

**Richard L. Fisher**

Scout Executive

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*"I come from a family of preachers and teachers. When I went to work for the Boy Scouts of America, I used to tell my father that this was my ministry. The values of Scouting, the work of Scouting, have always been in agreement with my core mission."*

## This Strikes Us ...

*A Sojourner's Truth Editorial*

There is a piece of legislation before Toledo City Council titled "Conditions for Letting Land Contract Property." This act will require that all land contracts in the city be recorded, be inspected and receive a Certificate of Property Code Compliance, a procedure similar to that prescribed by the proposed point-of-sale ordinance.

We urge City Council to pass the land contract ordinance.

A land contract is an arrangement between a buyer and an owner to purchase property for an agreed upon price in installment payments over a period of time. The property deed is usually handed over only when the payments have been completed. Not all such transactions are recorded.

Those who agree to purchase property in such a manner usually do so because they have difficulty in arranging for home loans through conventional lending institutions.

The advantages of the legislation are obvious: the bill will increase the number of people inspecting homes; it will protect buyers from entering into financial deals in which they may find themselves over their heads and it will protect the Toledo housing stock.

Proponents of the ordinance point out that disastrous financial deals occur not just because the seller might be dishonest. Very often houses sold via land contract arrangements are homes that need a lot of work. That's one reason that the seller may not have been able to sell the property through conventional means.

The expense of the work is often factored into the financial terms, but without proper inspection, the buyer may not be fully informed of what it will actually take to make the necessary repairs. It is not uncommon in land contracts for the buyer to discover that repair costs and house payments are beyond his means and after several years of trying to make the deal work, he is forced out of house and home.

And it is not unusual for such homes to rapidly decrease in value. As proponents note, such devalued houses bring down the value of houses throughout the neighborhood.

On the other side of the argument, opponents rail against government interference in private enterprise. We are sensitive to that argument but are not swayed in this case.

There are very few land contract sales – last year only 317 were recorded out of a total of almost 20,000 land exchanges. It is not exactly a thriving part of the real estate industry. But a land contract deal that goes bad can create enormous negative consequences for so many.

As Franklin Delano Roosevelt often noted, sometimes society has to recognize that individual sovereignty must be subordinate to the "public welfare."

\* \* \* \* \*

Last week Toledo Law Director John Madigan released an opinion stating that the election of Councilman Michael Ashford to the council presidency was "inappropriate." What we find to be inappropriate was Madigan's opinion.

Narrowly construing a sentence in the Charter that speaks of the "death, removal or resignation" of the president of council, Madigan opined that it was first necessary for City Council to vote to remove then-President Rob Ludeman before voting for Ashford to replace him.

This is an opinion designed merely to serve as an irritant in City Council's side.

The fact is, there is no process spelled out in the Toledo City Charter for removal of the president of City Council. The president serves "at the pleasure" of the Council. The mere act of voting in another president, which the Charter makes clear council members can do at any time, serves to remove the previous president. There is no timeline delineated that says one act must occur before another can be taken.

The upshot here is that someone will be inspired, if it hasn't already happened, to take the matter into the court system for a ruling thereby wasting time and resources on a lot of nonsense.

Former Law Director Barbara Herring reviewed the Madigan opinion, researched the pertinent case law for similar situations and concluded that there was no need for Council to re-open the matter and hold a vote specifically to remove a council president.

We hope that those inclined to drag this matter on over the next four months will soon recognize that their time and energies are better spent in more fruitful pursuits.

## The Sojourner's Truth

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## Community Calendar

### \*September 6

United Way's Lunch with Leaders: Owens Corning; 11:45 am to 1 pm; Guest speaker Diana Patton of Equilibria by Diana: 419-254-4670

### \*September 7

ONYX 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing: Ottawa Park; 11 am: 419-244-8666  
 Fish Fry: Amazon Lodge Hall; 11 am to 5 pm

### \*September 8

Episcopal Church Women of All Saints Church: Annual Luncheon and Style Show; Gladieux Meadows; 11:30 am – Social Hour, 11:45 am – Lunch, 12:45 pm – Style Show; 419-531-4196 or 419-243-9633

### \*September 9-11

"A Relevant Worship & Word Revival;" True Vine MBC; Guest revivalist Rev. Rudolph McKissick, Jr of Bethel Baptist church, Jacksonville, FL; 7 pm; At Mt. Pilgrim Baptist: 419-241-4717

### \*September 11

5<sup>th</sup> Annual Black College Tour Informational Meeting: Sponsored by Maumee Bay Club, NANBPWC; Kent Branch Library; 6 to 8 pm: 419-478-4268  
 Toledo Interfaith Mass Choir: Auditions for membership; St. Paul AME Zion; 7 pm: 419-241-7332 or 419-241-3330  
 Scott Alumni Association: General monthly meeting; Kent Branch Library; 6pm

### \*September 14-15

5<sup>th</sup> Annual Imani Festival: Mt. Zion Baptist Church; "The Big Push ... Takin' My Life Back;" Friday 5 to 9 pm – JAZZ Under the Stars; Saturday – health and wellness, musical guests, praise & worship, Steppin' for Christ, amusement rides, 3-on-3 basketball tournament: 419-246-1850

### \*September 14-16

St. Catherine Festival 2007: St. Catherine of Siena; Fri – 6 pm to midnight; Sat – 2 pm to midnight; Sun – Noon to 8 pm; Rides, Texas Hold'em, bingo, chicken dinner

### \*September 16

JJ Express Back to School Bowling Party; Imperial Lanes; 2 pm; Door prizes, raffles and fun: 419-514-6580

### \*September 17-22

JJ Express Drill & Drum Corp annual tryouts; Car Spa at Dorr and Upton; 5 pm each day: 419-514-6580

### \*September 21

Fish Fry: Amazon Lodge Hall; 11 am to 5 pm

### \*October 7

52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Women's Day Program: St Mark MBC; Morning speaker – Sis. Tammy Freeman of Columbus; Evening speaker – Sis. Willie Mae Ellis: 419-241-1726

### \*October 12-14

Scott High School 30<sup>th</sup> Year Reunion: Call 419-244-3677 or email scotthighschool30years@yahoo.com to register

## The Sojourner's Truth

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# If There Was Ever A Time To Stand Up, That Time Is Now!

## THE JENA 6 STORY

By Bishop Stephen Ward



In this year of 2007 we are still dealing with issues of hate rather than love, war instead of peace, along with ignorance, racism...and justice is "just-for-us."

Just as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was fully aware of and involved in the injustices ... we must also be cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. We cannot sit idly by in Toledo and not be concerned about what is happening in Jena, Louisiana.

As Dr. King stated on April 16, 1963 in his letter written while he was confined in a Birmingham jail, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are

caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial "outside agitator" idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere within its bounds."

A major injustice is unfolding in Jena, LA as six black young men (now referred to as the Jena 6) are railroaded in a case that reads like one straight from the era of Jim Crow. The District Attorney has refused to protect the rights of Jena's black population and has turned the police and courts into instruments of intimidation and oppression.

