



The Sojourner's Truth

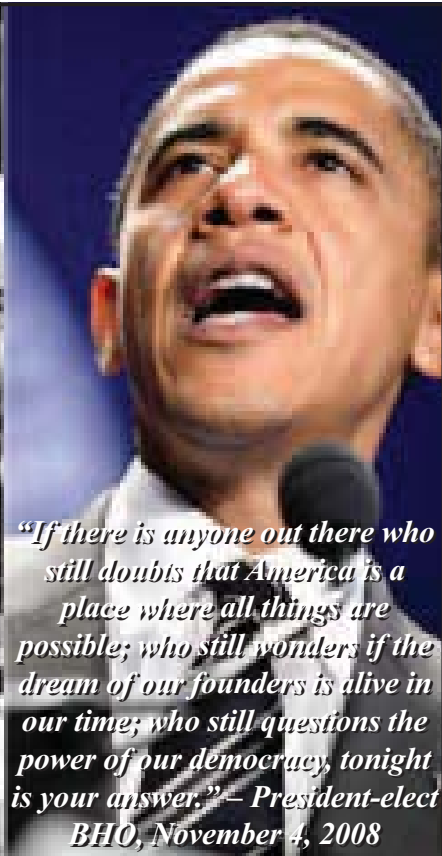
Volume 15, No.13

"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

January 14, 2009



"With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day." – MLK, August 28, 1963



"If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible; who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time; who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer." – President-elect BHO, November 4, 2008



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Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr./Barack Obama Inauguration Special Issue

This Strikes Us ...

A Sojourner's Truth Editorial

Welcome to the Barack-Obama-has-been-elected-president-post-racial America!
 Let's start with the State of Illinois, shall we? The nation is waiting to see if Roland Burris, former Illinois Comptroller and Attorney General, who has been selected by disgraced Gov. Rod Blagojevich to take Obama's vacated seat in the U.S. Senate, will in fact be allowed by the Senate to take that seat.

Senate leaders had said they would never to seat anyone the impeached governor appointed. In the event, of course, Blago called their bluff and played the race card ... brilliantly, we might add. He appointed a 71-year-old African-American who positively craves the spotlight and insists upon calling attention to himself. So much so, in fact, that he will fight and claw for what he feels belongs to him.

Burris, never a shrinking violet, has erected a mausoleum to himself in a Chicago cemetery highlighting his accomplishments (e.g., the first African-American student from Southern Illinois University to participate in an exchange program in Hamburg, Germany ... how big is that?) and leaving room on the structure for more to come.

He runs for political office in Illinois at the drop of a hat. In addition to his comptroller and AG victories, he has lost three times in runs for governor and once for mayor of Chicago.

Burris had initially joined the chorus in excoriating Blago's alleged pay-for-play antics after the release of the complaint filed against the governor by the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. Burris eventually decided that making such a deal with the devil posed for him no insurmountable ethical dilemma ... it wasn't for Faust, after all.

How can the Senate—99 white members—turn away a black man who will be taking over Obama's seat? That was Blago's calculation. To ensure that everyone got the message, Blago called on U.S. Rep. Bobby Rush (Dem. IL) to drive home the point that a Senate bereft of black members was totally unacceptable.

The former Black Panther leader, who declined to support Obama for the Senate in 2004 and instead opted to back a rich white candidate, M. Blair Hall, had somehow seen the light in the following few years. Now we need an African-American in the Senate, he says, although in 2004 it did not seem to matter.

And, the Senate ...?

Obviously Democrats were caught between a Blago and a hard place. They could have called, early on, for a special election but fearing a Republican victory in such a race, they declined to do the right thing. Now they have egg on their collective faces as they try to think of ways to exclude this qualified African-American from their very selective club.

Welcome to the post-racial America!

* * * * *

As we prepare for the inauguration of the nation's first African-American president, we have to wonder about the impact of this election on our black communities around the country.

