



Jewell C. Lightner
ProMedica Health System
Director of Corporate Diversity

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“My legacy is that I feel I was able to make the most difference in our caring of patients and cultural aspects. Our diversity among employees is so great that it represents at least 50 different foreign languages. And the diversity among families and patients is just as great.”

This Strikes Us ...

A Sojourner's Truth Editorial

In case you hadn't yet heard, William Harner, regional superintendent of the Philadelphia School District, will not be taking the reigns of the Toledo Public Schools. We thought that this column would present the perfect opportunity to play the blame game and point a few fingers at those responsible for this very embarrassing debacle.

Regrettably, we were a bit tardy getting here. Everyone who could be blamed already has been and we arrived at the party far too late.

But let's face it, who would we blame if our timing had been a little better?

The talks fell apart over the fact that the prospective candidate did not want to live within the school district and the board clearly wanted him to do so. As we pore over the email correspondence that moved back and forth between school board members, we did not find any substantive discussion of this very vital issue. We did not find any nay-sayers. Everyone on the board seemed to be clearly in line with the fact that the superintendent should be required to live in the district.

And everyone in the community also seemed to be in agreement with this very basic premise.

Now, of course, not so much.

Now, of course, school board members are pointing fingers at one another while simultaneously admitting that this one issue loomed larger than any other aspect of the negotiations. And if this was the issue that was a non-starter, why the finger pointing?

Here's what appears to have happened.

First, the school board interviewed seven candidates and, with each of them, discussed the fact that one of the job requirements for the position of TPS superintendent was to live inside the district.

Second, the school board interviewed three finalists for the job and iterated the fact that one of the requirements for a TPS superintendent was to live inside the district.

Third, the board voted 5-0 to extend an offer to Harner to run the school district.

Fourth, as negotiations continued, Harner decided that he did not want to live inside the district. He decided eventually that he *would not* live in the district and the school board decided that they would accept his decision not to take the job because all five members, at least at that time, wanted the superintendent of TPS to live within the district.

Now, of course, at least one school board member is whining about all the other non-factors in the decision – salary, when negotiations started, whether the welcome wagon was rolled out for Harner.

But the fact is, and the fact remains, Harner did not want to live inside the district. And all the revisionist theories about which board members conspired to delay negotiations (by the way, the board members did not conduct the actual negotiations, attorneys for both parties did) won't make the fact disappear that Harner did not want to live inside the district.

Many people met the candidates, including members of watchdog groups who are now, in a frenzy of full-throated hypocrisy, blaming members of the school board for their incompetence. The fact still remains that no one had the foresight to launch an objection – at least not publicly – to the requirement that a superintendent should live in the district he or she is leading. Now everyone is taking a fresh look at an issue that wasn't an issue during the interview process and deciding that certain school board members erred by insisting on such a provision.

The whole episode has been embarrassing to say the least. But the embarrassment has been caused, not by the fact that Harner has decided not to come to Toledo. (Let him go, people. If he doesn't want this community, why would we go crawling after him begging him to change his mind?)

The embarrassment has been caused by the reaction to his decision. The turmoil on the board was bad enough prior to this event, now it has become even more absurd, as if that were possible.

Ironically, during the very week that Harner jilted the Glass City, the *Places Rated Almanac* for 2007 ranked Toledo 81st out of 379 metro statistical areas and the Toledo area's highest ranking was in education. In that category the Toledo area was ranked 26th in the nation.

That headline was obscured by the fact that the name-calling by, on and about the school board was already in full bloom.

Here's the worst part of all of this again we have shared over the recent week and a half. We now have to go through the process all over again – the second guessing about candidates, the questioning of what constitutes an important issue, the whining about who wants whom to be superintendent.

Harner doesn't quite understand what he is missing, does he?

The Sojourner's Truth

616^{1/2} Adams Street, Toledo, Ohio 43604
Phone 419-243-0007 • Fax 419-255-7700

Published weekly on Wednesday
Printed by Webco Graphics

Advertising deadline: Friday at noon

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Community Calendar

May 2

• BGSU Educational Talent Search Program: 2007 Senior S.T.A.R.S. Recognition; Cafeteria; 1:30 to 2:30 pm

May 3-5

• Second Annual Women's Conference: Praise and Deliverance Tabernacle Church: "To God Be the Glory;" Nightly at 7 pm; speakers include Elder Patricia Sullivan of Friendship Baptist, Evangelist Lucy Smith of Indianapolis and Pastor Barbara Farmer of Philadelphia: 419-246-9604

• Greek Community Rummage Sale: Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church; 9 am to 5 pm daily; Collectibles, clothing, household items: 419-243-9189

May 4

• Fish Fry: Amazon Lodge Hall; 11 am to 5 pm: 419-531-7079

• Talent Hunt by Omega Psi Phi Fraternity: Toledo Hilton; High School students grades 9-12; Music, dance, speech; Awards and prizes; 7 pm

May 4-5

• Mt. Zion Church Women's Conference: Friday at 6 pm; Saturday at 7:30 am; Topics include "Searching for a Breakthrough; Managing Me; Woman ... Know Yourself; Putting it all Together;" 419-246-1850

• Pilgrim Church Annual Flea Market: Friday from 9 am to 5 pm, Saturday from 9 am to 3 pm; clothing, games, books, jewelry, giftware, kitchen items, etc: 419-478-6012

• Full Gospel Fellowship State Conference: Friendship Baptist Church; Special musical guest Twinkle Clark: 419-531-3242

May 4-6

• 4th Pastoral Anniversary of Pastor and Mrs. Robert Bass: United MBC; Friday – First Lady's Night, Service at 7; Saturday – Banquet in the Fellowship Hall; Sunday – Pastoral Anniversary Service, morning worship at 10:45, afternoon worship at 5: 419-242-1455

May 4-25

• Bagley Housing Art Gallery: Bandits & Heroes, Poets & Saints – Expressions of Faith in the Popular Art of the Northeast of Brazil: 313-964-5942

May 5

• Cinco de Mayo Celebration and Art Exhibit: Presented by the Jamil Lewis Multicultural Center for the Arts and the Market Place; Noon to 6 pm: 419-870-9977

• "Breakfast For M'Lady:" Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Toledo Alumnae Chapter; Breakfast, scholarships award ceremony, "Mother of the Year" award, fashion show; The Pinnacle; 10 am: 419-536-7060

May 8

• Ut Center for Family Business/Advertising Club of Toledo/Northwest Ohio black Chamber of Commerce: "Sales, Advertising and Branding your Family Business;" Toledo club Belvedere Room; 7:30 to 11 am: 419-530-4425

May 11

• NOBMA Newsmaker Impact Awards Banquet: Honoring men and women who have influenced the news during the past year; Clarion Westgate

May 11-12

• Phillips Temple CME Church: "A Celebration of Motherhood;" 11 am: 419-242-7906

• Bethel apostolic Temple: "Don't Touch Me" Men and Women's Symposium; Minister Tabitha Williams; 10 am; Dr. Todd Hall, Minister Barbara Smith, Pastor Jeannette Williams; 7 pm nightly: 901-339-5346

May 15-18

• Libbey Annual co-ed Basketball Camp: For grades 4-8; 5 to 8 pm nightly; Fundamentals of team play and individual competition; Prizes awarded: 419-535-9544 or 419-385-5341

May 17

• United Way Women's Initiative Annual Luncheon: Toledo Riverfront Hotel (Wyndham); Learn about the impact of social and emotional learning and progress of students at East Side Elementary; Keynote speaker Roger Weissberg, Ph.D.: 419-254-4608

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

The announcement that Johnny Mickler is leaving Toledo to return South is sobering news.

Mickler has been a conscience of the community during his 10 years here. He would take the mayor, including me during my term, to task when no one else would raise a peep. Mickler has been a good pilot for the Greater Toledo Urban League movement and I wish him well in his return to his home of Greenville, SC.

Who will succeed Johnny Mickler as leader of the Urban League?

The organization will need someone who can raise money, keep stakeholders happy and keep his or her eye on the pulse of the community. Diane LaBiche, Mickler's number two person, should be a strong candidate. Liz Watson should also be a consideration. What about Shawn Reid, number two at Lucas County Job and Family Services, or Jay Black,

former chief of staff during my administration?

Or maybe the Urban League family will kick up someone from a smaller unit to the Toledo branch.

Toledo Public Schools needs to retool its negotiations with William Harner. We are at the point where the credibility of TPS is clearly on the line. And, as much as I admire the extensive work of Larry Sykes at LMHA, at TPS, at the Metroparks, it is past time for Sykes to take a break and catch up on some peace and quiet.

I know Sykes has the heart of a lion but enough is enough. Larry, you have meant more to the community in your cumulative effort than just about anyone else in the past 25 years. You served the schools, on the city parks board, Metroparks, minority banking - both state and local. I was fortunate enough to serve as chairman on three major boards during your stints. No one else has game like you have. And, you

made a difference in the lives of so many in helping them get cars, boats and homes. You've done it all! Your way.