In a small, still mostly segregated, section of rural Louisiana, an all-white jury heard a series of white witnesses called by a white prosecutor testify in a courtroom overseen by a white judge in a trial about a fight at the local high school where a white student who had been making racial taunts was hit by black students. The fight was the cul-

mination of a series of racial incidents starting when whites responded to black students sitting under the "white tree" at their school by hanging three nooses from the tree. The white jury and white prosecutor and all white supporters of the white victim were all on one side of the courtroom. The black defendant, 17-year-old Mychal Bell, and his supporters were on the other. The jury quickly convicted Mychal Bell of two felonies — aggravated battery and conspiracy to commit aggravated battery. Bell, who was a 16-year-old sophomore football star at the time he was arrested, faces up to 22 years in prison. Five other black youths await similar trials on attempted second-degree murder and conspiracy charges. Yes, you read that correctly. The rest of the story, which is being reported across the world in papers in China, France and England, is just as chilling. The trouble started under "the white tree" in front of Jena High School. The "white tree" is where the white students, 80 percent of the student body, would al-

ways sit during school breaks. In September 2006, a black student at Jena High School asked permission from school administrators to sit under the "white tree." School officials advised black students to sit wherever they wanted. They did. The next day, three nooses, in the school colors, were hanging from the "white tree." The message was clear. "Those nooses meant the KKK, they meant '... we're going to kill you, we're going to hang you till you die,'" Castepila Bailey, mom of one of the students, told the London Observer. The Jena High School principal found that three white students were responsible and recommended expulsion. The white superintendent of schools overruled the principal and gave the students a three-day suspension saying that the nooses were just a youthful stunt. "Adolescents play pranks," the superintendent told the Chicago Tribune. "I don't think it was a threat against anybody." The African-American community was hurt and upset. "Hanging those nooses was a hate crime, plain and simple," according to Tracy Bowers, mother of students at Jena High. Black students decided to resist and organized a sit-in under the "white tree" at the school to protest the light suspensions given to the noose-hanging white students. The white district attorney then came to Jena High with law enforcement

officers to address a school assembly. According to testimony in a later motion in court, the DA reportedly threatened the black protesting students saying that if they didn't stop making a fuss about this "innocent prank... I can be your best friend or your worst enemy. I can take away your lives with a stroke of my pen." The school was put on lockdown for the rest of the week. Racial tensions remained high throughout the fall. On the night of Thursday, Nov. 30, 2006, a still-unsolved fire burned down the main academic building of Jena High School. On Friday night, Dec. 1, a black student who showed up at a white party was beaten by whites. On Saturday, Dec. 2, a young white man pulled out a shotgun in a confrontation with young black men at the Gotta Go convenience store outside Jena before the men wrestled it away from him. The black men who took the shotgun away were later arrested. No charges were filed against the white man. On Monday, Dec. 4, at Jena High, a white student—who allegedly had been making racial taunts, including calling African-American students "n——"—while supporting the students who hung the nooses and who beat up the black student at the off-campus party — was knocked down, punched and kicked by black students. The white victim was taken to the hos-

pital treated and released. He attended a social function that evening. Six black Jena students were arrested and charged with attempted second degree murder. All six were expelled from school. The six charged were: 17-year-old Robert Bailey Jr., whose bail was set at \$138,000; 17-year-old Theo Shaw — bail \$130,000; 18-year-old Carwin Jones — bail \$100,000; 17-year-old Bryant Purvis—bail \$70,000; Mychal Bell, a sophomore in high school who was charged as an adult and for whom bail was set at \$90,000; and a still unidentified minor. Many of the young men, who came to be known as the Jena 6, stayed in jail for months. Few families could afford bond or private attorneys. Mychal Bell remained in jail from December 2006 until his trial because his family was unable to post the \$90,000 bond. Theo Shaw has also remained in jail. Several of the other defendants remained in jail for months until their families could raise sufficient money to put up bonds. The Chicago Tribune wrote a powerful story headlined "Racial Demons Rear Heads." The London Observer wrote: "Jena is gaining national notoriety as an example of the new 'stealth' racism, showing how lightly sleep the demons of racial prejudice in America's Deep South, even in the year that a black man, Barack Obama, is a serious candidate for the White

(Continued on Page 6)



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## Letter To Toledo Religious and Spiritual Community

Access to healthcare, poor education, public health issues, crime and other social problems plague the Greater Toledo area and have more of a negative impact upon the black community.

Social justice, environmental justice and restorative justice concepts are three of many approaches to deal with these concerns. As a whole, it appears that the Toledo spiritual community has not stepped up to the plate to deal with these issues.

Prevention (both primary and tertiary), intervention and treatment all have a spiritual component. Good health means that a person is safe and is whole physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

When the president and governor were pushing "faith-based initiatives", it appeared that there were many places of worship involved in community programs. I am calling for faith-based community, especially in the black community, to "step-up to the plate." The flock that is in need of this, not only are your parishioners, but our brothers and sisters "in the street."

I would love to see "Ministers of Health" organizing and coordinating efforts in our places of worship. We have Youth Ministers, Ministers of Music and others, and a Minister of Health could assist with public health issues and disparities that directly impact our community. Diabetes, hypertension, prostate, lung, and breast cancer; addictions including tobacco, alcohol and gambling; environmental racism; violence and obesity are just a few of the public health issues we need to deal with.

Religious leaders it is time for you all to lead.

Morris Jenkins, J.D., Ph.D  
Department of Criminal Justice, University of Toledo  
City

## Diversity at UT: The New President's Commitment to Changing a Culture

By Linda M. King  
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

This is the third article in a series regarding the development of The University of Toledo's President's Commission on Diversity.

The Sojourner's Truth has been following the progress of The University of Toledo's efforts to restructure its campus policies and procedures in order to incorporate diversity into campus culture and to establish diverse practices as the norm rather than the exception.

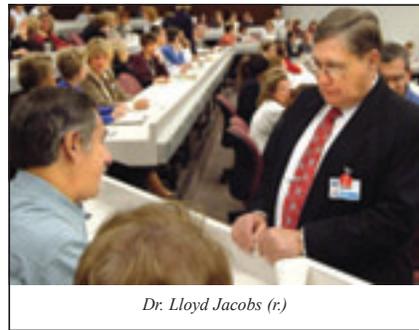
As previously reported, the conclusion of an audit assessment report, conducted by an external audit firm, and requested by The President's Commission on Diversity, suggested that the success or failure of the program hinged upon the visible, active participation and support of the university's administrative leadership.

This week the Truth interviewed UT President Lloyd Jacobs, MD, in order to gauge his impression of the future of diversity at UT.

Dr. Jacobs, former MUO president, assumed the presidency at The University of Toledo in July 2006. With his induction came not only the task of merging two institutional entities, but also the challenge of merging MUO's existing diversity policies with the commission estab-

lished by former UT President Dan Johnson, Ph.D.

Dr. Jacobs describes the process. "The merger principles were basically the same but the ways of accomplishing the goals were different." The difference it turns out is the audit assessment's recommendations, which the commission has resolved to utilize, and Dr. Jacobs seems



Dr. Lloyd Jacobs (r)

dedicated to seeing fulfilled. "I see the document as a tool," he says. "And I believe in the commitment of diversity. I want to exemplify the document."

Another indication of Dr. Jacobs' dedication to the program's success, is the president's letter posted on the university's website. Dr. Jacobs is hopeful as he persuades the UT campus com-

munity to look forward to the coming year and encourages web readers to "seek out diverse friends," describing the institution as "young with unlimited potential." In fact in his address to the UT community, the president promises this year to make diversity a "priority," and "a source of strength." In his letter Dr. Jacobs lives up to his self

coming medical students this year.

Even so, Dr. Jacobs points to continued community and campus obstacles that hinder minorities and maintain barriers. Among these says Dr. Jacobs are "geographical challenges, segregated schools and the lack of healthcare progress." He also admits that there ongoing problems that plague the Toledo Public School system. "Toledo Public Schools are our supply chain," says

"We just have to keep at it."

And keeping at it is what the university appears to be doing. The university's homepage displays a diversity link that takes students to the President's Commission on Diversity page and welcomes submissions and comments that will have an opportunity to be addressed during one of the commission's upcoming meetings

The website also provides information regarding aca-

and African-American students, according to William Pierce, director of freshman admissions.

And when asked if he's seen a discernable difference in campus culture at UT, Dr. Jacobs responds proudly, "I have noticed that minority students on campus seem more willing to engage. As I walk around campus there is a noticeable increase in eye contact and a more open attitude."

Dr. Jacobs seems committed to the hope as he says "of building a sustainable culture through continued improvement." And he believes strongly in the power of education as a life altering path. "A college education is the key to self-improvement, jobs and the ability to feel good about oneself."

For more information on UT's Diversity Commission go to their website at [www.utoledo.edu](http://www.utoledo.edu).

Contact Linda King at [Linda@thetruthtoledo.com](mailto:Linda@thetruthtoledo.com)

### "We've got to do better in the K-12 grade arena." - Dr. Lloyd Jacobs

Dr. Jacobs. "But the administration continues to be deeply troubled by many difficulties and the ongoing unrest of its board members. We've got to do better in the K-12 grade arena."