Several weeks ago, The Blade had an article on the 20 homicides committed in the City of Toledo during 2008. That is actually a remarkably low number for a city of this size—therein is the good news.

The bad news is that African-Americans, who comprise about 25 percent of the city's population, committed, and were victim of, 75 percent of the homicides. Even worse news is that these figures are not an anomaly, they are a microcosm of what is happening within the nation at large.

A letter to the editor of this paper last week suggested that our mayor, or other leaders, might be at fault for this tragedy.

We can blame our mayor for a lot if we so choose. We can take him to task for divisive rhetoric, job loss, lack of economic development, kicking out the Marines. We might even be inclined to hold his feet to the fire for the problem of global warming.

However, let's get serious about the worst problem facing the black community—the crisis facing our youth and, in particular, our young black males.

African-American males are dropping out of school at an alarming rate and that lack of educational attainment is the underlying cause of every serious issue in our community—joblessness, single parent households, poverty, crime, health disparities...

At some point the African-American community has to face the realism that those such as Bill Cosby have been so relentlessly talking and writing about in the last several years. These are problems we have to overcome.

The election of Barack Obama, as welcome as it is, is no panacea for the ills that face the black community. In fact, some vehicles of relief, such as affirmative action, are going to face greater scrutiny and doubt over the next four years as a direct result of his election.

If the problems within our community are going to be solved, they are going to be solved by those within the community ... or they won't be solved.

The Sojourner's Truth

1811 Adams Street, Toledo, Ohio 43604
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Community Calendar

January 15

Sistas Movin' On Discussion Circle: Support and sisterly love for women incest and child sexual abuse survivors; Elizabeth House (across from Boston Market); 6 to 8 pm: 419-729-0245 or www.mynirvananow.org

Zepf Center Open House: Opening of A.R.T. Gallery (Artists in Recovery and Treatment); 6 to 8 pm; 6605 W. Central: 419-841-7701 or email cbskey@zefpcom.com

January 17

17th Annual MLK Scholarship Breakfast: "Be More Than a Dreamer;" Sponsored by Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity—Alpha Xi Lambda Chapter; Park Inn; 9 am; Guest speaker Tyrone Bledsoe, Ph.D.: 419-215-7575

January 18

MLK Service: All Saints Episcopal Church; 10 am; Speaker Rev. J. Carleton Hayden

January 19

MLK Unity Celebration: UT's Savage Hall; 9:30 am to 11:30 a.m.; Speeches by UT students, music by Clarence Smith Community Chorus, Positive Force dance troupe: 419-245-1565

NOBMA MLK Classic: Featuring high School Basketball matchups of Scott and Libbey HS vs. Detroit Pershing and Akron Buchtel—1 and 3 pm; Owens Community College: 419-243-0007

January 20

Inauguration Day! Swearing in of the 44th president of the United States, Barack Obama; Noon

January 24

Quilting Class at Historic Third Baptist: Stitches from the Soul Sistah; 10 am to 2 pm: 419-248-4623

February 1

Jerusalem MBC Edifice Dedicatory Celebration: "Maximize our Victory;" 419-248-2139

The Truth Art Gallery

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 Phone: 419.243.0007

Ramon Tiggs, Curator

For event information contact:

Glenda D. Brown
 Director of Events
 419.346.5275
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The Truth Art Gallery and Events Center is dedicated to providing professional services for your next event. We invite you to come and view the art gallery and see the many possibilities that we offer for having your special event at this special venue.

Gallery Hours:

Mon - Fri: 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
 Sat and Sun: By appointment

The Sojourner's Truth

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The Sojourner's Truth, 1811 Adams Street, Toledo, Ohio 43604
 Phone 419-243-0007 • Fax 419-255-7700
 thetruth@thetruthtoledo.com
 www.thetruthtoledo.com

My View

By Jack Ford
The Truth's Political Columnist



her five children. I had not seen the kids or Barrett in seven years.