But I think it is time for you to take a break. You can come back in a little while, rested up and ready to slug it out as only you can do. There are many of us who deeply love you and respect you. Please sit down for a while.

Back to Harner. TPS needs to nail this guy down if they can, if it is not too late. He has superior credentials and has the right profile for our future. And he should not be faulted for trying to get a good, even spectacular, deal for him and his family. That's what fathers are supposed to do.

In addition, it appears that everyone on the school board and outside parties such as the mayor, also need to avoid talking to the candidate. Too many voices in negotiating are like too many cooks in the kitchen. Something will get burned.

Somebody needs to be designated as the negotiator and, then, let everyone else get out of the way and leave them alone. And, get the deal done.

As a former legislator, I can tell you that Columbus is

watching what goes on here in Toledo. This will be grist for intervention if the noise from Toledo continues to bounce around the state.

Contact Jack Ford at jack@thetruthtoledo.com.



Jack Ford

Gut Feeling on Superintendent Search

The headlines of the April 25 Blade article, which said that "Top Choice to lead TPS drops out; Harner halts negotiations," came as no surprise to me as I recall sitting on one of the superintendent interview panels at TPS.

Maybe it was my gut feeling (the same seventh sense employed by GWB of the good job Brownie, Putin, Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, Miers, Brenner and Gonzales fame) at that time while questioning and listening to the candidates, that whispered that maybe this was not the man for Toledo.

I say we stop looking for an Ebony Karl Rove conspiracy and consider the \$30,000 the board paid to Proact Search Inc., of Milwaukee, the point at which we discontinue digging a hole and give John Foley the job and get on with the process of trying to save our education system.

I consider Toledo lucky that Mr. Harner rejected the job as superintendent, (if it is true) as he would have had to call on all of his West Point military training to fight the Toledo political system.

He would have needed a "Presidential surge" to learn and combat the many problems in the TPS structure. Let's save some money and some energy and give a local experienced person our support and the opportunity to work on getting it right. After the next election, if Mr. Foley can find a school board president who has the best interest of the school system at heart and he can solve the perceived public issue that the teachers' union has the real chokehold on the progress of the public school system, maybe, just maybe he can get it right.

If this happens, maybe we can do the right thing for Scott High School, which is the main school that suffers at the hands of the present TPS and TFT school administration.

Sincerely,

Warren Woodberry

We Know Who to Blame

Yes, we've once again entered the TPS spin zone. First, the explanation was William Harner abruptly ended negotiations with Larry Sykes and the other board for personal reasons. Then, the true reason came out, and guess who's in the middle of this failed negotiation again; you're right - Mr. Larry Sykes. Larry Sykes was also involved in the last failed negotiation a couple of years back in which he led the move to hire Eugene Sanders. Is this just a simple coincidence? We know how that ended.

This time around, Sykes' true reason, among others for botching the negotiation was the desire by Harner to place his daughter in a private school.

The question is when will Larry Sykes stop blaming Darlene Fisher for his frailties? When will Sykes stop pointing fingers for fallout caused by his stubbornness? And, when will Sykes allow our school system to move forward?

I am sure by now Sykes knows how the community feels about him. That's why he is holding off announcing that he will run for the nth zillionth time. However, what Sykes doesn't understand is this time the community has caught up with him. It's now just a matter of time for us to get a breath of fresh air in the board make up.

Now, let's dissect each of the reasons Sykes gave for letting a great opportunity in Harner pass us by:

First, the issue of Harner's daughter attending Maumee Valley. My question to Sykes is if this was an issue with Harner, why wasn't it then an issue with John Foley whose kids didn't attend the TPS system? Better, yet, how about Sykes' own two children who didn't attend the district's schools? Could there be a double standard here?

Residency. Should this have been an issue when over 80 percent of TPS teachers and administrators do not reside in Toledo? Therefore, Mr. Sykes' explanation is preposterous - makes no sense.

Tuition for Harner's daughter. This, too, is a non-issue. A good negotiator would have factored this amount into Harner's pay. If Harner was worth it, why would Sykes and Robert Torres not have found ways to bring him here rather than frustrate him? Once Harner's child's tuition was factored into his pay, how he paid for his daughter's education would have been his personal prerogative. These are the things you do when you believe you've got a good candidate at the table.

The sad thing is the sophistication to negotiate well was completely absent at the table - it was all about hard-balling the candidate. In the end, we came out losing. Oh, well, once more, our children seem to be coming up short. I guess it's all about ego, photo-ops and grandstanding. Let's see these five people's next move for this district.

Francis I. Dumbuya, Ph.D.

Advertisement for 'The Toledo Best Dressed Women' contest. Includes text: 'SHE NEEDS YOUR VOTE! We are talking about your favorite "BEST-DRESSED WOMEN"'. Contact info: 419-243-0007 or email at thetruthreporter@buckeye-access.com. Winners announced May 9th.

Drama Reigns as the Search for a TPS Superintendent Implodes

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

Toledo Public Schools Superintendent-select William Harner said last week – for the second time – that he will decline the honor of taking over the 29,000-student Toledo district and will remain in Philadelphia...at least for the moment.

And once again, a member of the school board raised the possibility that negotiations with the regional superintendent for the Philadelphia School District can be reopened even as she could not resist the urge to point fingers at fellow board members for their failure to secure the candidate they had selected by a unanimous vote just months earlier.

The ongoing drama over the vacant superintendent's position entered a new phase last week when Harner announced that negotiations had broken down and he was no longer entertaining the idea of accepting the post.

"I was disappointed," said School Board President Deborah Barnett. "I had thought we were very close to having a deal with Mr. Harner. The district needs a permanent leader and all the board members were very serious about these talks but there's a process we have to respect in hiring a superintendent."

Immediately school board member Larry Sykes, head of the board's finance committee and in charge of the negotiations with Harner, assailed fellow board member Darlene

Fisher for interfering in the negotiations and said that the talks had ceased because of Harner's demands to live outside the district and to have the district pay for his teenage daughter's tuition at a private school.

Harner would later say that Sykes' had mischaracterized his requests but when emails of the correspondence between board members, between board members and Harner and between board members and Nancy Noeske of Proact Search Inc. in Milwaukee, WI were released at the end of the week, it appeared that the residency issue was the major stumbling block and that Harner's attorney did at least broach the subject of including Harner's daughter's tuition in the contract.

Fisher then held a press conference on Friday requesting that the board reinstate talks with Harner and blamed Sykes and Robert Torres, as the point men in the negotiations, for their failure to bring a sense of urgency and warmth to the discussions with Harner. She blamed Sykes in particular for intentionally stalling the talks in hope that they would indeed fail.

The email correspondence however displayed no such evidence that talks had been deliberately stalled on Sykes' part nor did they show that Fisher had improperly interjected herself in negotiations with Harner. She did

contact the candidate, as did board member Steven Steel, Ph.D., at one point, but neither contact appeared, at least from email correspondence, to be inappropriate.

The first indication that the talks were not on track came on March 5 during an exchange of emails between Harner and Noeske when Harner noted that he had not heard from the board or the board's representatives in the time since he had been selected. Noeske replied that the board was trying to work out the "me-too" language in the bargaining unions' clauses that, according to David McClellan, president of the Toledo Association of Administrative Personnel union, would prevent the board from paying Harner more than the salary that they paid previous Superintendent Eugene Sanders, Ph.D., until a raise was negotiated with the union itself.

On March 27, Harner sent a note to Noeske informing her of his intent "to withdraw from superintendent contract negotiations" with the board because of the "me-too" language. He was talked into staying the course by Steel – on the same day – shortly after Noeske informed Steel of Harner's doubts.

But a few days later, on March 30, Harner upped his salary demands, insisted that his daughter not be required to attend school in TPS and requested that he be allowed to live outside the district due

to "administrator union issues and angst about my salary and compensation." He also introduced a laundry list of additional perks.

That note prompted, on April 2, from Noeske to Steel suggesting that the board contact Harner directly rather than simply through attorneys and informing him that "if the Board screws this up, you will not be able to attract a quality person."

Then, of course, the bottom dropped out at the beginning of last week as Harner again removed himself from consideration.

According to Steel, observers, and board members themselves, can second guess how the board conducted the negotiations but the bottom line is the residency issue, he told The Truth, and nothing either party said or did during the negotiations can eliminate the fact that, on that issue, there was no room for give.

Storer Camp Scholarship Awarded To Two Third Graders

Special to The Truth

The 2007 Lesley Harper Sr. Memorial YMCA Storer Camp Scholarship will be awarded to two third graders at Ella P. Steward Academy for Girls. Myrjah Russell and Jasmine Jenkins will receive scholarships for one week at YMCA Storer Camps in Jackson, Michigan.