Dr. Jacobs also speaks of the atmosphere that seems reluctant to expel old practices. "We have the tendency to want to stay within our own comfort zones," he says.

democratic, campus and community diversity, and offers resources as well as diversity training workshops. And this year the university's College of Engineering has launched its own diversity web page.

Statistically the university is showing an increase this year in minority enrollment. Combined enrollment numbers show a 21 percent increase in Latino/Hispanic

## The Jena 6 Story

(Continued from Page 3)

House." The British Broadcasting Company aired a TV special report, "Race Hate in Louisiana 2007." The Jena 6 and their families were put under substantial pressure to plead guilty. Mychal Bell was reported to have been leaning towards pleading guilty right up until his trial when he decided he would not plead guilty to a felony. When it finally came, the trial of Mychal Bell was swift. Bell was represented by an appointed public defender. On the morning of the trial, the DA reduced the charges from attempted second-degree murder to second-degree aggravated battery and conspiracy. Aggravated battery in Louisiana law demands the attack be with a dangerous weapon. The dangerous weapon? The prosecutor was allowed to argue to the jury that the tennis shoes worn by Bell could be considered a dangerous weapon used by "the gang of black boys" who beat the white victim. Most shocking of all, when the pool of potential jurors was summoned, 50 people appeared — every single one of them

white. The LaSalle Parish clerk defended the all-white group to the Alexandria Louisiana Town Talk newspaper, saying that the jury pool was selected by computer. "The venire [panel of prospective jurors] is color blind. The idea is for the list to truly reflect the racial makeup of the community, but the system does not take race into factor." Officials said they had summoned 150 people, but these were the only people who showed up. The all-white jury which was finally chosen included two people friendly with the district attorney, a relative of one of the witnesses and several others who were friends of prosecution witnesses. Bell's parents, Melissa Bell and Marcus Jones, were not even allowed to attend the trial despite their objections, because they were listed as potential witnesses. The white victim, though a witness, was allowed to stay in the courtroom. The parents, who had been widely quoted in the media as critics of the process, were also told they could no longer speak to the media

as long as the trial was in session. Marcus Jones had told the media "It's all about those nooses" and declared the charges racially motivated. Other supporters who planned a demonstration in support of Bell were ordered by the court not to do so near the courthouse or anywhere the judge would see them. The prosecutor called 17 witnesses — 11 white students, three white teachers and two white nurses. Some said they saw Bell kick the victim; others said they did not see him do anything. The white victim testified that he did not know if Bell hit him or not. The Chicago Tribune reported the public defender did not challenge the all-white jury pool, put on no evidence and called no witnesses. The public defender told the Alexandria Town Talk after resting his case without calling any witnesses that he knew he would be second-guessed by many but was confident that the jury would return a verdict of not guilty. "I don't believe race is an issue in this trial. ... I think I have a fair and



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EOE

# Richard L. Fisher: Working to Increase Minority Representation in the Boy Scouts of America

By Alan Abrams  
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

"I come from a family of preachers and teachers. When I went to work for the Boy Scouts of America, I used to tell my father that this was my ministry," recalls Richard L. Fisher, Scout executive of the Toledo area's Erie Shores Council.

"The values of Scouting, the work of Scouting, have always been in agreement with my core mission," adds Fisher.

One of Fisher's many responsibilities as Scout executive is to increase minority representation among volunteers and members of the Boy Scouts. He joined the Boy Scouts during a less enlightened era, when there were still pockets of opposition to the integration of the Boy Scouts and their recruitment of inner city youth.

"My first (Scout) camp experience was in St. Louis, and it underscored to me that there were differences between the races. I belonged to one of the mixed cultural units, which included whites,



blacks, Jews and Christians alike. I remember when we were at summer camp; we would go fishing in a cove. Some white kids saw us and called out, 'Hey Tootsie Rolls, you can't fish here.' We chased them back to camp. I'm not going to say we beat them up, but some of the Scout leaders saw an opportunity

to teach everyone a valuable lesson and didn't interfere," remembers Fisher.

He has worked in Scouting for 19 years, holding positions of responsibility in St. Louis, Denver and Topeka before coming to Toledo in July 2005.

Fisher began his Scouting career as an Exploring

executive in St. Louis in Sept. 1988, working his way up to director of Support Services, the post he held when he left for Denver in Nov. 1997.

He served as director of Field Service in Denver from Dec. 1997 to Feb. 2001 and as Scout executive in Topeka, Kansas from Feb. 2001 to June 2005.

"I wasn't really involved in Scouting too much as a kid. I grew up on the South Side of Chicago which is predominantly black. My father was Richard L. Fisher, a bishop in the AME Zion Church. He is now deceased. My mother, Joan M. Fisher, was an educator in the Chicago and St. Louis school systems. She lives in St. Louis as does my one sister, Susan Fisher Weaver, who is an educator there.

"When my family moved to St. Louis from Chicago we went from a neighborhood that was 98 percent black to one that was 98 percent white. It was then that I decided to try Scouting," recalls Fisher.

"However, I didn't purposely pursue a career in Scouting. I had earned my bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Kansas in 1984 and I was working in graphic arts. I was not happy with the job I had and a friend of mine suggested I try the Boy Scouts. I told him I wanted a job, and wasn't interested in just volunteering. But I went to the Council Service Center in St. Louis and I was hired," says Fisher.

He is pleased with his accomplishments since arriving in Toledo. "My greatest success is a result of Charlie Johnson, who works in the juvenile system. We've been able to establish a Venture Crew for sailing. All of the kids on the crew come from

the youth detention system. We have one sailboat, and we use it to teach the kids sailing skills on the Maumee River and Lake Erie. And the kids also earn their hours of community service.

"We have an arrangement with the marina that in exchange for the use of storage spaces, the kids work cleaning the storage spaces and slips. They understand that if you do something good for someone else, it will come back to you. And they also are learning that nothing is free. It has helped them to develop a work ethic," says Fisher.

Is the program a success? "When you compare our recidivism rates with others, ours are much lower than the national figures," says Fisher. There are 21 kids in the Venture program. Their ages are between 14 and 20, and the program includes both boys and girls.

Fisher is also working with family resource centers to establish Scout packs and troops in their centers. "We have a good partnership with LMHA through Linnie Willis, their executive director. We take the kids to day camp and to the week long Boy Scout Summer Camp.

"We are having adult leaders go into the developments to run the programs. As a result of the ACLU challenge over the use of public funds, we have our own membership standards. We had to relocate 15,000 charter organizations to private organizations.

"What is unique here in Toledo is that we have a commitment by the citizens of the LMHA housing development to be our charter partners. We have organized through the citizens' group," says Fisher.

One of the changes Fisher would like to see is to increase the involvement by area churches in Scouting.

"The black churches were the anchor points of many of our communities and the focal points for black involvement in Scouting. I would like to see them become more of a community resource center. Many of the churches in the core part of the city have commuting members, so there isn't the same opportunity for outreach. Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church and Indiana Missionary Baptist Church were great for Scouting in the past," says Fisher.

Relocating to Toledo held another benefit for Fisher — he met and married Toledoan Marci Cannon. Fisher has two daughters from a previous marriage, Elizabeth Fisher, 23, and Lauren Fisher, 9. Both live in Topeka.

Fisher says the Erie Shores Council district sent one area Scout to the World Jamboree 2007, recently held in the United Kingdom. The event, which drew more than 40,000 participants, marked the worldwide celebration of the founding of the Scouting movement by Sir Robert Baden-Powell in 1907.

Fisher said he is "geared up" for the 2010 convention honoring the centenary of the founding of the American Scout movement by Dan Beard. He is also enthused over the success of this year's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Scout's Camp Miakonda in Sylvania.

For more information on local Boy Scouts activities, visit the Erie Shores Council Website at [www.ToledoBSA.com](http://www.ToledoBSA.com) or call (419) 241-7293.

And remember, the popcorn sales begin in October.