Demetrious Smith was there as well as—so was Alan Bannister. So we had a real party just eating and laughing for several hours.

Smith is working for a candidate in the Akron area and Bannister is the representative for Gov. Ted Strickland in northwest Ohio.

Man, it looks like Toledo will be a haven for juicy political blowups in 2009. Recall Carty... Gerken vs. Konop... a city-wide strike threat... six at-large council races... three school board races. There is so much fodder for political shenanigans on just about every front. Lucas County Democrats are in control of just about everything but we are fighting each other.

We had a reunion of sorts in Columbus on January 8. The site was the historic St. Paul AME on Long Street.

The occasion was the community swearing in for Kevin Boyce, the newly appointed Treasurer for the State of Ohio.

It was a reunion because five of my former aides attended the event. It was a thrill to see everyone join in and enjoy Boyce's great opportunity.

Boyce and his wife Crystal were very gracious hosts and honorees. Toledoan Derrick Diggs, my first aide in Columbus, was there with his mother.

Sandra Barrett, another aide was in attendance with

agreement on a 2009 budget does not mean a whole lot. If you remember in 2008, the city announced a new budget at least four different times. So a budget means nothing because it can change without much hoopla from anyone. My guess is that the 2009 budget is under projected as to overall income and, therefore, will be changed substantially in 2009... probably three or four times.

The chest beating on both sides over a municipal strike will continue. My guess from talking to citizens is that they do not fear a possible strike. Many citizens have said to me that they do not care if municipal workers strike or not... strange is that not?

The Recall Carty crowd looks like it can do a good deal of mischief. Unlike other "recalls," this one has a strong involvement by some in the black community who know how to campaign. If this group takes this campaign into the black churches, beauty salons, barbershops, bars and social clubs, you better watch out! Tie in the

black community with the business interests and you may have an explosive situation.

Mike Bell will be a formidable candidate for mayor if he gets in the race. He is looking at forming an exploratory committee to advise him on the opportunity. Bell looks

and acts like a hero.

Toledoans want a mayor who will convince them that he or she can fix the economy, increase the budget and control crime. Bell will be a convincing figure in the campaign. No mayor can do all of those things in reality, particularly on the issue of job

creation. That's a global issue not a mayor's gig.

Be sure to attend the community-wide meeting at the Main Branch Toledo Lucas County Library on January 26 at 4 p.m. We will look at the issue of the over-incarceration of black youths in Lucas County.

Still ... Another Mugging for Black Contractors

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq.
Guest Column



Well, the verdict is in, that is, the money verdict and the results are that black/minority contractors were again given the 10-inch knife in the gut when it came to dishing out public taxpayer monies regarding the \$640 million-plus new schools building projects.

Again, the black contractor was assigned to the back of the

bus and was told to stay there by the majority white contractors and their so-called bidding front agency known as: Lathrop/Gant (the black guy involved)/Barton-Malow. What a joke...again.

With the school projects practically finished and the contracts awarded, it is only fitting to survey this dismal landscape and present the following awards based upon dubious merit and lack of achievement:

- (1) Outstanding Award For Blindly Trusting white contractors to do the right thing: Black/minority contractors. (note: these guys have hearts of gold for their naive trust in white contractors sharing the wealth with them!)
- (2) Best Performance by a

public administrator for being totally clueless as to how

this tried and true shell game works: A tie! Lisa Sobbecki (Toledo Board of Education member) and good ol' John Foley (super of schools).

(3) Best Supporting Role for pulling the wool over everyone's eyes: LGB, the bidding front group that was to be part of the group to "lookout" for black contractors. Yes, they looked out for black contractors and made sure that they found next to none!

(4) Award for Best Performance of watch dog that had no teeth or even a bark: The Citizens Oversight Committee. Oversight? This committee took a sleeping pill six years ago and just now woke up!