Paul D. Thomas founded the annual scholarship in 2004 in memory of Lesley Harper Sr. the late Mr. Harper was a local general contractor who employed, trained and mentored many young men and women from the central city area of Toledo, some of them went on to become very successful in business and construction. Paul D. Thomas was one of those lucky individuals that Harper trained and mentored. Thomas has been a member of the Carpenters Union for over 20 years. Thomas is currently employed by the

Ohio and Vicinity Regional Council of Carpenters as a Business Representative. He currently holds a seat on the YMCA Storer Camps Board of Directors and is also a member of the YMCA Storer Camps Scholarship committee.

Thomas chose Ella P. Stewart Academy for girls because he attended Ella P. Stewart before it became an all girls school and Thomas chose third graders because his first experience with Storer Camp was as a third grader.

The selections were made based on academics, citizenship, attendance and an essay contest.

The scholarships will be presented on Tuesday May 8, 2007 at 11:30 a.m. at Ella P. Stewart Academy for Girls at 124 W. Woodruff, Toledo, OH. If you would like to attend, please contact Paul Thomas at (419) 461-3011.

Bishop Timothy Clarke at 2007 IMA Spring Revival

Bishop Timothy J. Clarke, senior pastor of First Church of God in Columbus, OH, will appear at the 2007 Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance that takes place at Warren A.M.E. Church May 2 through 4.

Clarke was called to the ministry in 1974 and served as associate minister at First Church of God in his hometown of far Rockaway, NY under his mentor, the late James E. Cray. Clarke began his pastorate at York Avenue Church of God (Warren, OH) in 1977 and served that congregation for four years.

In 1982, Clarke was called to the senior pastor-

ate of the Columbus First Church of God and was consecrated to the office of bishop in 2001. In addition to his commitment and anointing as pastor, Clarke serves the Body of Christ as an evangelist and teacher. He has received numerous honors and degrees for his service to the church and the community at large.

Clarke serves on the boards of various community and political organizations including the State of Ohio Victims of Crime Advisory Board, the Columbus Urban League, the United Way of Franklin County, the Interracial Leadership Council, the Clergy Leadership Task

Force, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and the New Beginnings Christian Community Revitalization Corporation.

The author of seven books, Clarke ministers to the heart and encourages the soul through: *Signs of His Coming*, *Daughter, Don't Miss Your Season*, *Living in the Blessed Peace*, *Making the Most of Your Time* and *Celebrating the Family: Lessons from the Book of Faith*.

The Spring Revival's nightly worship starts at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Rev. Otis Gordon at Warren A.M.E. – 419-243-2237.

2007 IMA Spring Revival

"Promoting Unity Among Denominations"

Psalms 133:1, Ephesians 4:13

May 2, 2007 – May 4, 2007

Nightly Worship 7:00pm



with
Dr. Timothy J. Clarke

Pastor, First Church of God
Columbus, OH

@ Warren A.M.E. Church
915 Collingwood Blvd, Toledo, OH

Rev. Otis Gordon – Host Pastor
Rev. Cedric Brock – IMA President

For more information contact

Rev. Otis Gordon @ Warren A.M.E. Church 419/243-2237

Mickler to Leave Toledo Urban League for Position in Home Town

Special to The Truth

Toledo Urban League President Johnny McDuffy Mickler, Sr. will be leaving his post to become president and chief executive officer of The Urban League of The Upstate in South Carolina on June 1, 2007.

Appointed the Toledo Urban League's first president in 1997, Mickler was instrumental in building the organization from a fledgling startup with two employees, one site and a budget of \$162,000 into a modern organization with four sites, a staff of 21 and an annual budget of \$1.1 million.

Mickler's new position returns him to his home town of Greenville, South Carolina, where he worked with the Greenville Urban League from 1987 until 1993, when he was appointed president of the Urban League of Greater Madison, a position he held until he came to Toledo in 1997.

"I have made great friends and learned a great deal during my years here," said Mickler. "While leaving is always difficult when you're surrounded by friends and have received so much support, I am now able to return to Greenville to put my experience to work for the good of my home town."

The board of the Toledo Urban League will work with the National Urban League to hire a new leader for the organization.

"Johnny has been a tremendous leader for this organization and in this community, and his loss will be felt throughout northwestern Ohio," said James Murray, chairman of the board of directors of the Toledo Urban League. "We will work closely with the National Urban League to find a new leader who can continue Johnny's great work here."



Johnny Mickler, Sr.

The Greater Toledo Urban League's mission is to promote, encourage, assist, and work in various ways to improve the social and economic conditions of African Americans, other minorities, and the disadvantaged in the community. This mission and purpose are guided by a board comprised of a cross-section of individuals representative of the Toledo community. The operation of the Greater Toledo Urban League is made possible through memberships, private and corporate donations and funding from the United Way of Greater Toledo.

"Made in the USA – An Unbreakable Skull for a Glass Dragon"

*By Gregory Dennis
Special to The Truth*

We landed in the cover of night at Beijing International Airport and were then whisked away on two charter buses with the final destination being Qinhuangdao, a city a few hundred miles southeast of Beijing situated in China's northern province of Hebei. Literally translated, Qinhuangdao means Emperor Qin's island and it is nestled on the coast of the Yellow Sea overlooking the Korean peninsula. It is also Toledo's sister city. Both are transportation and shipping hubs with similar latitudes and industry.

Cruising along the dark countryside, only gas stations and truck stop inns were visible, then we finally got off the highway and arrived in the city. The bus crawled along the empty road in second gear, mostly to save gas. The driver downshifted, stopped and the doors opened at a place that looked like a one-floor casino. Red, blue and green neon lights flickered on the entrance sign.

My casino dreams evaporated when the bright lights dimmed into a dingy 20-table all-night eatery. This was the Chinese all-night full-service diner. Instead of an American fare of grits, eggs, pancakes and sausage, we dined on balls of dough, salted fish, porridge and other standard Chinese breakfast items.

Whether the hotel was downtown or not is a mystery. Surrounded by city



Commissioner Ben Konop with Chinese Counterpart

blocks in every direction – buildings, hotels, back alley shops, restaurants, banks, markets... all and every manner of business laced the streets nearby the hotel.

Along with an early breakfast buffet that had omelets made to order, the hotel had a park adjacent with peacocks, and a cove pond for traditional Chinese relaxation. For entertainment the city was not lacking – nightlife was alive and kicking in the city, but it was limited to Chinese venues, including a few discos with overpriced beer and a floor show with scantily-clad female dancers sliding down poles to what Europeans kindly refer to as "rave" music. The best deals were at local alley restaurants. They serve cold beer and have cheap food, and are stocked with locals ready for a challenge.

A summer resort village for rich businessmen from Beijing, and Tianjin, Qinhuangdao is like a more distant Hamptons if Beijing were New York City. Due to a recent environmental campaign, Qinhuangdao's newly

clean beaches attract many Chinese and Russian tourists.

More world renown, the Old Dragon's Head, the start of the Great Wall where the first Chinese emperor, Qin, set off for Japan looking for medicine that would give him eternal life, this area has long attracted Sino historians and travelers who venture past Tianjin.

The Old Dragon's Head is on the beach of the Yellow Sea, and it extends into the water which through the ancient Chinese eye resembled a dragon's head submerging into the waves. Walking along the paths, I encountered Jimmy Jackson-sized stone soldiers colorfully decorated, and restored quarters where the ancient sentinels roosted when not defending the wall from outsiders were contained on the wall.

The next notable tourist attractions were the wheel and glass factories. Both factories were state of the art, and in no way

(Continued on Page 8)

AALEAA's 11th Annual Scholarship and Awards Dinner Banquet

"A Taste of Essence 2007"

Saturday - May 12

Reception at 6:00 p.m.

Dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Park Inn Toledo Hotel
101 N. Summit Street, Toledo, Ohio

Keynote Speaker

Earl D. Mack, Jr.

President
African American
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"Economic Empowerment in the Black Community"

Special to The Truth

The Committee of the Whole and the Toledo Chapter National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. in conjunction with several partners, will host the first in a series of monthly seminars on "Economic empowerment in the Black Community."

The monthly series will feature luncheons that are intended to be informative sessions on a variety of practical and relevant topics.

The first seminar will have presentations on Asset Protection, Investment Management and Life, Health, Disability and Long-Term Care Insurance. Each seminar will

feature several speakers discussing a variety of wealth-building concepts and techniques. The seminars will also feature a keynote speaker.

The inaugural event will be a breakfast and will take place on Saturday, May 12, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Genesis Dreamplex. Seating will start and breakfast will be served promptly at 10 a.m.

The inaugural keynote address will be on "Buying Back Our Community" by Burner Crew, senior portfolio manager in the public sector for KeyBank.

The cost of this first event is free. The public is welcome to attend. Future seminar

dates, times, locations and costs will be published in the near future.

This event is being sponsored by the Committee of the Whole and the NANBPWC, Inc. The event's costs are also being underwritten by KeyBank, Jaguar Landrover of Toledo, Inc., Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and Owens Corning.