## The Community Club Announces Fall Programming Lineup

The Community Club moves in a different direction opening membership to women and implementing their fall event roster including free admission to events:

Sunday NFL Ticket begins Sunday, September 9, 2007. Doors open at 12:30 p.m. Free admission.

Monday Night Football beginning Monday September 10, 2007. Doubleheader game. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. Free admission.

WOW! The Working Women's Wednesday event. Networking and socializing beginning at 5:00 p.m. thru 9 p.m. \$10 admission includes food, spirits and beverages.

Friday night starts the weekend with an R & B Old School Jam Session. Doors open at 10 p.m. Free admission.

Saturday night social each week featuring the best in neo-soul, old school and R & B. Doors open at 10 p.m. Free admission.

The Community club is located at 3353 Franklin, corner of Franklin and Pearl streets near Manhattan Blvd. For more information or to become a member, call 419-720-4306.

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- Rogers High School
- Hawkins Elementary

# ASSETS Toledo a Proven Asset to 23<sup>rd</sup> Graduation Class

By Nadean Hamilton  
Sojourner's Truth Reporter



With a graduation class as diverse as their varied business interests, ASSETS Toledo inducted 25 men and women into its alumni pool when the business training course held its 23<sup>rd</sup> graduation ceremony on Friday, Aug. 17.

One by one, each graduate was called to the podium and presented with not only a certificate but also a small gift in honor of their accomplishments.

As each graduate spoke, he or she relayed the various challenges they had initially faced while pondering the feasibility of their business venture. Many of these challenges presented themselves in the form of self-doubt, fear of failure, and sometimes the skepticism of friends, family and potential business backers.

However, each graduate credits their passion to realize their dream, the unwavering guidance and support shown by Olivia Holden, executive director of ASSETS Toledo, and their dissatisfaction with the daily grind of working 9 to 5, as being motivating factors in their quest to become successful entrepreneurs.

One such graduate, Evan McKinney was especially poignant when he told the audience that the gifts God had given him were not merely for his personal benefit, but to also inspire the rest of the world to pursue their hopes and dreams.

What I do is just [utilize] the gift that [God] has given

me, but the gift that I give back [designing] is what I do [for the world],” said McKinney.

McKinney, owner of Ar’dant Fashions Ltd, a company that designs leather jackets, says ASSETS Toledo opened his eyes to the realities of business ownership.

“I’ve been designing T-shirts, and kind of running my own business since 1989, but nothing of the caliber that I am trying to do now,” McKinney said.

“I [now] have a solid foundation on which on which I can build, and a lot of people who can help me; whereas before I was trying to do everything by myself,” said McKinney.

“The best thing that I got out of the class was [the importance of] beginning with a better foundation...versus

what I had before,” said McKinney.

Another graduate of the program, Malakahi Marshall, is the owner of Artists, Musicians, & Entertainers Network, an agency that develops and promotes new talent.

Marshall says that she was inspired to open the talent agency because she wants to ensure that everyone interested in the performance arts has the opportunity to pursue the dream no matter their background.

“I just want to be a support system to people who have talent,” said Marshall.

ASSETS Toledo was launched in 1999, and seeks to provide hands on training, mentoring and capital to aspiring small business owners.

# The Jena 6 Story

(Continued from Page 4)

impartial jury.” The jury deliberated for less than three hours and found Mychal Bell guilty on the maximum possible charges of aggravated second-degree battery and conspiracy. He faces up to a maximum of 22 years in prison. The public defender told the press afterwards, “I feel I put on the best defense that I could.” Responding to criticism of not putting on any witnesses, the attorney said, “Why open the door for further accusations? I did the best I could for my client, Mychal Bell.” At a rally in front of the courthouse the next day, Alan Bean, a Texas minister and leader of the Friends of Justice, said, “I have seen a lot of trials in my time. And I have never seen a more distressing miscarriage of justice than what happened in LaSalle Parish yesterday.” Khadijah Rashad of Lafayette Louisiana described the trial as a “modern-day lynching.” Tory Pegram with the Louisiana ACLU has been working with the parents for months. “People know if they don’t demand equal treatment now, they will never get it. People’s jobs and livelihoods have

been threatened for attending Jena 6 Defense meetings, but people are willing to risk that. One person told me: “We have to convince more people to come rally with us. ... What’s the worst that could happen? They fire us from our jobs? We have the worst jobs in the town anyway. They burn a cross on our lawns or burn down my house? All of that has happened to us before. We have to keep speaking out to make sure it doesn’t happen to us again, or our children will never be safe.” Whites in the community were adamant that there is no racism. “We don’t have a problem,” according to one. Other locals told the media “We all get along,” and “most blacks are happy with the way things are.” One person even said “We don’t have many problems with our blacks.” Melvin Worthington, the lone African-American school board member in LaSalle Parish, said it all could have been avoided. “There’s no doubt about it,” he told the Chicago Tribune, “whites and blacks are treated differently here. The white kids should have gotten more punishment for hanging

those nooses. If they had, all the stuff that followed could have been avoided.” Hebert McCoy, a relative of one of the youths who has been trying to raise money for bail and lawyers, challenged people everywhere at the end of the rally when he said “You better get out of your houses. You better come out and defend your children...because they are incarcerating them by the thousands. Jena’s not the beginning, but Jena has crossed the line. Justice is not right when you put on the wrong charges and then convict. I believe in justice. I believe in the point of law. I believe in accepting the punishment if I’m guilty. If I’m guilty, convict me and punishment, but if I’m innocent, no justice...” and the crowd joined with him and shouted “No peace!” What happened to the white guys? The white victim of the beating was later arrested for bringing a hunting rifle loaded with 13 bullets onto the high school campus and released on \$5,000 bond. The white man who beat up the black youth at the off-campus party was arrested and charged with

(Continued on Page 14)

## Candidates Forum

The Nelson Grace/Nellie Gales Democratic Club is sponsoring a free Candidates Forum on Saturday, September 8 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Wilson Park Shelter House, 600 East Oakland Street.

Candidates from for Toledo City Council Districts 4 and 6, as well as candidates running for the Toledo Board of Education have been invited. Come meet the candidates and hear their positions on the issues.

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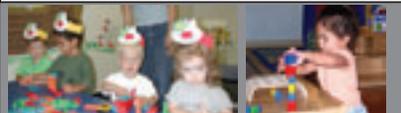
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# An Original Cowboy Retires But Doesn't Plan to Ride Into the Sunset

By Fletcher Word  
Sojourner's Truth Editor

Larry Sykes retired last week, and from more than just his position as vice president — community affairs officer of Fifth Third Bank. After 10 years of service on the To-

he is walking away from two, very visible community positions, Sykes envisions being as much of the part of the community as ever.

"I'm going to be around and as involved as much as I ever have been," said Sykes "I'm not retiring from life; I'm retiring from Fifth Third after 30 years of service. People tend to look at you as if life is

sector." And as he sat down with The Truth last week, a day before the last day in his eighth floor office in the downtown Fifth Third building, Sykes spoke of the three issues that he will devote his time to in that next phase of his life: health, finance and education.

"Our health has the biggest impact on our lives in the African-American community," he said as he recalled his own fight against pros-

the disease diagnosed early. That early detection saved his life. Others, he acknowledged, have not been so lucky.

"We could be the first generation to bury our own children because of their eating habits," he said paraphrasing part of a speech former President Bill Clinton gave to a group of educators during a conference Sykes attended recently.

He also pointed to several of the dangers that teen preg-

Along with his involvement in health matters — he has served in the past as a spokesperson for the Cleveland Clinic, site of his successful surgery, and has been actively involved with the American Cancer Society and other such groups — Sykes will remain active and involved in educational issues.

"There are 55 million students in 18,000 school districts," he said. "I have been on the board for 10 years but I have been involved with the public schools since 1981. That's a lot of knowledge. I have worked with seven superintendents — hired two of them."

And, of course, finance will continue to play a large

He entered the world of finance in 1972. "I have always tried to pass my knowledge on," he said, "and that's what I want to continue to do."