(Continued on Page 16)

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
1929-1968

"When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir."
—At the Lincoln Memorial during the March on Washington, August 28, 1963

TOLEDO FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
AFT, AFL-CIO

FRANCINE LAWRENCE, President - KEVIN DALTON, V.P.

Unnoticed Toledo Champions

Largely unnoticed, for-profit and non-profit developers have continued building new housing units and rehabbing existing housing units within the City of Toledo, despite the general housing market slump. This year, the number of housing units to be built from new construction permits pulled for single-family buildings (residential structures with one to housing four units) has already exceeded the number from the last year.

Private developers of market-rate subdivisions are diligently and methodically building or completing subdivisions, such as Edgebrook Villa off Holland-Sylvania Road, Brody Trace off Nebraska Ave. near I-475, the Villas at Suder Cove, and Foxwood Villas off of Dorr Street. In these and similar housing developments, we anticipate the completion of 131 market-rate units in all, with 105 of the homes already completed and another six single-family homes under construction at this time.

Many of these developers located their market-rate construction project within the of the City of Toledo Community Reinvestment Areas to take advantage of the reduced real estate tax liability, that they then pass on to the future homebuyer.

In addition, the City has seen 392 affordable housing units recently built or rehabilitated. Such housing provides affordable, safe and decent housing for the occupying families and seniors with limited or modest income. For example, Neighborhood Housing Services of Toledo, a local non-profit, recently completed another 25 scattered single-family homes in South and East Toledo.

Various faith-based organizations, like Roman Catholic Diocese of Toledo and Maumee Valley Habitat for Humanity, and private developers, like the Millennia Group and Harvard Development Company, have overseen the rehabilitation or construction of affordable housing units. Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority substantially rehabilitated 98 housing units in 2008, with another 44 units under construction.

The City of Toledo provided many of these developers with either grants or affordable loans from its federal funding allocations or provided real estate tax relief through its Community Reinvestment Areas to assist these developers in making the rental units affordable.

While 456 market-rate and affordable housing units have been constructed or rehabilitated this year, there are another 338 units under construction, financed through both public and private sources. I am extremely grateful to these developers and residents who have recently built a new home or rehabbed their existing home for their faith in Toledo.

So when you see a Toledo developer or a neighbor who has rehabilitated or built a new home in the City, be sure to thank him or her for his or her commitment to Toledo.

Mike Badik, City of Toledo's Commissioner of Housing

Boyce Sworn In, Lays Plans For Treasury

Special to The Truth

Kevin L. Boyce was sworn in today as Ohio's 47th Treasurer. The dual inaugural ceremony with Attorney General Richard Cordray in the statehouse atrium marks a new beginning in Ohio government, a state hit hard by the economic downturn.

In front of an audience of state leaders, supporters and the new Treasurer's young family, Boyce said that the



"We will safely and strategically invest Ohio's funds in Ohio, not only to ensure strong returns, but also to build up and strengthen our communities and businesses."

Boyce, 37, was appointed Treasurer by Governor Ted Strickland in succession of Cordray who was elected Attorney General in the November election. A native of Columbus, Boyce graduated from the University of Toledo and holds a master's degree in Administration from Central Michigan University. He served nearly eight years on Columbus City Council, including as president pro tem and chairman of the Finance Committee. Boyce has also served as the chief of staff for the Ohio House Democratic Caucus and executive director of both the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus and Knowledge Works Ohio, a non-profit education advocacy group. Kevin Boyce lives in Columbus with his wife, Crystal, and their two young sons.

"The best way to learn the value of a dollar is to have to work for it,"

values he learned growing up in difficult circumstances are the ones that will guide him in the Ohio Treasury.

"The best way to learn the value of a dollar is to have to work for it," said Boyce. "I know that Ohioans work hard for their money, and every day that I'm in the Treasurer's Office will be a day that Ohioans' tax-dollars are put to work for the state in the safest

possible ways."

Boyce said that government is the people's business, and that in addition to safeguarding Ohio resources, he will use all of the tools of the Treasury to help Ohioans to weather the current economic storm.

