden trollop you would ever hope to see. There's this one scene where she's poppin pills and ends up playing a game of co-ed tap football. She's stoned. She's half-naked.

She collapses on the field and is left to lay in the grass in a drugged up stupor.

Some guy comes over, climbs on top of her and gets up and goes back to the impromptu football game just a few feet away. This is just business as usual.

How Rae crosses paths with Laz is pretty much well known by anyone that's really seen these previews.

A guy kicks (and I mean *for real, for real* kicks) her out of his truck after beating her in the face and she's now laying in the middle of the street. Just by happenstance that it's in front of Laz's property.

He brings her inside with the hope of nursing her back to health, but he's in for far more than he bargained for.

Black Snake Moan keeps your attention the entire time.

Just like Laz, viewers are in for far more than they bargain for when you pay money to see this flick.

Of course I'm not dropping all the jewels because I really feel like this is worth you all going out and seeing.

Every once in a while there's one of those films that come along and it becomes bigger than just going out to see someone make you laugh.

This is a film that will grab a hold of you and take you somewhere.

The true grade for *Black Snake Moan* is A.

Go and See IT - TOLEDO!

Reel Review

Wild Hogs

John Travolta, Martin Lawrence, Tim Allen
William H. Macy

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

The taglines for these comedies are sometimes the funniest part of the whole set up.

Wild Hogs' tagline reads: "Four guys from the suburbs hit the road... and the road hit back."

That's funny in a cute way, but it's really funny because it's pretty damn appropriate.

I don't think I was really looking forward to this film.

Actually, 2007 really only holds two... yeah, that's it... TWO highly anticipated movies in my book.

Since we're talking about comedies, there's no way you can talk about upcoming comic releases and not talk about this summer's *The Simpsons* film.

There was even a contest held across the country to see which Springfield would get a chance to host the inaugural screening. All you had to do was make a short film about how your Springfield mimics the one where Bart and Homer get down at. With that, *Shrek*

3 and yet another Harry Potter installment comes soon (I think this is the one where he uses the cloak of invisibility to escape student loan officers-L.O.L), family films are all the rage these days.

And why not? There's a war going on, winter has been kinda rough and the kids are barely learning in school anyway... if you've got a family why not take them out for an evening of fun at the movies?

Just choose wisely.

A trip to the local cinemas can eat up any discretionary income you might think you have... and do it at lightning speed. So make sure you see a film worth seeing. Which brings me to *Wild Hogs*.

How is it possible that Tim Allen and Martin Lawrence...



two of Hollywood's most tried and true, battle-scarred bad boys... are in the same family-friendly movie?

After all those run-ins with the law, reported drug usage and abuses of power during their heydays... these two are lucky they can still draw in an audience at all.

But, lo and behold, here they are alongside John Travolta.

The previews didn't leave much to the imagination, so if you've seen one you've seen them all.

Four friends take a road trip on their motorcycles as a way of reclaiming their lives, breaking out of ruts, escaping

(Continued on Page 17)

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A PREBID CONFERENCE is scheduled for **March 21, 2007, at 1:00 pm** at the New Start High School Dining Room, 2010 Tremainsville Road., Toledo, Ohio 43613

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Quality Time Child Care

1 Toddler & 2 Preschool fulltime positions

Degree in Early Childhood Education
 Some experience required
 Competitive salary

Reply: Executive Director
 2315 Dorr Street
 Toledo, Ohio
 43607

Special Events Coordinator, part-time position leading to full time July 1. Under direction of Special Events Manager, responsible for planning and execution of events for internal & external customers, providing event services necessary including location and vendor referrals, event planning and coordination of activities. Requires two years dealing with all phases of special events, small and large-scale, for a variety of clients. Must be highly organized, detail-oriented, with outstanding interpersonal skills. To apply, e-mail resume with cover letter to jobs@toledomuseum.org or mail to HR,
 Toledo Museum of Art,
 PO Box 1013,
 Toledo, OH 43697.

EOE.

Vehicle Upkeep Custodian

Seeking a dependable competent individual to maintain agency vehicles. This PART TIME position requires a high school diploma or GED, valid driver's license plus good driving record, and ability to lift up to 30 pounds. Duties include scheduling maintenance, transporting vehicles, routine cleaning of interiors, and maintaining vehicle log sheets and key inventory. Perfect opportunity for a college student or retiree. Excellent customer service skills essential. Send resume, with cover letter and salary expectations, by 3/21/07 to

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

EOE.

"Barbers Wanted"

Are you a professional looking for a new environment?

Newly remodeled (4) Chairs
Barbershop

The old Hutton Pharmacy building, on the corner of Woodstock and Dorr, enter the barbershop from Woodstock Ave.

"Big Momma's Barbershop"

Location: 2101 Dorr Street

- *Low Booth Rent
- *Experienced Barbers Preferred
- *Management will make allowance for low clientele barbers
- *Plenty Parking Space
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For Contact Call: Joe Love at (419)320-2056

Telemarketing position with one of the fastest growing agencies in the area. Vince Davis Agency has telemarketing positions from \$8.00 to \$20.00 dollars per hour. Your income will depend on your productivity.

Sales position available. Income ranges vary and will depend on productivity. Income ranges in the \$25,000 to \$40,000 the first year.

FREE TOWING

Attention Landlords or Property Owners, if you have abandoned cars (in any condition) Bad Boyz Towing will remove it for FREE.

Call 419-810-5879

MS. JUNIOR TOLEDO

Your Crown Awaits You if You Dare to Dream!! Interested in becoming a contestant?

If you are between the ages of 12 and 18 (not turning 19 before July 2007); and possess a performing talent (e.g., singing, dancing, acrobatics, poetry, drama, musician, etc.), please complete the information below.