If there is one aspect of his retirement from Fifth Third that disturbs Sykes, it's the fact that he leaves as the only upper management black male in banking in all of north-west Ohio. "Black men have not fared well in banking here," he said. "We are really missing out and unless you are at the table, you can't be a diner."

Sykes told a story of his first several years in the banking field when he was invited to address a group of elementary students at an inner-city



ledo Board of Education, Sykes declined to run for reelection this year and did not file petitions for the upcoming contest. Yet, in spite of the fact that

over, but you don't work on a job forever, you prepare for the next phase. I can do anything I want to do ... I have received a lot of offers from business and the non-profit



tate cancer and how fortunate he was to be able to have

nancies present including the fact that so many more children are entering the world unaware of the medical history of their parents.

"As minorities," he noted, "we could wipe ourselves out."



part in Sykes' life.

school. He was introduced by the classroom teacher as a banker and the kids just didn't know what to make of him.

"You don't look like a teller to me," one small girl told him. "You a security guard?" asked another.

"No," I said to them. "I manage a collection department and I have 30 employees," he recalled with a laugh.

"Our young people have to understand what's available to them because it's not where you were born or where you live, it's how you want to live," said Sykes. "Being at risk is not being exposed."

"I grew up poor and I still carry one of my old food stamps in my wallet so that I never forget."

He has not forgotten nor has he failed to appreciate what has happened to his life over the years, a bout with cancer notwithstanding.

"I'm fortunate enough to be able to retire in my 50's," he said as he spoke of his immediate plans to sit back and reflect while sifting through offers for other challenges.

Whatever decisions Sykes makes about his future plans, though, one can rest assured that there is no thought of drifting off to Florida or sitting back under a shade tree writing his memoirs.

We're going to hear quite a lot from Larry Sykes for quite a long while.

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Contact Fletcher Word @ fletcher@thetruthtoledo.com

# Learning to Dance the Old School Way – Cheek to Cheek

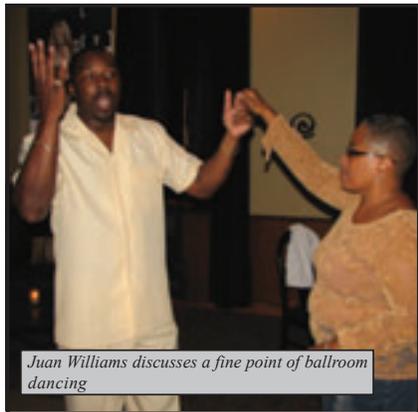
Ballroom dancing has become extremely fashionable these days and, for those wanting to learn how to cut a rug with more than a touch of flair, Jackson's Lounge and Grill in the heart of downtown Toledo is the place to be on a Thursday night.

Those Fellows, the promotional arm of a new venture, have teamed with Body 'n Soul, the dance instructors, to introduce a little elegance into the lives of those who are interested stepping out and tapping their creative sides.

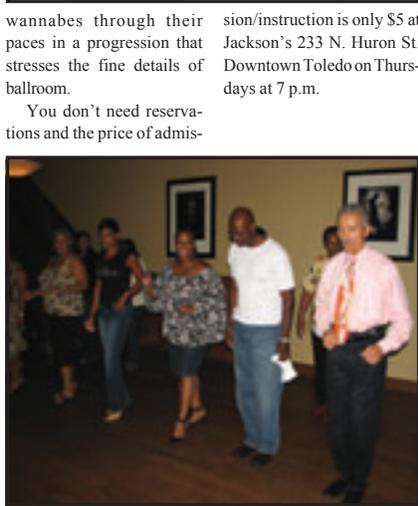
Phillip L. Cunningham, Lamont Calhoun and Kameron Kyser are Those Fellows. They started the ballroom dancing evening about three months ago and the attendance has grown to an average of about 50 participants. Dancers are split into a beginners' class and one for the advanced.

But an evening of ballroom dancing is more than simply about dancing," says Kyser. "This is the premiere place to network and maybe the only place in Toledo on a Thursday evening," he says.

Juan Williams, Mary Brown and Bertie Gordon are the Body 'n Soul instructors who take Bojangles-



*Juan Williams discusses a fine point of ballroom dancing*



wannabes through their paces in a progression that stresses the fine details of ballroom.

You don't need reservations and the price of admis-

sion/instruction is only \$5 at Jackson's 233 N. Huron St. Downtown Toledo on Thursdays at 7 p.m.





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# We Are Ribs Captures Top Prizes at Rib Off

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Quick now!  
Who won the top prizes at this year's 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Northwest Ohio Rib-Off held at the Lucas County Fairgrounds?

Let's take a look at the possibilities. There were a lot of big boys there from around the country. Had to be one of those guys, eh?

Hog Wild Barbecue from Memphis, TN – home of the barbecue – was there as was another Tennessee outfit – Buddy's Barbecue. Texas Outlaw was there from, well ... the other home of the barbecue, the Lone Star State.

And a little closer to home, Sgt. Oink's was there from Tiffin. They bill themselves as a "national cooking team that has competed nationally for 12 years." In between Texas and Tiffin, a score of other competitors went after the top prizes.

But as it turns out, you don't have to go as far as Tiffin or Texas to sample some prizewinning ribs. At the corner of Wenz and Hill – right here in Toledo – there is a barbecue shop called We Are Ribs and if you hadn't already guessed the answer to the above questions by now,

let us clue you in: We Are Ribs captured two of the three first-place prizes at this year's Rib-Off – the People's Choice Award and the Golden Rib Award.

James McDay – owner, chef, ribber, saucier – has been at the barbecue business since 1993. He has the 21 Wenz Street location which is open from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Wednesdays through Saturdays; he has another location named We Be Ribs Mobile at Cricket West, which is currently open on Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. According to McDay, however, the Cricket West location will soon be open on Thursdays as well.

But the bulk of the McDay We Are Rib business is his catering operation. Year-to-date, McDay has catered 115 affairs from groups as small as 50 to those exceeding 600. At any given time, 22 part-time employees will be assisting his efforts to bring his rib delights to the masses.

For more information on the We Are Ribs site at Wenz Rd, call 419-537-9268. For the catering services or We Be



Ribs Mobile, call 419-810-3736 or 419-870-1959. Or McDay and company can be reached via the Internet at [www.wearibs.com](http://www.wearibs.com).

## Thanks Toledo!

Shelia Mosby, owner of Revelations Photography, would like to say good-bye and thank Toledoans for their dedicated support over the years. Shelia extends her appreciation to Toledo.

Shelia says, "thank you, Toledo, for believing in me and supporting my vision. I am what I am today because of the loving support Toledo has given. I am moving to Dallas, Texas in the next few weeks and will miss all of you. If you visit the Dallas, TX area, stop by and see me or if you know of anyone who lives in the Dallas, TX area, let them know I am coming. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!"

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# Local Chapter of SNMA Hosts Quarterly Minority Dinner

By Nadean Hamilton  
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Undeterred by the threat of inclement weather, several dozen faculty and community members came out for the University of Toledo's College of Medicine Student National Medical Association quarterly dinner on Friday, Aug. 24.

The purpose of the dinner was not only to foster supportive and collaborative net-



Morton, Kimberly 2A

works amongst students, faculty and community members committed to the recruitment and retention of underrepresented minority students in the professional schools of UT's Health Science Campus, but to also welcome first-year medical students who may be interested in taking on leadership roles in the organization.

One student up to the challenge of pursuing a leadership role is Aaron Franklin who said SNMA played a major role in his decision to attend UT.

"I did not think I was going to come here initially," said Franklin. "But, when I came in for the interview, I met all of the SNMA members here [who] called me up on the phone and told me that it was going to be a good thing here," said Franklin.

"I was totally impressed, not just with the [SNMA] initiatives," said Franklin "...I wanted to be a part of something that was growing; not just something [whose reputation] was set in stone," Franklin said.

The New York native

says he decided to apply to UT's College of Medicine after meeting, and being encouraged by, a graduate of the college practicing at Sloan Memorial-Kettering. "I couldn't understand how it was that the only black guy that I saw that was a physician over there [was from] the University of Toledo," said Franklin.