Event volunteers are still needed. Sponsors and partners are still needed. For more information on this event, please call Vince Davis at 419-244-2904 or Ethel Scott at 419-255-4174. Or email at vince.davis.bun1@statefarm.com or ethel.scott@keybank.com.

Jewell C. Lightner: Her Breakthrough Diversity Program Has Brought a Touch of CLAS to ProMedica Health System

By Alan Abrams
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

"At ProMedica Health System, diversity is key to fulfilling our values," says Jewell C. Lightner, the healthcare organization's director of corporate diversity.

During her five years in the post, Lightner has redefined the role of diversity at ProMedica. Long ranked as one of the most integrated health systems in the country, the Toledo-based healthcare giant was formed in 1986. The organization has 15,000 employees, 70 corporations and joint ventures, 2,900 physicians and more than 233 facilities—including 10 hospitals—in the 23 counties it serves in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan.

ProMedica's hospital holdings range from Flower Hospital in Sylvania, Toledo Hospital and Bay Park Hospital to hospitals in nearby Fostoria, Defiance and Adrian, Michigan.

ProMedica's expanded partnerships and joint ventures include one announced recently with Lima Memorial Health System.

Last year, Flower Hospital became the first metropolitan hospital in the nation to earn certification recognizing its quality of care provided to diverse patients. The certification was awarded by the Center for Multicultural Competency in Healthcare Organizations (CMCHO), an independent organization created to certify health care organizations in the area of multicultural competence.

In order to receive the certification, Flower Hospital underwent a three-day, on-

site evaluation based on the 14 national Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) standards developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health in 2000.

"During the process, seven investigators came in and examined patient charts, conducted random interviews, held focus groups with physicians, talked to senior leaders, and all levels of management. Their community assessment was so thorough that they even called former patients," recalls Lightner.

CLAS serves as the framework for addressing the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to treat patients from diverse cultures.

Says Flower Hospital's President Kevin Webb, Ph.D., "In terms of Flower Hospital, Jewell Lightner was the person who was instrumental in getting us this certification."

"We were the first hospital in our system to go through the program," says Lightner. "We received a three-year certification, which is the second-highest level. I'm already preparing our try for the top level — Best in CLAS," she adds.

Lightner brought the diversity program with her when she accepted the start-up position with ProMedica in 2002. (Jack Ford had previously held a similarly-titled post within the organization.)

"I brought it from its infancy to where it is today," says Lightner of the program. "I created a three-year Diversity Strategic Plan within my

first 90 days."

As Lightner wrote in a case study published last year by Rutgers University, "Nearly every target goal was achieved."

Lightner's concept of redefining the providing of healthcare from a global perspective made a positive impact on the organization by strengthening ProMedica's market position and reducing costs. It also established benchmarks and metrics that measure and sustain an inclusive and representative workforce. Lightner also created internal and external Diversity Advisory Councils and created and delivered state-of-the-art training programs.

Her innovative Diversity Initiative resulted in Toledo Hospital being honored as the "Preferred Provider of Care" by the Ohio Hispanic Commission.

"Diversity includes all of us. Everyone fits in. It reflects our life experiences and how we work together and learn from each other," says Lightner.

"We were looking at becoming a more representative workforce, one that reflects the community we live in. That's why I started with the third standard defined by CLAS: it states that healthcare organizations should insure that staff at all levels and across all disciplines receive ongoing education and training in culturally and linguistically appropriate service delivery.

"My legacy is that I feel I was able to make the most difference in our caring of

patients and cultural aspects. Our diversity among employees is so great that it represents at least 50 different foreign languages. And the diversity among families and patients is just as great. That's why we developed a language assistance program for those who do not speak English as their first language," says Lightner.

Why was that significant? Consider the potential for linguistic miscommunication in which a doctor's prescription advising a patient to take a pill *once* a day is interpreted by a Spanish-speaking patient as meaning 11 times a day — because the Spanish word for 11 is written as *once*.

The diversity training program she instituted went far beyond acknowledging such facts as Jewish and Muslim dietary restrictions.

"Just being hospitalized is already stressful for most patients," said Lightner. She began programs for patient literacy in which medical terminology was replaced with layman's language whenever possible and patient education



materials were produced on a fifth or sixth grade reading level for ease of understanding.

"We also began producing this material in a myriad of languages. We needed to look upon this as being a

global village. Do you know what language has been the most requested at Flower in terms of translation? Somali," asks, and quickly answers, Lightner.

(Continued on Page 8)

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LISC: Confronting the Reality That the Physical Is Not Enough

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

The Local Initiatives Support Corporation's (LISC) effort to rebuild and transform distressed communities has been an unqualified success, says Paul D. Williams, senior vice president of the organization's national office for Field Strategies and Development. And "housing development is the core of that effort," he adds.

However, as the organization, that has invested nearly \$8 billion in residential and commercial development – 215,000 affordable homes and apartments, 30 million square feet of retail and business space, facilities for child care, schools, arts and playing fields – reviews the overall results of that development, it has been forced to face a daunting admission: "Places have prospered," says Williams, "but people have not."

Armed with that eye-opening assessment of its activities over the last quarter century, LISC, with 30 urban programs in place as well as rural programs in 37 states, has determined that its strategy

for change must shift.

What LISC has observed only too often over the years are situations in which new residences have not improved the overall quality of life for the residents. Home values have often risen but personal incomes have stagnated and "folks have continued to struggle," says Williams.

"Part of these changing realities is the need to do more than bricks and mortars," Williams, a Minnesota resident, told The Truth last week during a tour of Toledo with the local executive director, Hugh Grefe. "We have got to talk about jobs and education and we are therefore looking at a broader agenda. "Our new vision and strategic direction is a result of pushing that envelope."

That new vision has moved LISC to looking at an agenda that takes a more holistic approach to improving neighborhoods by "creating opportunities for individual residents of those communities to raise their income, to build assets and

gain access to quality education," says Williams. "Our goal [now] is to build sustainable communities."

LISC has therefore resolved to develop community partnerships to work towards five core program objectives to reach the larger goal: expanding capital investment in housing and other real estate, building family wealth and income, stimulating local economic activity, improving residents' access to quality education and developing healthy environments and lifestyles.

Williams, in his conversation last week, listed a number of principles that would define how the agency means to achieve sustainable communities, but the bottom line is quite simple – the agency, which financially supports the efforts of groups such as community development corporations, will no longer be attracted to place development dollars into areas that take a scatter-shot approach to rebuilding – a house here and there. Neighborhood re-

vitalization is one of the keys to sustainability – looking at an area and making wholesale changes with the assistance of corporate entities, local government and philanthropic organizations.

"It is more compelling when a CDC comes to us and says 'we want to bring back a whole block,'" says Williams, "then we want to share the risks."

LISC has traditionally been a relatively decentralized organization, with local offices taking the lead in how their funds are dispersed. But the Toledo LISC office is definitely on board with the national operation's new philosophy about building sustainable communities.

Toledo LISC, which opened its doors in 1990 and has dispensed grants, loans and equity investments exceeding \$75 million, helped to build or renovate over 1,500 homes and assisted in the construction of half a million square feet of commercial space, is well on board with the new philosophy of build-



Paul D. Williams

ing sustainable communities.

Within the past year, for example, Toledo LISC has developed a concept titled Toledo Fund for Neighborhood Development (TFND) choosing to invest in single projects to assist in neighborhood transformation, emulating the success of similar project in Richmond, VA.

Over the next five years, says Williams, the goal is to ensure that as many local offices as possible are incorporating the new model into their

operating philosophies. But he also stresses that the new approach is not a radical shift, nor is it particularly novel. What is new, says Williams, is the idea of intentionally focusing on outcomes of transformative scale, creating a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

So whether LISC will be successful in improving more than just the bricks and mortar of target communities will be evident in short order – presumably in five years.

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11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
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Byrmedale Junior High
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Harbor Behavioral Healthcare Receives Excellence Award

On Wednesday, April 18, 2007 Harbor Behavioral Healthcare, a not-for-profit mental health and wellness agency, received an "excellent" for the 2007 Youth Program Excellence Award. Harbor is one of only four organizations throughout the state of Ohio to receive this award.

YES is a comprehensive program addressing both vocational and non-work needs of youth ages 19-21 that will lead to employment and long-term job retention.

The program offers options to young adults and is an opportunity to build relationships, identify personal resources and obtain training to meet their ultimate goal. It incorporates activities such as tutoring, summer employment opportunities, paid and unpaid work experience, leadership development, and comprehensive guidance and counseling.

The crux of the YES program is to provide youth in poverty with opportunities to obtain and retain employ-

ment that is valuable and meaningful to them, thus becoming productive citizens, contributing to their community, and advancing their socio-economic status. It also helps to nurture self-esteem while laying the foundation for personal success one step at a time.

Darlene White, program director states, "I am grateful that Harbor has the opportunity to touch the lives of these young adults and offer them hope."