"Let there be no mistake, the financial health of your neighbors or your local store builds or diminishes your own wealth." Boyce said.

Representative Edna Brown Appointed Clerk Pro Tempore Toledo Lawmaker Plays Key Role in Swearing-in of 128th General Assembly

Special to The Truth

Representative Edna Brown (D-Toledo) was appointed as Clerk Pro Tempore in the swearing-in of the Ohio House of Representatives on Monday, January 5, 2009.

As set out by the Ohio Revised Code, Rep. Brown was appointed by Speaker Jon Husted to serve in this post. After session was gavelled to order, Brown called the districts in numerical order, as well as the members and newly elected members from those districts, to come forward so that they could take the oath of office.

"I am honored to have had the chance to usher my colleagues into service," Brown said. "As we embark on the work of 128th General Assembly, I am eager to continue my service to citizens of the 48th House District and all Ohioans. Although this day was a special one, it is important to remember that, in fact, every day we walk into the

House Chamber is equally important in our work for the people of Ohio. They deserve nothing less than our sincere dedication and consider-

ation. I am proud to give them mine."

Brown represents the 48th Ohio House District, within the City of Toledo.




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Is Dr. King's Hope for America Still Just a Dream?

On the Brink of an Historic Inauguration: A Look at the King Legacy in 2009

By Geneva J. Chapman,
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Thanks to the successful efforts of many Americans—black and white, Christian, Jewish, and Muslim—the holiday celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy became a reality more than 20 years ago.

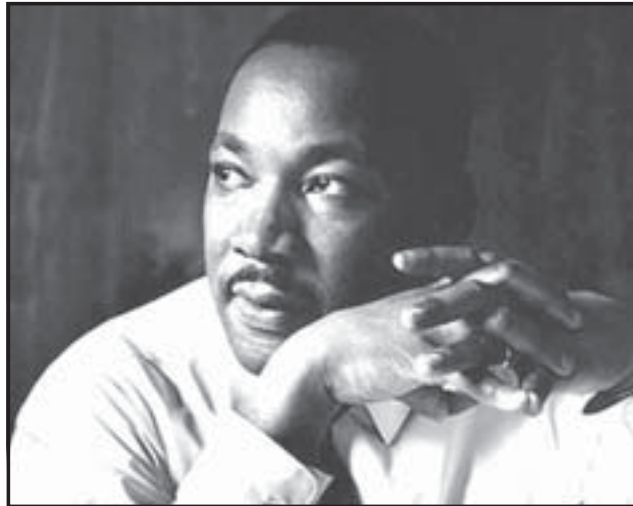
Since then, each year on the third Monday in January, all over the nation, people gather in churches, civic halls, schools, and universities to honor and commemorate the social activist and religious leader who called himself a "drum major for justice." Excerpts from his speeches, especially the "I Have a Dream" speech, are recited by young people who often compete in essay contests to explain "what King's dream means to me" or join together to sing "freedom songs" from the civil rights movement. Politicians and civil leaders give their take on the King legacy. Community choirs "lift every voice" to sing about the faith that King so treasured. And, at the end of these annual

events, everyone feels that the legacy of King, "the dreamer," has been honored.

Yet, as Paul Rockwell writes in an article published by In Motion Magazine: "Dr. King was not a dreamer—at least not the teary-eyed, mystic projected in the media. True, he was a visionary, but he specialized in applied ethics... and his mission, as he described it, was, 'to disturb the comfortable and comfort the disturbed.'"

"In fact, the oft-quoted 'I Have a Dream' speech was not about far-off visions. In his speech in Washington, D.C., August 28, 1963, King confronted the poverty, injustice, and "nightmare conditions" of American cities. In its totality, the 'I Have a Dream' speech was about the right of the oppressed and poor Americans to cash their promissory note in our time. It was a call to action."