The highlight of the evening came when Bernice Rumala, SNMA immediate past president, presented a dismaying report illustrating that while UT's College of Medicine has made progress in increasing the number of matriculated underrepresented minorities, it still has a long way to go in hopes of reducing the disparities between the matriculation rates of underrepresented minorities and non-minority students.

For example, between 2000 and 2004, there were a total of 21 matriculated underrepresented minority students out of a possible 723; while during 2005 and 2006 collectively, that num-



Bayliss, Jocelyn 1A



Shipp, Desmond 2A



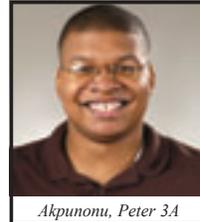
Franklin, Aaron 2A



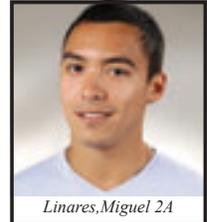
Green, Brittney 1A



Emerson, Andrew 1A



Akpunonu, Peter 3A



Linares, Miguel 2A



Reyes, Andres 1A



Adebayo, Ben 2A

ber rose to 22 students out of a possible 290 students. There are 10 students from underrepresented minority groups this year – eight African-Americans and two Latinos.

Founded in 1964, the SNMA has over 160 chapters nation wide, which seek

to bridge the health disparities gap through the recruitment and retention of underrepresented minority students.

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# U.G.E: Writing, Producing, and Performing Music Since Elementary School

By Michael Hayes  
Minister of Culture

Let's clear that up too. Especially with Labor Day having just passed, let's talk about my labor... my career, my true occupation.

I have been writing, producing and performing music since elementary school.

My entire family is full of artists. Artistic expression was mandatory for us as we were growing up.

My father is a regionally known percussionist and my mom a dance teacher/fashion designer. They always had to hold down jobs because their careers hadn't yet evolved to the point of becoming their bread and butter, which is why I work as hard as I do to ensure that my story goes in a different direction.

U.G.E. is the company I run along with my partner/cousin Lavale Stewart.

Together, we are known as The Undergodz. No, there is no biblical reference but there is some science behind the name (visit the Myspace page if curious).

We both play keyboards, dabble in bass and guitar and drums.

So I try to tell folks, we don't just loop up a sample and play over it.

We make music. From scratch.

Everything from ballads, to hip hop, crunk n b, neo soul, (lyrics too!) - everything.

Long story short, by the time we were turning 22, The Undergodz had produced somewhere just over a thousand tracks, recorded about 200 to 300 songs and already had 10 years gracing stages of all kinds all over Ohio (thanks to mom, dad and aunt Dianne).

Then, our production skills took us into the next

phase - being one of only a handful of Toledo-based producers who do R&B/neo soul we were in demand.

So in our twenties, we laced local projects from people like Mr. International and Jean Rugby and Exxact. Ed Claybourne came to us for his teenage daughter's project and that's when our role in producing Sasha Claybourne (or Sasha P. - if you see her on Myspace) came in and that made us get even more serious about being producers in a true sense of completely cultivating acts.

Sasha is so talented and we worked so well together that for over a year we had a role in helping create her stage show in addition to producing her music.

After a few trips back and forth to New York, we landed our first major pay check selling beats to a regional artist and Lavale and I got serious about starting a label.

Then it became time to take all we've learned, all our tracks we had laying around, and all of that... and begin forming a music company.

Which brings us to now. If you see me in the streets and it looks like I've got the world on my shoulders, or if I don't speak because I'm moving too quickly - please don't think I'm acting funny or stand-offish.

The hustle of becoming a self-sustained entrepreneur, the ins and outs and daily grind of the music business (even just on the local/regional level) and the overall unpredictable nature of the entertainment field... it's enough to crack the average person's mental framework in two.

Ask any of the local mini-moguls around the city, from

D.J. One Tyme to Frank Wright, Big Black, and plenty others... they will tell you. You have to be built for this.

For U.G.E. - at any given moment my company is involved in one or all of five different processes:

- 1- Creating Material - making tracks, scheduling a writing session with an artist
- 2- Recording Material - scheduling time, coaching vocals, laying initial mix jobs
- 3- Rehearsing - choosing line-ups, wardrobe, etc. for upcoming shows
- 4- Negotiating - our representation in NYC has terms for us to go over weekly
- 5- Errands - getting CD's made, talking to radio, making new contacts, etc.

Also for U.G.E. - a while back we took an extensive amount of time to create a business plan. That's when there were five people on the executive team and only three to four acts on the roster. NOW - there are basically two people on the executive team and we have as many as six acts to support.

But you know what? That's what makes it all good for me.

I know plenty of you reading this are in the same boat I am in.

Holding down a solid 40+ hr. work week at a job that is not your passion, while devoting your every other waking hour to what is TRULY your passion.

Not all of you want to be in the music business.

I know some folks who read this who want to own a catering business.

I know at least a dozen friends of mine who read this article who all want to head their own graphic design firms. I know many of you want to work in real estate,

fashion, film, broadcasting and so many other fields... but you're toiling in that other field that currently pays the bills - I FEEL YOU!

And it's YOU who I make music for.

When we sit down to write a song... me and my crew - we feel like the thugs, the d boys, the hood chicks already have enough music of their own floating around.

U.G.E. makes music for the working mom with two kids, the dude who drives that delivery truck, the college kid who made their way out of the ghetto, the single father who had his heart broke... WE RELATE TO Y'ALL!

You don't have to ride rims, buy furs, push weight or fight in the club for us to acknowledge you. Every song we have for every artist under our umbrella is designed to relate to everyday people, living everyday lives who just want a little more for themselves.

So when you see me grinding, understand I'm not just chasing some empty fame.

This is really about the spirit.

For an artist, we are never truly at peace unless we are creating.

In that balance of chaos and order... for those of us who are artists, we have to write something, make a sound, make a noise, draw something. Something has to be created.

It's about bringing inner balance and trying to unify your surroundings.

Even the songs The Undergodz have made about racism and politics... we don't do that to destroy anything... we do that to build awareness.

And even a song like "We Get Chose" (Aye Dee feat.

Darron Scott and Dangerous Ones)

is honest because people on their way to the club wanna hear about that single person's lifestyle. But we don't condone any behavior above any other... we just express it hoping that the average person doesn't have too stretch to far to relate to it.

That's the problem with music right now.

We've got music on ipods, on phones, - EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK - there's music.

But hardly any of it is good music.

And even less of it is music that you can relate to if you are just an ordinary person.

I always tell every act on our roster, when you step to that microphone... treat it like it's someone's ear.

I'm aware of how of how much of a cliché it is to pursue a career in music.

I'm even aware of how much of a cliché it is to remind everyone that's what you're doing.

But I use this article the same way we use that microphone, like it's someone's

ear. So real talk, I'm letting y'all know my situation.

Plus - I know many of you can relate to me.

I know many of you who work a job and your co-workers think that's the only thing you do.

Like for me, at 4:31 I have to brush off the non-sense of the previous eight hours and step into full U.G.E. mode.

Hell, even when I'm at work I still have things to handle.

One of my co-workers said "you sure do play a lot of games on that phone of yours"

and I thought it was funny. I deleted the games when I got this phone.

If you see me texting or emailing someone on my phone, it's usually related to U.G.E.

Many of you out there are just like me.

Came up from nothing, had a dream and found a way to work to support yourself and the dream.

You bleed for it. You sacrifice. You don't sleep or eat properly because you are nearly possessed.

(Continued on Page 13)

## Willis Elected Most Worshipful Grand Master



Rev. James H. Willis, Sr., pastor of St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church, brought Toledo, OH the most prestigious Masonic Honor within the State of Ohio when he was elected The Most Worshipful Grand Master in Columbus, OH on August 5, 2007.

As The Most Worshipful Grand Master for the state of Ohio's Prince Hall Masons and Toledo's Amazon Lodge #4, Rev. Willis presides over the Order of Eastern Stars and other Masonic affiliates within Ohio.