(Continued on Page 10)

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“Made in the USA – An Unbreakable Skull for a Glass Dragon”

(Continued from Page 5)

echoed Western notions of sweat shops in the Far East. Neither place was packed with workers and mostly everything was automated with humans overseeing or doing touchup work on assembly lines.

Designed for English tours, both factories had colorful displays in English, but the actual content and reports posted on those displays were in Chinese. Obviously these factories were set up for foreign investors to tour, but when you dance with the stars, don't you have to put your best foot forward? Designing factories for foreigner visitors can preempt any subsequent criticism, like the usual Western rebukes on workers' and human rights. So was this

really deceit, or was it just strategic planning when courting investors in a higher league and different bargaining power?

Our band of visitors, the Sister Cities Toledo delegation, was comprised of two groups with their respective missions. The trade delegation, there to boost trade ties through dialogue and joint planning, was stacked with professionals and interpreters ready to tackle the issues. The cultural delegation focused on extending friendship by having Chinese and American musicians perform together and interacting to confirm and destroy stereotypes they shared about each other.

The trade delegation con-

sisted of journalists, lawyers, doctors, politicians, businesspersons and other professionals from or with close ties to Toledo. The cultural delegation though lacking many Chinese speakers, comprised of Toledo's international Youth Orchestra, a few teachers from Toledo schools, was equipped with what an orchestra member in a thank you speech given to the Qinhuangdao local television station called the universal language – music. Later at the farewell dinner, John Henry Fullen, the director of Toledo Sister Cities, described the assistance the TV station provided as “indispensable” in making the trip a reality.

The net impact of the trip was a success for both cultural and trade relations. When the Toledo International Youth Orchestra performed it became a prototypical example of the trip's success. The musicians created a unity and siblinghood amongst themselves that transcended into the crowd of listeners and parents of different nationalities. Camera shutters blasted though the air and the room lit up

with flashes as everyone tried to memorialize the celebration with a digital photo. The trade efforts did not end in the same Hollywood flair, the trade efforts ended on the recognition that further delegations will be necessary to boost business ties between the two cities.

Currently the US has huge trade deficit with China, that is, China is exporting much more to the US than the US is importing into China. With China being such a good source for cheap labor, there has been a proliferation of foreign direct investment in mainland China. Since 1995, when China joined the World Trade Organization, US companies have opened more wholly-owned subsidiaries to take advantage of the low production costs.

Many US companies have outsourced their labor divisions to China and South-



east Asia. The trade-gap with China is growing, and in the future we can see Vietnam as an emerging labor power riding on the coattails of the Chinese business model.

At the conclusion of the trade delegation, attendees were tutored on rudimentary US immigration law, specifically laws and direction for Chinese to obtain visas for entry into the US. Lucas County Commissioner Ben Konop led the delegation with the help of his interpreter and invited Qinhuangdao officials and businessmen to invest in Toledo. Met with little enthusiasm overall, this invitation seemed to have received some interest from a local glassmaker specializing in the manufacture of mirrors for automobiles.

As in times of celebra-

tion, such as giving thanks for a good harvest, traditional Chinese culture carried the day as drinks were shared to memorialize two things –

the already harvested fruits of relationship and anticipation of the new seeds just planted for future cooperation. Memorializing a good harvest in an agricultural nation such as China is imbedded in the culture of the ancient gatherer. The trade delegation was successful, but a static unevenness still existed.

The one-sidedness in trade talks at any capacity between US and Chinese delegates inherently favors the Chinese. Nowhere in the talks did the Chinese delegates mention how a US citizen can get an extended visa to live in China for work

(Continued on Page 9)



Jewell C. Lightner

(Continued from Page 6)

The Somali language (Af Soomaali) is spoken mostly in Somalia and adjacent parts of Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya. Because of the civil war and diaspora, speakers are found all over the world

In addition to Somali, Lightner says patient services at Flower Hospital are now provided in American Sign Language, Arabic, Russian, German, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean and Japanese.

“This reflects the shift in demographics for this area,” notes Lightner.

The translation services are provided by qualified interpreters and the hospital has access to more than 140 languages through interpreter services which are even available during off hours,” says Lightner.

“This was a sleeping giant, and we were struggling with how to do it,” acknowledges Lightner. She says Flower is now working on increasing their usage of multilingual signage, another CLAS mandate along with full and easy access to translators and translated materials.

Lightner also introduced patient's family education councils, another important factor on the patient care side in terms of continued quality improvement as well as patient safety.

Her concept of

multicultural covers every culture and has been expanded to include system-wide programs celebrating the diversity of various cultures by programs highlighting menus and musical programs featuring Greek, Italian, West Indian, Polish and Chinese themes – with a major emphasis coming up on the May 5 Cinco de Mayo festivities.

“Our employees are recognizing that diversity includes me,” says Lightner. “We all share a common value system.”

Her emphasis upon culture specific training included the institution of a review board which looks at clinical studies and how they can be augmented with increased cultural emphasis. An example is the Minority Health Month free Type 2 diabetes study which reached out to African-American adults 21 and older. While it occurs in people of all ages and races, Type 2 diabetes is more common in African-Americans.

“Diversity at ProMedica is fully integrated into our corporate culture, and does not just stand alone,” says Lightner.

She chairs the Diversity Community Advisory Council and sits on the Diversity Steering Council along with the presidents of the hospitals in the ProMedica system. “They oversee the strategic plan and I update them on it

quarterly,” explains Lightner.

The daughter of Doris and Edward Abram (originally Abrams, her branch of the family had dropped the final “s” from their surname); Jewell was born in Beckley, West Virginia. After her paternal grandfather died, the family moved to Toledo.

Jewell was the middle child. She has four siblings: Raymond (Ray) Abram lives in Toledo; Mark resides in North Carolina; and her sister Angela and brother Michael both live in Columbus.

Jewell earned her bachelor's and master's degrees at Bowling Green State University.

Following graduation, she worked as a human relations specialist and is certified as a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR). Prior to joining ProMedica, she worked for Findley Davies, Inc. and Owens Corning, both in Toledo.

Lightner and her husband Herman have been members of Cornerstone Church since 1993 and are active in the church's ministries.

“It is because of my faith in God and my love for serving people that I have no doubt, with God's help; we can be the Best in CLAS,” says Lightner.

She is the mother of two step-children: Jamie Almeister and Lisa Lightner



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(Continued from Page 8)

purposes. Yet this procedure is slightly different than getting a travel permit, which all Toledo delegate had. A work visa in China for a period of time longer than six months requires a physical checkup. There was no attempt to inform the Toledo delegates on the nuances of Chinese immigration law. Why? It was unnecessary.

Americans are not lining up and being rejected for work visas to enter China, and there is also not a high demand amongst US citizens to live and work in China. Are we xenophiles or do we have a deep-rooted fear of Communism emerging from McCarthyism?

Unlike China, as an industrialized nation the United States has progressed past the time where labor intensive goods drive our market power. Now the US exports high technology, like business software and other intellectual property (IP). The human capital that engineers US IP is more valuable than all the hi-tech products we export to China.

United States services are arguably the most valuable resource, but these services

have been exported to China at a disproportionate rate. One reason US services, in the form of expertise, are exported to China so slowly is because not enough experts speak Chinese at a level comfortable enough to understand highly-technical jargon. Our business people mostly depend on the competency of their counterparts' English when making small, and medium-sized deals.

Toledo is a city that is engaging the 21st Century in the fast lane by creating a strategic partnership with Qinhuangdao. Working together these cities can blossom, but all things being equal, Qinhuangdao will have the ultimate advantage unless Toledoans ante up. More students need to learn Chinese starting at the beginning of high school, and more high schools need to offer four years of Chinese curriculum.

Schools need to provide incentives to students who study Chinese, for example providing a free trip to China for three weeks during the summer after the completion of third year Chinese in school. This is

just an example, but Toledo is one of the few cities in Ohio that already offers Chinese in some high schools and, as a whole, the community looks to expand Chinese education among the youth.

So if this expansion continues, then Toledo can serve as a beacon to other communities for ways of leveling the playing field with China. Other cities in Ohio should look to other Asian countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam as the next countries to emerge as headliners on the world stage of international trade by using cheap labor conditions as a catalyst for development.

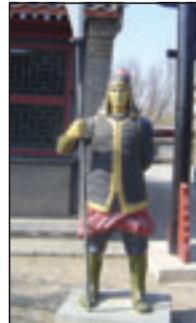
Many hope that Toledo will continue to embrace international relations with similarly situated cities outside of US borders in order to strengthen trade, which will continue to enhance Toledo's standard of living.

Toledo must make an unbreakable glass skull to import to the Old Dragon's Head.

Ed. Note: Greg Dennis,



a second-year law student at OSU is an old China hand having spent a total of two years in China during the course of four previous visits. He speaks Mandarin and anticipates a career in international business.