Understanding that King did more than just dream about change and given that even in his most celebrated



speech, he championed the rights of the disenfranchised poor, how have we fared in the years since he made that historic speech in the three areas in which he made a definite historical impact: desegregation, voting rights, and

civil rights?
What is King's legacy in 2009?

The word legacy was defined as "anything handed down by an ancestor or someone who lived before us" by Dianne Partee, a curriculum specialist in the Office of African and African-American Studies for the school district of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, during a presentation entitled "Using Dr. King's Legacy to Shape the Twenty-First Century," on January 6, 1998.

In his pursuit of social justice, said Partee, King "handed down" several things to future generations of Americans. Among these gifts are activism as a means of social change with a clear methodology for said activism; legal recourse or changing the laws to effect social change; politicization, which is taking social change into the voting booth; and vigilance in all of the aforementioned.

King's activism was rooted in the philosophies of non-violent resistance. The principles of non-violent or passive resistance include: 1) individual or group decide to obey either "the law of the state" or "higher law;" 2) if "higher law," individual or group disobeys "law of the state," but holds "moral high ground" by refusing to use violence while withholding state violence; 3) often involves lifestyle of voluntary simplicity as means of reducing social or economic pressure available to state; 4) may involve willingness to be jailed as form of social protest.

This form of resistance is not new, having been practiced in Ancient China, Classical Greece (e.g., the play Lysistrata, about Athenian women using sexual abstinence to force men to end warfare), by Jesus Christ who exhorted his followers to "turn the other cheek" and


forgive their enemies in the New Testament, and by Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi in India when he practiced satyagraha or the use of hunger strikes and willing imprisonment to resist English rule.

"Shuffling" and "head-scratching" by African-American slaves, which later became a negative stereotype, has even been viewed as a form of passive resistance, since it resulted in a cessation of work by the slaves. Other examples of passive resistance are modern-day worker slowdowns to protest management policies, abortion clinic blockades, and wives saying "Yes, Dear" without giving consent.

Probably the most famous incident of passive resistance by a single individual was Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat to a white man in Birmingham, Alabama, during segregation.

King's commitment to non-violent resistance and civil disobedience as tools for change has been heralded as perhaps the most important part of his legacy, earning for him a Nobel Peace Prize. Following King's example, adherents to this philosophy daily protest across from the White House or outside of the Supreme Court about topics ranging from animal rights to U.S. foreign policy in peaceful demonstrations that are an essential element in American democracy, and one of King's lasting and most significant contributions to our society.

In a January 20, 2003, article in The Cincinnati Enquirer, Kevin Aldridge writes, "About two dozen (Continued on Page 6)




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MLK Unity Celebration to Spotlight Leader's Strength, Courage

Special to The Truth

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led movements and marches in the name of equality. The devoted activist boldly worked to make the world a better place.

"Strength to Lead, Courage to Love" will be the theme of this year's Unity Celebration, which will take place Monday, Jan. 19, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in Savage Arena on The University of Toledo's Main Campus.

Toledo Mayor Carty Finkbeiner and UT President Lloyd Jacobs are scheduled to speak. There will be a parade of nations from Toledo Sister Cities International, and a processional of youth, student, business and union leaders, as well as clergy members, educational representatives, elected officials, social service agencies and community organizations.

Performances slated to take place will feature the Clarence Smith Community Chorus and students from the Positive Force Christian

School of Dance. The UT Student African-American Brotherhood will deliver presentations of the civil rights leader's speeches and offer reflections on his teachings. A video tribute to King also will be shown.

In addition, special recog-

nition will be given to members of the U.S. military forces.

Immediately following the program, a community luncheon will be held in the west lobby of Savage Arena.

This is the eighth year UT and the city of Toledo have teamed up to present this

event. Some 3,000 attended the celebration last year.

For more information on the free, public event, contact Deb Driscoll, UT director of special events, at 419.530.2200, or the Toledo Board of Community Relations at 419.245.1565.



Dream?