Janice, Hubbert's Daughter



“Hospice of Northwest Ohio turned my doubt into trust.”

"I was very protective of my father, especially after his health failed. I wasn't going to allow just anybody to come in to provide care for him.  
 "Our family didn't have the resources to hire a private nurse. But together, we decided to contact Hospice of Northwest Ohio.  
 "When Hospice came into our home, I just sat back and checked them out. They always explained to us what they were going to do and how they were going to do it. And the level of care was awesome. Hospice provided nursing care, aides to help in the home, plus all the medications and equipment my dad needed.  
 "All the services Hospice provided were covered by Medicare." I don't think a lot of people are aware of the excellent care available. Families in situations like ours need to call Hospice of Northwest Ohio."

To ask for our free DVD, "Hospice Answers," call 419-661-4001. Or for more information, visit [hospicenwo.org](http://hospicenwo.org).

\*Hospice care is covered by Medicare, Medicaid and most insurance. No one is turned away due to inability to pay.

Answers for Living the Last Months of Life.<sup>SM</sup>

## Opinion/Commentary: The Jena 6 Connection

By Vickie Shurelds  
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

As black journalists from across the nation unite to bring a story of bold, shocking racism to the forefront, the question arises: how far are we in Ohio from experiencing the same type of occurrence? It's possible, of course, that we have already had the experience, but the structure of our legal system and the limited resources for minorities to control the focus of the mass media may have allowed the information to go "un-noticed" by mainstream media.

It was September of 2006 and several black high school students sat under the "white" tree on their campus. White students responded by hanging nooses from the tree.

When black students protested the light punishment for the students who hung the nooses, District Attorney Reed Walters came to the school and told the students he could "take [their] lives away with a stroke of [his] pen."

Racial tension continued

to mount in Jena, and the district attorney did nothing in response to several egregious cases of violence and threats against black students. But when a white student – who had been a vocal supporter of the students who hung the nooses – taunted a black student, allegedly called several black students

watched the brave actions of the "Little Rock Nine" as they entered Central High School 50 years ago. Now, in recent history, especially following the Columbine massacre, schools have adopted a no-tolerance attitude for weapons, yet the white students of Jena obviously came to school with their ropes dis-

NPR.

In the aftermath of the Don Imus debacle, African-Americans are keeping a watchful eye on mainstream media. There is a feeling that the "firing" of Imus was used only as a sort of cloaking device, to allow the appearance of victory for racial intolerance, while major

many times, but it was never made into law.

As we've watched former Nazi supporters and participants taken into custody for the heinous crimes committed against Jews, experienced the death of Saddam Hussein for the atrocities committed against his people – there has been little talk of justice for the Southern lynch culture that was, in the words of Walter White, the first executive secretary of the NAACP in 1939: "an almost integral part of our national folkways.

As the light of African-American journalists illuminate the town of Jena, Louisiana, the town is frantically searching for a place to hide. Last month, the city council ordered the "white tree" cut down. The response was: Too little, too late. The desperate fear of the African-American community for the fate of these young men created a cyclone affect of outreach, as all over the United States; too many are aware of the precarious situation that has been created because of the apathy of our generation.

It is one of the most shameful facts of the American democratic process that no federal legislation against lynching in this country was ever passed. The Dyer Anti-Lynching bill was presented

message is clear once inside. Racial tension, sectionalism along racial and economic lines, and that underlying irritation, just beneath the surface of the attitude of a few people make it clear, "we don't want your kind around here."

A compelling discussion centers on the timeline. Did the progress of the Civil Rights era slow down or come to a grinding halt? Were American terrorists successful in the destruction of the spirit of equal rights? With the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., John F. Kennedy, Jr., Robert Kennedy, Malcolm X; did the hope of a free nation disintegrate? And the greatest question of all: can it happen, does it happen; will it happen in your community?

The answer is what ever we want it to be. For more information on "The Jena 6" go to <http://www.freethjena6.org> there are petitions you can sign in the hopes of having the Governor of Louisiana intercede. Watch closely the situation as it unfolds, you could be watching your own future. Look deeply into cases in your own town. Jena, Louisiana's District Attorney Reed Walters knows the power of his pen – do you know the power of yours?

### "Jim Crow" areas in the South, and "Sundown Towns" in the North no longer place obvious signs of discrimination at the entrance of their towns, but the message is clear once inside.

"nigger", and was beaten up by black students, six black students were charged with second-degree attempted murder. They are now known as "The Jena 6."

Last month, the first young man to be tried, Mychal Bell, was convicted. He faces up to 22 years in prison for a school fight.

Twenty-two years in prison for a school fight! *A high-school student.* Ironically, his sentencing is scheduled just shy of the date in September the Nation

played proudly, and received only a light admonishment after hanging three nooses from the "white tree" as a reminder to African-American students that entering that area would be considered trespassing. A rope can be a deadly weapon. The incident has begun to garner media attention after an all-white jury delivered a guilty verdict following the trial of the first defendant. Prior to that action, the case has only been acknowledged by the African-American press and

media players chose an appropriate amount of time for the dust to settle before announcing the triumphant return of the scandalous commentator to national television and radio. The message sent is a clear one to many in the black community: the outrage of the African-American community is considered an acceptable consequence of minor impact. Remember, that in this country certain considerations still hang in the balance:

"Jim Crow" areas in the South, and "Sundown Towns" in the North no longer place obvious signs of discrimination at the entrance of their towns, but the

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Dear Sharon,

Pastor Dennis Ward and the members of the Women's Chorus of Second Baptist Church just want to thank you for the beautiful, detailed article you did in the Sojourner's Truth Newspaper's Lima Truth section last month about the Women's Chorus' first concert effort... We know how busy you are and for you to take the time to attend and then to write such an elaborate article was really special to us.

We want you to know that we will do our best to live up to the accolades that you conveyed upon us and we thank God for you and the ministry you are providing to the community.

Thanks again,

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# Lucas County Children's Services Seeking Foster and Adoptive Families

*Sojourner's Truth Staff*

A fall session of Lucas County Children's Services' (LCCS) training classes for adults interested in becoming foster or adoptive parents will commence this Saturday, September 8. The classes, which run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., can be completed in just five Saturday sessions compared to the normal 10-week class sessions conducted during the rest of the year.

Part of the reason for the compacted schedule is to encourage interested adults to sign up while the process is just a little more convenient for their schedules. And those managing the LCCS foster and adoptive efforts say that they do indeed need people in this community to step forward—for the sake of the children.

Currently, LCCS has 67 children under its supervision who need adoptive par-

ents, and hundreds more who need foster homes.

"My hope is that we would have a large pool of families who would want to make their homes available," says Robin Reese, manager of placement for LCCS. "This community has been very



Robin Reese

good over the years, especially with African-American families who have stepped up when we ask ... now we have to flat out ask."

LCCS has approximately 500 children in agency foster homes at the moment but only 300 active, licensed families to serve them. The

agency needs more foster and adoptive homes, says Reese.

One reason for concern about the number of available homes here in Lucas County is that the current group of foster parents is aging. A rather large number are in their 70's. "It's time for the younger generations to step up," says Julie Malkin, public information officer.

What is the biggest complication in building the number of available homes?

"There is a lot of misconception about 'special' cases," says Reese. "Some people feel that they might not be able to handle special cases." In fact, adds Reese, to a certain extent all of the children are "special" in one way or another but that does not mean that they cannot be parented. Parenting, she adds is a lot of work under any circumstance and given the assistance that the agency provides there are not going

to be insurmountable challenges for a family.

"These are our children, you cannot throw them

away," says Reese. It is important, says President, to get older children



Deloise President

What is the process for applying to become a foster or adoptive parent?

First and foremost, the process is free. Once a person or family applies, LCCS will evaluate

It is important, says President, to get older children

into homes even for a few years so that when they "age out" of the system at age 18, they have a family connection. Children who age out without such a connection have higher rates of homelessness, substance abuse and incarceration.

Both President and Reese emphasize that interested families are assessed on an individual basis in order to be as inclusive as possible.

"Our job is to assess," says Reese. "We try to rule families in not out."