Toledo delegation - this column's author on the far right

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Toledo Interfaith Mass Choir (And Friends) Use "Yesterday's" Music To Express Today's Victories in Concert at the Stranahan

By Geneva J. Chapman,
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Just when it looked as if spring would never come this year, the Toledo Interfaith Mass Choir (and Friends) presented a concert Saturday, April 14, at the Stranahan Theater all dressed up in every single pastel shade in the color palette.

They could have been a bouquet of spring flowers in full colorful bloom – except those that bloomed early had succumbed to those cold early spring nights – or they could have been a basket of Easter eggs dyed in all the hues of the pretty frocks we used to wear to church when Easters were sunny and warm, not snowy and frigid.

But Easter had come and gone; and it didn't warm up enough for those spring frocks until a couple of weeks later. What the dozens of men and women representing churches from all over Toledo really looked like was a Holy-Ghost filled,

soulful-singing breath of spring as they kept most of the SRO crowd on their feet with heartfelt testimonies and spirited renditions of old and new favorites.

Tittering on the brink of having church several times, the crowd went wild and the choir sang until the spirit of the Lord came down, under the skillful direction of Derrick Roberts, dressed in a three-piece peach suit with matching shirt, tie and shoes – for the first half of the concert.

Roberts ran down the aisle at one point and asked for the house lights to be turned on so he could "see who's here!" Amid the shouts of praise and spontaneous gesticulations, there were moments of reflection during personal testimonies of individuals triumphing over sickness and sorrow, disease and despair.

Beverly Tucker, who lost both her husband and her

mother, led the choir singing, "Great is Thy Faithfulness." Dressed in a beautiful mauve dress with jewels at her ears, neck and feet, as well as adorning the graceful folds of her gown, Tucker looked every bit the opera diva with a voice that proved she is just that.

Using the entire stage, she moved as she sang, dramatically trailing the pleated skirt of her dress, its hem brushing the floor lightly.

Roberts wore a purple for the second half of the show, which was highlighted by a testimony from Dwight Hunter. Having recovered from a stroke, Hunter's hands, one side of his body and his voice were all impaired.

However, when he started singing "How Great Thou Art," his voice, tenuous at first, grew stronger and clearer until he was singing with such beauty and force, there was no sign of



any impairment of any kind in his voice. There were many testimonies and much shouting about God's goodness, but there was also some really good singing, too.

Darius Coleman brought an old standard, "Yes, God is Real," into the 21st Century with his flawless runs and trilling voice. His rich, young voice made an old song new again. Towona Johnson sang "Precious Lord," quietly and beautifully, the way Thomas A. Dorsey intended it to be sung

when he wrote the musical plea for God's guidance.

There were many other wonderful and memorable moments during the three-hour concert, but most memorable of all was the exuberance, joy and spirit exhibited by the members of the choir and their director.

Once again, Toledo's premiere gospel choir showed us what it means to really praise the Lord.

Contact Geneva at geneva@thetruthtoledo.com.

Harbor Behavioral Healthcare Receives Excellence Award

(Continued from Page 7)

Harbor Behavioral Healthcare's knowledgeable and friendly staff includes licensed counselors, social workers, registered nurses, developmental pediatricians, psychologists, and psychiatrists. Harbor has nine locations serving the northwest Ohio area, accepts most insurance, and has day and evening appointments available. For more information on the YES Program or any of Harbor's programs call 800.475.4449. Harbor serves over 12,000 people annually.



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Girl Scouts & Hostelling International Show Community Pride Through Community Wall Art Exhibit

The Girl Scouts of Maumee Valley Council's, 21 G.R.I.P. Program Girl Scouts - Girls Reaching Imaginative Places - collaborated with Hostelling International Toledo area to complete their Hostelling Community Wall. The Community Wall is a fun and educational component of Hostelling International USA's Opening Doors, Opening Minds program that asks youth "What is it like to live in your community?" Through this collaboration Girls Scouts have been guided by trained volunteers and staff from GSMVC and HI-TA providing a mission based program, to express their community and cultural pride through art, called a Community Wall.

The Community Wall art exhibit was present on April 4 at Port Lawrence Community Room. The celebration began with the

reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance, traditional Girl Scout Promise, and the Girl Scout Law. A poem was read composed by all 21 Girl Scouts that participated in the Community Wall program. Each line of the poem was written by a different girl giving 21 perspectives on loving friends, where they live and the importance of their community.

Girl Scout Troops 5203 and 5303 spent seven weeks on their art creations by painting three large canvas panels describing how the girls perceive their cultural lives in their neighborhoods that include, The Toledo Blade, The Boys and Girls Club, The Mud Hens, Toledo Police and Fire Departments. They also wanted the community to know the activities they like to do; dance, go to the park, jump rope, sing, read, paint and ride their bikes. Most of all they want to show how important Girl Scouting is to them.

The Community Wall



panels will first be displayed in the GSMVC service center located at 2244 Collingwood Blvd., Toledo and then travel as far away as the downtown Chicago Hostel.

The Girl Scouts of Maumee Valley Council (GSMVC) and the Hostelling International Toledo Area (HI-TA) are on the same page when it comes to our youth having missions that follow the same vein in our communities. HI-TA: To help all, especially the young, gain a greater understanding of

the world and its people through hostelling.

GSMVC: "Girl Scouts of Maumee Valley Council builds girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place."

GSMVC serves 14,500 throughout northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan offering quality programs like the Community Wall to our girls. For more information contact Sandy Garrison sgarrison@mvgsc.org or call 419-243-8216.

Rep. Brown Votes for Workers Comp Reform



State Rep. Edna Brown D-Toledo, voted last week in favor of legislation that will reform Ohio's scandal-plagued workers compensation system largely along the lines proposed by Governor Ted Strickland earlier this year.

The legislation, which passed the House on Wednesday, would abolish the Bureau of Workers' Compensation Oversight Commission and replace it with a Board of Directors that will assume more of the responsibilities for overseeing the system.

The bill also establishes a deputy inspector general for the Bureau of Workers' Compensation, responsible for investigating all claims of criminal violations, abuse of office, or misconduct and for reviewing workers' compensation claims.

The goal is to reform a workers' compensation system which lost \$215 million in a Bermuda hedge fund and where millions were lost from a badly managed coin investment fund.

"If we are going to rebuild trust and accountability in the

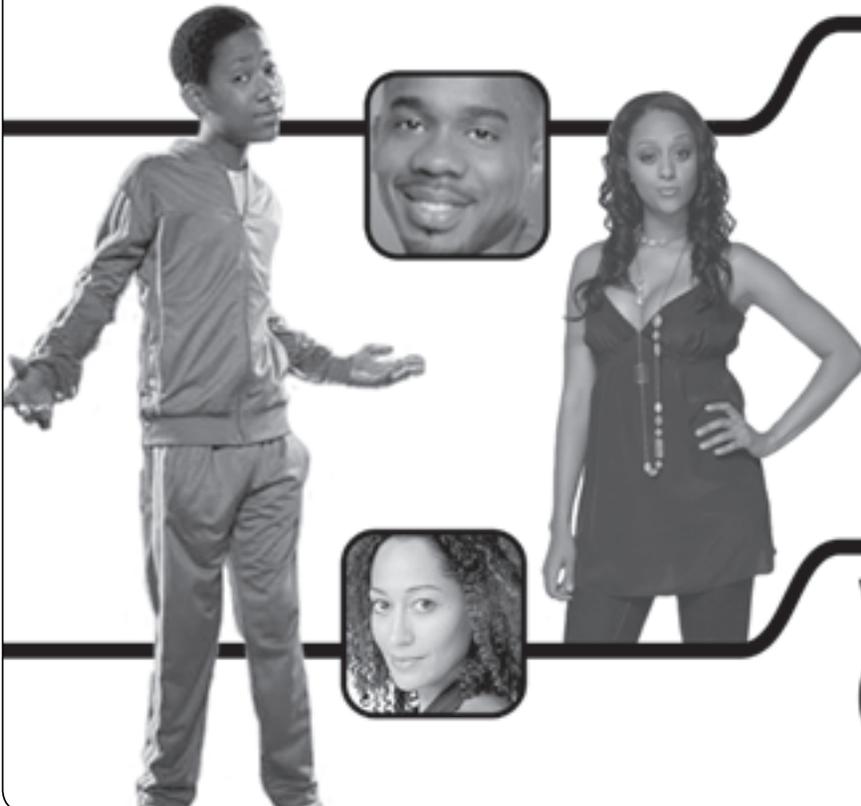
Bureau of Workers' Compensation, we must ensure integrity and professionalism," Brown said. "This bill marks an important step forward."

The provisions are contained within House Bill 100, an operating budget for the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation and the Ohio Industrial Commission for fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation is the largest exclusive state-funded workers' compensation system in the United States, with more than \$19 billion in assets. In fiscal year 2006, BWC provided workers' compensation coverage to more than 288,000 employers, processed more than 188,000 new claims and paid out more than \$1.9 billion in benefits.

H.B. 100 now moves to the Ohio Senate for consideration there.