Apply by May 5, 2007

NAME: _____

AGE: _____ DOB: _____

PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TALENT: _____

MAIL TO: MISS JUNIOR TOLEDO PAGEANT 2124 CALUMET AVENUE; TOLEDO, OH 43607 (419) 450-7031

Legal Notice

Sealed bids will be received by the Lucas County Department of Job and Family Services (LCDJFS) office, 3210 Monroe Street, Toledo, Ohio, until 4:00 p.m... (local time), April 10, 2007 and opened immediately thereafter for the selection of Contractors for Home Based Chore Services and Volunteer Guardianship Services for the Senior Population. Submitted bids must be completed according to the specifications and provisions outlined in the Request for Proposal. The contract period will be from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

On March 14, 2007, the Request for Proposal will be released and is available for pick up by potential bidders at the LCDJFS office during regular working hours or download the bid by going to the site: <https://apps.co.lucas.oh.us/bids>.

A Bidder's Conference will be held on March 20, 2007 **from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.** at the LCDJFS office. **ATTENDANCE IS OPTIONAL, BUT IS HIGHLY ENCOURAGED.** If any changes are made to the RFP as a result of the Bidder's Conference, an addendum to the RFP **will be posted on the website address noted above.**

ANY BIDDER WHO PLANS TO RESPOND TO THE RFP MUST SUBMIT A LETTER OF INTENT WITH PERTINENT INFORMATION SUCH AS NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER AND EMAIL ADDRESS TO THE LCDJFS OFFICE BY March 21, 2007, by 4:00 p.m.. Attention: Eva Strickland.

Prior to the April 10, 2007 4:00 P.M. (local time) deadline each bid upon submission must be stamped for the time and date and placed in our bid box. The bid box is located at the Security Desk on the first floor of the LCDJFS office. No bids will be accepted after 4:00 P.M. (Bids that are time-stamped at the Document Center will not be accepted.)

This notice is posted, as of March 14, 2007, at <http://www.co.lucas.oh.us/supportservices/bidnotices.asp>

The right is reserved to reject any and all bids.

By order of the Board of County Commissioners, Lucas County, Ohio.

Tina Skeldon Wozniak - President
 Pete Gerken - Commissioner
 Ben Konop - Commissioner

Legal Notice

Sealed bids will be received by the Lucas County Department of Job and Family Services (LCDJFS) office, 3210 Monroe Street, Toledo, Ohio, until 4:00 p.m... (local time), April 10, 2007 and opened immediately thereafter for the selection of Contractors for Employment Services for Ohio Works First Clients and Non-Custodial Parents of Ohio Works First Recipients. Submitted bids must be completed according to the specifications and provisions outlined in the Request for Proposal. The contract period will be from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

On March 14, 2007, the Request for Proposal will be released and is available for pick up by potential bidders at the LCDJFS office during regular working hours or download the bid by going to the site: <https://apps.co.lucas.oh.us/bids>.

A Bidder's Conference will be held on March 20, 2007 **from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.** at the LCDJFS office. **ATTENDANCE IS OPTIONAL, BUT IS HIGHLY ENCOURAGED.** If any changes are made to the RFP as a result of the Bidder's Conference, an addendum to the RFP **will be posted on the website address noted above.**

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A Night at Diva: Strawberries, Stilettos & Lingerie Fashion Show Party

(Continued from Page 15)

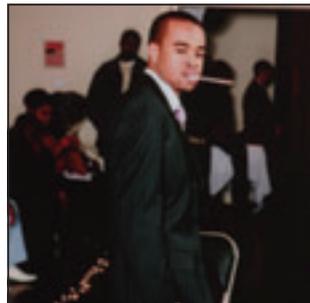
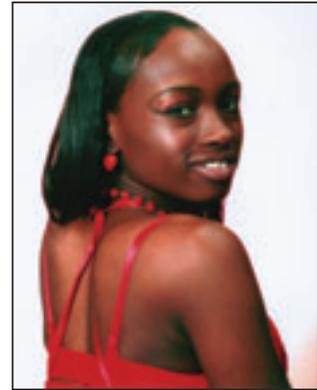
Rashonda Lynch who wore a tiara, bra and skirt completely made of diamond crystals. She was escorted down the runway and back by a human throne of three male models (Fatinikun wearing a custom tailored suit by Ticknors of Franklin Park Mall) as she waved to her

admirers. This did not overshadow the unique sets of jewelry worn by all the models (Sponsored by Jule of Franklin Park Mall) during the entire show and can be seen on them during their final good-byes as they exited the banquet room for the last time.

It was a night to remember. After the show, those who still had enough energy to party after midnight, waited for D.J. M.P.R.E.S.S. to begin to play so they could dance the night away at the 'Strawberry Jam.' The others went downstairs to begin the highly anticipated speed-dating segment. Though the majority had never experienced speed-dating before, there were a lot of excited and satisfied participants.

The party went on with the smooth sounds of a currently nameless local jazz/funk band (Courtesy of Alternative Directions Counseling & Wellness Center) that, into the wee hours of the morning, continued to rock the house.

Ed. Note: Monique Ward is an event planner, promoter, freelance journalist and aspiring Holistic Health Counselor. Recently she started a movement called the Artists Exchange Initiative Out of the Underground aka the A.E.I.O.U. which held its first tour November 18, 2006 in Toledo, Ohio featuring artists from all around the country. For questions or more information please call 419-471-0094 or email aeciou_4life@yahoo.com for details. You can also visit www.myspace.com/PozativPromo to find out about upcoming events in the Glass City and surrounding areas.



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