Registration for the classes starting this Saturday is available by calling 419-213-3336.

Contact Us at  
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Julie Malkin

the people involved and the home. "We look at matching children with families that best suit their needs," says Deloise President, adoption supervisor. "Different kids need different types of families. And we want to dispel certain myths such as you won't be able to mold and shape older children, particu-

## U.G.E. Story

(Continued from Page 11)

Consumed by acquiring the success in the field you chose, while you toil in the field that currently pays the bills. Hell, even Keith Sweat was a mailman before he had hits. Some artists are starving artists... I prefer to be hungry rather than starve.

I had two jobs at 17 so I know how to work, but I also know some of us are just not meant for 9-5.

I know so many of you feel me out there. About a month ago, I had a woman in her 40's try to belittle me for being 29 and haven't made it yet. For a minute, it did get to me. But one of U.G.E.'s main reps up in The Big Apple, former head of urban radio for Atlantic Records—Henry Brown (fake last name)—he always tells me and Lavale that we are right on track. The hip-hop/R&B game is flooded with 30-somethings.

He said that's actually becoming the norm. Then I thought about this thing I watched on TV about Generation Y. They define that as all of us born between 1976 and 1998 and how times have changed to the point that a person's 20's start earlier and end later than in previous generations. It was a slick program, but I digress.

My point is... we have a lot of barriers. U.G.E. is what I spend my time doing... but we need a lot of work yet to be done. Age isn't a barrier, but it is an indication that time is of the essence. Hell, funding ... a lot of music labels in Toledo, Detroit or

wherever are funded through money from the block. Somebody got an uncle or whatever heavy in the dope game, and then they get a studio and start a label as a way to go legit.

That's cool—but that ain't us.

We grind for ours. Everybody on my crew works a job... some of us two jobs.

But at this point, having access to greater funds would be nice. Also... anytime you see U.G.E. — understand we are a work in progress.

Me and Lavale may be gradual in our demands, but we do have high standards for our people.

Oh yeah, our people. Just who is U.G.E.?

Okay. Aye Dee — singer/songwriter. One of the most well-known male R&B singers in this city (and after '07, this region). This past Labor Day weekend we had a show in Detroit and he was damn near signing autographs afterwards because he tore it down on a crowd that at first didn't even want to see a show. As producers, we throw everything at Aye Dee and he demolishes it. Neo Soul joints like "Stay" and "My Fix." Up tempo joints like "Grown Ass Man" and "Unbelievable." Aye Dee will tell you himself, the music he's made since being with U.G.E.

as an official artist can stand up against just about

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# The Jena 6 Story

(Continued from Page 6)

simple battery. The white students who hung up the nooses in the "white tree" were never charged. The people in Jena are fighting for justice and they need legal and financial help. Since the arrests, a group of family members have been holding well-attended meetings, and have created a defense fund — the Jena 6 Defense Committee. They have received support from the NAACP, the Louisiana ACLU and Friends of Justice. People interested in supporting can contact the Jena 6 Defense Committee, PO Box 2798, Jena LA 71342, or at

jena6defense@gmail.com; or Friends of Justice, 507 N. Donley Ave., Tulia TX 79088, or at www.fojtulia.org; or the ACLU of Louisiana, PO Box 56157, New Orleans LA 70156, or at www.laaclu.org or (417) 350-0536. What is next? The rest of the Jena 6 awaits similar trials. Theodore Shaw is due to go on trial shortly. Mychal Bell is scheduled to be sentenced September 20. If he gets the maximum sentence, he will not be out of prison until he is nearly 40. Meanwhile, the "white tree" outside Jena High sits quietly in the hot

sun. Nationally syndicated radio talk show host Michael Baisden along with comedian George Wilborn, national celebrities, and thousands of people wanting justice for the Jena 6 students will gather in Jena, Louisiana on September 20 for a peace and protest rally at the Jena Courthouse.

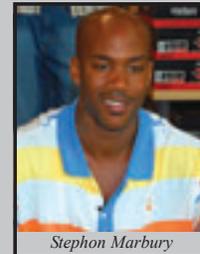
**\*The facts in this article were gathered from People's Weekly World Newspaper's story written by Bill Quigley and Audrey Stewart.**

## Local Student Receives Starbury Gift Certificate

*Sojourner's Truth Staff*

Kemonte Glover, son of Deana and Keith Glover, was the first in line to meet one of his sports heroes, the New York Knicks' Stephon Marbury, during the point guard's visit to Steve and Barry's University Sportswear in Monroe, MI on July 21. As a result of his determination — the young Toledoan arrived at the store at 7 a.m. — Kemonte received from Marbury the first of seven gift certificates for a \$500 shopping spree at the store.

Marbury's appearance was to promote his new line of shoes — the Starbury. At \$14.98, the shoes have cre-



Stephon Marbury

ated a buzz of publicity in an industry in which \$200 footwear are regularly marketed

to youngsters.

Marbury, however, remembers what it was like to grow up in poverty and that memory prompted him to take his line in a different direction. He brought out a low-priced shoe — the same model he wears during games — that families who struggle financially can afford.

Kemonte was certainly appreciative of the star's largesse as he pushed his cart filled with clothing and Starbury shoes around the store.

## The Black Market Place

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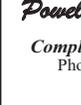


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Metroparks of Toledo has an opening for park naturalists - internships and part-time at Wildwood and/or Oak Openings Preserve. Internship will last up to 3 months, up to 40 hours per week, \$12.23 per hour. Part-time up to 35 hours per week, \$13.31 per hour, benefits available. Must be available weekdays, weekends and evenings. Excellent work environment and opportunities for personal development. Requires two years college in science field and previous experience with nature. Additional one year experience as an environmental educator required for part time position.

Submit resume and application by September 14 to Administrative Office, Wildwood Metropark, 5100 W. Central Ave., Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Visit [www.metroparkstoledo.com](http://www.metroparkstoledo.com) to review the position description and download application. EOE

**RETAIL SALES**

Metroparks of Toledo has an opening for a seasonal and a part-time sales clerk at the Farmhouse Gift Shop at Wildwood Preserve. Seasonal will work through December, up to 40 hours per week, \$7.80 per hour. Part-time up to 35 hours per week, \$11.15 per hour, benefits available. Must be available weekends and evenings. Excellent work environment and opportunities for personal development. Requires high school diploma or equivalent; some retail experience preferred for part time position.

Submit resume and application by September 14 to Administrative Office, Wildwood Metropark, 5100 W. Central Ave., Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Visit [www.metroparkstoledo.com](http://www.metroparkstoledo.com) to review the position description and download application. EOE

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# An open letter to our community from the Dean of The University of Toledo's College of Medicine



September, 2007

Dear community members:

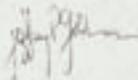
I wish to emphasize the respect and gratitude we have for all of the community-based physician mentors who commit countless hours and actively share knowledge in an effort to ensure the ability of our students and residents to give the highest quality and most compassionate care to the patients they will ultimately serve. These young people's futures are truly in their hands.

The combination of education in the classroom and at the bedside is critical to the future of health-care delivery in our region and beyond. As physician educators, these professionals must challenge our students and provide information in a manner that can be clearly understood and flawlessly applied. As physicians, they need to do everything in their power to provide these learners with the knowledge and guidance to allow them to offer the highest quality care and professionalism to their patients as specified in the 2,500-year-old Hippocratic oath taken by all physicians.

In recent weeks, there has been some discussion involving our community-based physician mentors and the future of the UT College of Medicine's student rotations in our community. It has even been suggested there is a lack of appreciation for the time and commitment these physicians and educators are giving. To the contrary, we truly believe our students are being taught in a world-class learning environment by the best physicians in the area. Without their assistance, we put the well-being of these future physicians, the health of patients, and our community at risk. We are only able to provide this high caliber of teaching with their continued commitment to our classroom and bedside education.

Please join me in thanking all of these physician educators for their continued dedication ensuring the excellence of our next generation of physicians!

Sincerely,



Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.  
Provost and Executive Vice President for Health Affairs  
Dean of the College of Medicine