(Continued from Page 5)

teens and young adults, interviewed across Greater Cincinnati ... say King's message of nonviolent resistance is more relevant than ever - particularly as the nation stands poised for war and controversy has been renewed over the future of affirmative action programs in college admissions. They say King's principle of overcoming your enemies with love may be the only solution to the racial problems that surfaced in Cincinnati during the April 2001 riots."

During the civil rights movement headed by King, his use of the judicial and legislative systems for change also served as a model for future movements. Often when various groups disagree with existing federal or state laws, they use King's method of peaceful demonstration rather than resorting to violence. Likewise, King encouraged political action in the form of voting to effect change. Political activism that includes getting people registered to vote, campaigning for particular candidates or causes, and encouraging people to vote, regardless of their political affiliation or stand on a political issue, is very much a part of our culture.

Yet, despite all of this political activism, voter turnout in most elections, except presidential election and certain hotly contested local elections, continues to dwindle year after year as lower and lower percentages of registered voters come to the polls. Even this past year's general election did not top the turnout of the 1960's.

Vigilance in the use of all of King's strategies for change is paramount to effecting any change in our society. These changes are not accomplished easily or quickly.



In an article entitled "King's Legacy in 2003: A Call for Vigilance and Agitation," Donald Temple writes, "We

(Continued on Page 8)

The University of Toledo, TOLEDO EXCEL
The Joint Committee and Sponsoring Organizations
Present

**25th Annual Conference for Aspiring
Minority Youth inviting
(all Toledo-area 7th - 12th graders, their
Parents and Community)**

**"25 Years Later...Rekindling the
Commitment to Education"**

 Saturday, January 31, 2009 
8:30 a.m. sharp - 1:30 p.m.
at
The University of Toledo, Student Union Auditorium
Doors open at 7:30 a.m.

-----Free Admission and Lunch-----

Guest Keynote Presenter

Mr. Hill Harper
Scholar, Author, Activist and Actor on CSI-NY
Keynote title:
"The Importance of Education"

Concurrent Student Session Presenters:
Mr. Hill Harper and TOLEDO EXCEL alumni
A panel discussion on student empowerment

There will be a book signing after the student session.
Advance reservations strongly suggested but not required:
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10 a.m. until 6 p.m.
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Owens Community College to Host Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Basketball Classic, Jan. 19

Special to The Truth

Owens Community College, the Northwest Ohio Black Media Association and the Toledo Public Schools will honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as the College will serve as host to the 2009 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Basketball Classic on Monday, Jan. 19. Four boys high school basketball teams from Ohio and Michigan will compete in the double-header with all proceeds benefiting Northwest Ohio Black Media Association scholarship initiatives.

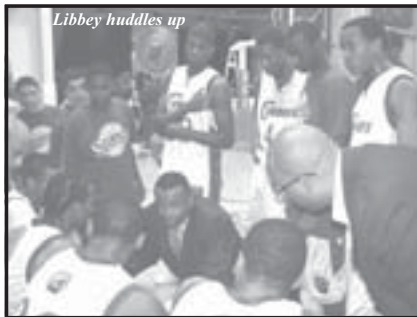
Founded in 1996 by the Northwest Ohio Black Media Association, the 2009 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Basketball Classic will be held at the College's Student Health and Activities Center on the Toledo-area Campus. Owens is located on Oregon Road in Perrysburg

Township. "Owens Community College appreciates the opportunity to strengthen our partnerships with Toledo Public Schools and the Northwest Ohio Black Media Association and once again support this very worthwhile fundraiser for scholarships in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.," said Christa Adams, Ph.D., president of Owens Community College.