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Inspiring Area Youth to Be All They Can Be

By Sharon Guice
Special to The Truth

For the past six years, The Ohio State University at Lima and Rhodes State College have been investing in youth from a number of surrounding counties who are unquestionably our leaders of tomorrow.

Area junior and high school students are invited to the Lima Campus during the Annual Multicultural Career Day event to get exposure to both college life and career options. It is also a great opportunity for local community leaders (from diverse ethnic and minority backgrounds) to come directly into contact with youth who may have similar interests but need to see first hand that they too can achieve.

Each student is given an opportunity to explore college life and careers in a meaningful way during this event and many of the presentations are hands-on and interactive.

On Friday, April 20, a beautiful, sunny day, approximately 100 youth from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, descended on the OSU Lima Campus and Rhodes State College to learn about a numbers of professional and technical careers. Such exposure can change the destiny of a youth forever. The Sixth Annual Multicultural Career Day 2007 started with a continental breakfast followed by a formal welcome by Michael Cunningham, Ph.D., OSU associate dean, and Melissa Green, Ph.D., vice president student affairs, Rhodes State.

During the welcome (opening session) the youth learned about Freeman A. Hrabowski III, Ph.D. Hrabowski is an African-American who has made history for the past 20 years as one of the longest-serving college presidents. He is the president of the University of Maryland-Baltimore County and started a program to train black scientists in 1988. He has worked hard to improve the campus life for students, staff and faculty.

Green, who introduced this topic, challenged the youth to say as Hrabowski says: "We can be much better" It was a challenge to change the Lima Campus by being hungry enough to transform a campus into a campus that is well known

all over the world. It was a challenge given to them to make something great of their lives and do something great for Lima and area counties.

After getting guidance from Traci Cox on how to maneuver across the campus to find the class rooms, the youth left the open session pumped and excited to learn about careers in business presented by Jerome O'Neal, careers in health technologies presented by Joel Harris, careers in information and technology by Dave Brown, careers in education presented by John A. Upshaw, careers in engineering presented by Nanette Smith, careers in law enforcement/corrections presented by Rick Kohli, careers in social work presented by this author.

Each session was 25 minutes, long enough for the presenters to encourage, educate and answer questions from the youth to help them better understand the various options and pathways for success. Presenters not only shared with the youth about their field of work but also gave the youth

pep talks about personal experiences and advice on what not to do.

Difinni Johnson said she came to hear about social work because her father had been a social worker for 10 years and he now does social work as a minister. Some students came to hear about the health field and what it takes to be an entrepreneur when starting your own business. Some had no idea of what career to explore and was glad to have the opportunity to learn about different career options up close and personal.

Michelle Hurley a senior wanted to make sure she was exploring all the options made available to her so that she has made the best choice for a career.

The youth were able to attend three sessions out of the eight presented to them before returning to the campus auditorium to watch a dramatization presented by Marlon Shackelford (Dayton, Ohio), titled, "It's Hip To Have Hope."

The dramatization was a presentation about the history of hip-hop. Miss Kennedy, a nine-year-old

dancer, wowed the crowd with her dance routine. She said she has been dancing since she was a baby. Virtuous, an up and coming artist, rapped about her life giving testimony of how God changed her life. She involved the crowd by teaching them the lines of one of her songs and encouraged them to clap to the beat. A lot of clapping, swaying and rocking could be seen around the room as she rapped about the life of the streets and how to avoid it.

Marlon Shackelford Jr., a seventh grader, has performed several times for the career day being encouraged by his father, Marlon Sr. After listening to more rap, poetry, and singing, Shackelford encourage the youth to never, never, never, never, never give up. The day came to an end with the youth enjoying a lunch of tacos and pizza prepared by



the campus cafeteria, chef. Door prizes were given out which is always a big hit to get something free.

This program has been a success each year and the organizers noted how proud they were to have so many people and institutions that stepped up to help area youth recognize that they are people who can make a difference. A special thank you of praise is due John Upshaw, director of Student Life, as the inspiration behind the annual

multicultural career day.

Note: Virtuous, "Out The Box" concert/CD release party will be on Saturday, June 2, 2007 at St. Stephens Community Church, 2315 Park Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio. Doors open at 4 pm For more information contact: Virtuouswoman bygod@yahoo.com. VWP Staff: 513-325-3661. Guest Artist: Teresa Teri & Unique, Tri-blessed, D-M.A.U.B. and Anointed Soles will also be performing at the concert.



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Women vs. Hip-Hop?

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

I would like to open by quoting a verse from the greatest rapper alive, Jay Z.

He had a song on *The Blueprint 2*, called "Sisters & Bitches."

These are a few of the lyrics:

Sisters get respect, bitches get what they deserve

Sisters work hard, bitches work your nerves

Sisters hold you down, bitches hold you up

Sisters help you progress, bitches will slow you up

Sisters cook up a meal, play their role with the kids

Bitches be in the street with their nose in your biz

Sisters love Jay cuz they know how 'Hov is

I love my sisters, I don't love no bitch

The greatest thing anyone could bring to this debate is balance.

All are women hoes? Of course not.

All are women bitches? Of course not.

But maybe it's getting harder and harder to tell who's who.

ANOTHER DOUBLE STANDARD?

While in my last year at The University of Toledo, I decided to take a couple of women's studies courses and I was right in the middle of one of those classes when that song came out. Since we were already covering Lil Kim as part of our course material, I felt that it was fitting to bring up Jay Z's take on the issue as well as Talib and Mos etc.

Is there ever a time when calling someone a "ho" might be appropriate?

YES.

But like I said before, it's a unisex term.

Women have every right to call a man a ho if he's sleeping around

"whoring it up" with any and every willing person he can find.

A Ho is a Ho - maybe you don't speak slang so you'd never use that term.

But if you DO use it, be sure to remember **MEN AND WOMEN** can have "ho-ish" ways.

Is there ever a time when calling someone a BITCH might be appropriate?

This one is a bit tricky.

Women call each other bitches constantly.

I remember when I went to see the Vagina Monologues the first time, my girlfriend at the time and one of her friends sat through the whole thing and felt empowered and dignified and as soon as we hit the parking lot they called some other black female a bitch because of what she was wearing.

NO - I don't agree with the popular mis-conception that if a woman is assuming a position of power then she's automatically a bitch.

NO - I don't like it when I hear some 13 year old girl proclaiming to be a "down-ass bitch", "ride or die bitch" etc. etc. etc.

NO - I don't really like listening to rap songs where the word BITCH is used interchangeably with the word FEMALE.

But how can anyone have a strong argument for censoring rappers when there are millions of women who say the same stuff they say if not worse.

Remember, art imitates life.

Real life is that females

from hood chicks all the way to educated corporate boss types refer to themselves as bitches.

It would be great if more girls were lady-like these days...but really, how many lady-like females do YOU know?

How many females do you know that are even concerned with being lady-like?

HOW DID IT START? Women are being degraded in our culture.

But the big deal here is whether or not hip-hop created these circumstances, or hip-hop is merely reporting on these circumstances.

If the record industry folded tomorrow and there was never another rapper on the airwaves, would females still be called bitches?

It bothers me when someone as intelligent as Oprah Winfrey looks at hip-hop music and refuses to make distinctions between who is doing what.

That's no better than these crazy-ass cops that roll through the block and don't bother learning the difference between the criminals and the regular citizens.

Oprah's influence is unparalleled when it comes to informing women in our country.

If she sounds the alarm saying hip-hop is evil for degrading women, then her word is gospel to millions and it will never be questioned.

Meanwhile, you've got a video shoot happening where there's a casting call for half naked girls to show up show their ass on camera and the line goes on for miles and miles. Women degrading themselves without ANYONE'S help.

I could even talk about VH1's special following a handful of black females eager to take their clothes off in a video by an unknown rapper (for free) and how ironic

it is that one of the females in the broadcast claimed to be above allowing rap culture to exploit her but then came out with a porn tape about a year later.

But I digress. Derogatory terms hurt.

Every racial minority can agree with that and women in general have had to suffer cruel words from men for ages.

But this has been going on for YEARS!

Far before hip-hop originated in the Boogie Down.

Beer commercials featured half-naked females for decades, is that hip-hop's fault?

1950's television sitcoms portrayed women as little more than indentured servants in their own home. When The Honeymooners had the line "POW - right in the kisser" a whole nation of so-called "proper" white folks laughed out loud as this man made light of spousal abuse that was ACTUALLY tearing this nation apart from the inside.

Is that hip-hop's fault?

Prostitution didn't just earn its nickname in modern times, it really is the world's oldest profession. And where there has been a prostitute, there has been a pimp.

You can take it or leave it, but that's real talk from the bedroom all the way down to the boardrooms where record contracts are signed.

Where there is a prostitute, there is a pimp.

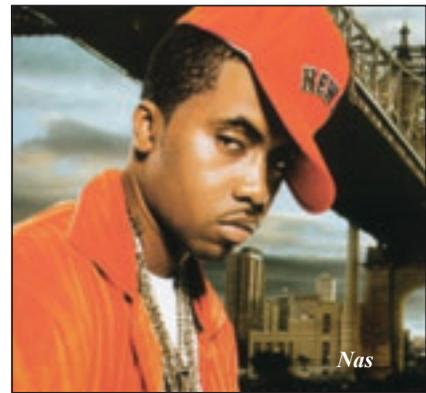
Some women have always sold their bodies for money.

Some women have always demeaned themselves in the presence of men.

In various ways all over the globe, some women have identified with a system that exploits them so much that they will even defend the degrading roles they assume.

Prostitutes are even unionized in some places, pay taxes in others.

I'm not defending women



Nas

who choose that lifestyle.

But I am defending hip-hop by saying that these evils existed before our music did.

We report on what's already happening.

DORAPPERS RESPECT WOMEN?

I always love bringing up this whole Girls Gone Wild craze that's been going on for the last five years or so. Has anyone tried to censor that guy?

Better yet, what happens to all those skanky girls when they get back from spring break and have to resume normal campus life?

I can assure you that those women mostly follow the career path they already had laid out and their little 15 minutes of freaky fame probably doesn't hold them back a bit. So I'd like to say that men will always respect women who respect themselves, but it's possible that a white woman degrading herself still has a better chance of rebounding or maintaining her position than a woman of color who may commit the same act of indiscretion.

I would imagine that most rap artists have a deep respect for positive women.

Their mothers always get love, and in many cases the entertainment lawyers or reporters who surround them are usually women who remind them that females deserve respect.

But then again, after every show the hotel lobby is filled with dozens of girls who will do ANYTHING you want them to do just so they can say they did it with someone famous. Hell, I've seen girls line up to sleep with dudes just because of some local celebrity status.

It's kinda hard to just have that respect when it's so obvious that the self-respect isn't there.

It is important to note that as many rappers come out of their immature phase, they settle down with wife and kids and the whole nine.

And then their lyrics and their songs become more like a profession than an expression.

Oh yeah, don't forget that some of this is actually a job and a boss who dictates what gets heard.

Nas' "Black Girl Lost," Outkast's "JazzyBelle" and Talib Kweli's "Love Language" demonstrate that for years our best and most gifted emcees do value women and all take time to write about love and relationships.

Method Man, L.L. Cool J., D.M.X. and many others have gone on record supporting the decision to marry and become family men.

There ARE rappers who respect women and openly adore women.

However #1 - Those songs don't always get the green light from the powers that be

#2. Like anything else, a person has to mature and their earlier material may reflect an un-enlightened point of view that will take time to mature

#3. Hip-hop has to be true by allowing writers to comment on EVERYTHING that they see. And the truth is that many of our women are living foul, so of course we're gonna at least speak on it and some might even take advantage of that reality.

If you are a young woman and you can't find any hip-hop that you feel comfortable

(Continued on Page 14)

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Women vs. Hip-Hop?

(Continued from Page 13)

listening to, you might have to turn off 106 & Park and check out some of the artist's I've named so far.

Also, please understand that not every time you hear the word bitch is a time when it's directed at a woman. Too Short spent the early-mid 90's turning

bitch into "Beeeyootch" – and that's just something rappers say coming and going on and off stage. Kinda like how in London a slang term for a

cigarette is a fag (i.e. "aye bloke, can I bum you a fag?" – LOL). But it has no reference to what we think of when we hear fag. In the hip-hop lexicon, meanings are very fluid – so if you hear Jim Jones say "Dip Set In This Bitch!" – he's not referring to women.

But once again, if you're un-easy about all that – just stay away from it.

There's enough hip-hop going around for you to

choose.

Even locally. Of course I always big up my crew, U.G.E., but one of the most concentrated efforts I've ever seen is another area-based collective led by Dr. Anthony Atkins.

LifeStoryz was a compilation CD I featured months ago that has songs called "Put The Guns Away" and "Black Queens" – there it is right there, positive hip-hop live and direct but he's having the

same problems getting on local radio that we have with U.G.E.

The world is starting to side with ignorant music.

Scary, but having talent and actually putting time and effort into making original and thought provoking music may not get as far as the up and coming knucklehead who just said a few club cliches and ended up on radio.

But, remember, you have a choice.

I'd like to see more female emcees in the game.

U.G.E. is always looking

for new talent, so if you are a female rapper and you ready to work then hit us up.

Sex sells, this is true. Women have been exploited in media as long as there has been media, this is true.

Things could stand to get better though.

Just remember to stop blaming hip-hop as if it's the only factor.

glasscitytruth@yahoo.com
www.myspace.com/undergodzent

THINGS GOING OWN:

Congratulations to Performing Arts of Metropolitan Toledo for their production of Seussical Musical this past weekend (great job Kai'lah a.k.a. babygirl!... and Karlene too!).

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A PREBID CONFERENCE is scheduled for **May 24th, 2007** at 3:00 p.m. at Toledo Public Schools' Board Room, 420 E. Manhattan Blvd., Toledo, Ohio 43608

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Toledo Celebrates Being Named "City of the Future" and "Most Business Friendly City" By fDi Magazine

Special to The Truth

Toledo Mayor Carty Finkbeiner was joined by business and civic leaders last week at International Park as the leadership of the City of Toledo celebrated its new status as a City of the Future and the "Most Business Friendly" large city in North America as determined by the fDi Magazine.

"This is a significant and dramatic achievement for the City of Toledo," said Finkbeiner. "When you combine this 'Most Business Friendly' honor with being named one of the 100 best communities to raise children, being one of the top 20 cities in the country for entrepreneurs, and being one of the five most unwired cities in the country, we darn well ought to be optimistic about our future."

fDi judges examined 44 cities of 500,000 - 2 million

people in a number of categories, including best infrastructure, most internal investment, most business friendly, most cost effective, and best quality of life.

"This award is well deserved and worth sharing with the world," said James Hoffman, president of Keybank. "The reasons people should see us as a city of the future include our transportation infrastructure, well-trained workforce, education institutions, business financing capabilities, and an affordable cost of living."

United Auto Workers, Local 12 President Bruce Baumhower pointed to a strong automotive industry as an indicator of Toledo's economic health. "Chrysler is for sale for \$4.5 billion," said Baumhower. "We've seen \$3 billion in investment

in Toledo's automotive industry alone over the last few years."

"Our company's founder, Edward Drummond Libbey moved Libbey Glass to Toledo in 1888," said John Meier, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Libbey, Inc. "It was a good place to do business then and it's a great place to do business today."

"Our future is promising, having been defined as a city and region of the future," said Finkbeiner. "Get out of the way, naysayers! We're building a stronger, younger, more diversified, more international port city - and we will not be denied!"

More information on fDi Magazine and the Cities of the Future award are available online at: <<http://www.gdi-solutions.com/fdi/2007future.htm>> .

Michael Ashford Hosts Campaign Fundraiser at Manhattan's

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Toledo City Councilman Michael Ashford hosted a successful campaign fundraiser on April 23 at Manhattan's Restaurant. Over 200 friends and supporters turned out to donate to Ashford's upcoming re-election campaign. Ashford, the representative of the District 4 since 2002, will be running for another four-year term this November.

Among the guests were elected officials such as State Representative Edna Brown, Toledo Clerk of Court Vallie Bowman English, City councilmen, Phil Copeland, Mike Craig and Wilma Brown, Toledo Board of Education members Deborah Barnett and Larry Sykes and County Commissioners Pete Gerken, Ben Konop and

Tina Skeldon Wozniak.

The elected officials were joined by a host of Democratic Party candidates and other businessmen, union officials, attorneys and dignitaries such as Jack Ford, Alan Konop, John Potts, Cheryl Tyler Folsom, Steve Kneppler, Jim Hartung, Jon Richardson, Johnny Mickler, Charles Welch, Myron Stewart, David Ball, Jimmy Jackson and Keith Wilkowski, among others.



Commissioners Pete Gerken and Tina Skeldon Wozniak and Councilman Michael Ashford



Dorene Mosley and Yvonne Harper



Vallie Bowman English and Weldon Dauthitt



Jay Black and Johnny Mickler



Marc Dann, State Rep. Edna Brown, Councilwoman Wilma Brown (seated) and Jimmy Jackson



Weldon Dauthitt and Art Jones



Lucas County Commissioner Ben Konop and Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann



George and Gloria Hilliard



State Rep. Edna Brown



Yvonne Harper and Councilman Phil Copeland

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"Bigs and Littles" Tea and Fashion show

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio held a fundraiser on Saturday morning in order to benefit the organization that pairs mentors with area youth.

Saturday's event featured a performance by the reigning Miss Teen Ohio 2006, who happens to be a Big Sister herself, Amiee Moser, and a fashion show featuring "bigs and littles" from the organization.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America was founded more than 100 years ago and is the oldest and largest youth

mentoring organization in the United States. The group serves more than

200,000 youth ages five through 18 in 5,000 communities across the nation.