Beginning at 1 p.m., varsity basketball action will commence with Scott High School (Toledo, Ohio) taking on Akron Buchtel High School (Akron, Ohio). In the second varsity game starting at 3 p.m., Ohio Division II state runner-up Libbey High School (Toledo, Ohio) will face Pershing High School (Detroit, Mich.), the Michigan Class A state runner-up. The Northwest Ohio



Scott vs. East Chicago



Libbey huddles up

Black Media Association, the Toledo-based affiliate of the National Association of Black Journalists, was founded in 1990 with the goals of strengthening ties among black communicators, becoming an em-

ployer group of professionals that honor excellence and outstanding achievement by black communicators, assisting in expanding job opportunities for black communicators, and identifying potential black communicators in local high schools and colleges.



East Chicago team receives victory trophy

For nearly two decades, the Northwest Ohio Black Media Association has played a very active role in many community outreach programs, which includes preparing students for careers in journalism through its Minority High School Journalism Workshop and helping the community learn more about the media through its community access seminars. The organization also provides thousands of dollars in scholarships annually and organizes debates and town hall meetings on an array of current event topics.

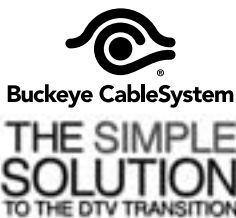
Tickets for the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Basketball Classic are \$10 for adults and \$8 for students. Tickets in advance are \$8 for adults and \$6 for students. Individuals can purchase tickets at "The Sojourner's Truth" in Toledo and at Libbey and Scott high schools starting Monday, Jan. 12. For more information, call (419) 841-1652 or (410) 243-0007.

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Dream?

(Continued from Page 6)

successful African-Americans enjoy a status gained by deep sacrifices of past generations.... Simple God-fearing black folk destroyed Jim Crow, exercising countless courageous acts of civil disability and believing in their hearts that 'we shall overcome.' Yet many of us who enjoy the comfort of significant incomes, nice homes and cars have become intoxicated by our new found economic and educational status.... We need to circle the wagons and learn how to better take care of each other. Dr. King used to always say, 'Negroes have to learn to stick together....' Dr. King once said: 'Freedom requires constant vigilance.' Frederick Douglass called for 'vigilance and agitation, not silence....'

In terms of tangible results of desegregation, voting rights, and civil rights, many see very positive changes. One such example is the litany of positive results from the civil rights movement cited by Hugh Price in an article published in the 30th anniversary issue of The Black Collegian in 2001. "In three decades many shifts of seismic proportions have occurred. In 1997, approximately eighty-seven percent of our young people attained their high school diplomas as compared to fifty-five percent in 1970. Back then a mere, 1,469 blacks held elected office in our nation. In 1998, we numbered 8,868. We have more black doctors, attorneys, scientists, MBA's, CEO's, and small business owners than at any other period in

our country's history. Black unemployment is at an all-time low. Black homeownership is growing, as are the ranks of the black millionaires and billionaires among us. Between 1976 and 1997, there was a sixty-eight percent increase in the number of black women enrolled in college and a twenty-one percent increase for young black men. More black women and men than ever are enrolled in colleges. African-Americans represent the most highly educated people of African descent anywhere on the planet. Many of these great social changes occurred as a result of the civil rights movement.... Economic power is the next civil rights frontier."

However, not everyone is as positive as Price. Many feel that King's message is lost on our youth and does not resonate in the ears of the hip-hop generation. Alex P. Kellogg's January 18, 2002, article entitled "King's Legacy Escapes the Young," expresses this viewpoint. "As the nation prepares to commemorate its greatest civil rights leader again this year, a question arises: What does the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. mean to a younger generation of black Americans, people who, as old as 30, were born three years after he was assassinated?"

"Young black people have no conceptualization of who he was or his message - because they have not been taught," says 40 year-old Sidney Holmes, an administrator at Drexel Uni-

versity in Philadelphia, who echoes the concern of many of his generation and older. Holmes says he feels "the legacy of Martin Luther King is a way of feeling and acting as a black American," and that "running around with your ass hanging out of your britches and all this video stuff... isn't part of the program."

He sees urban violence and the popularity of rap music as evidence of the malaise and social disintegration King hoped to eliminate."

In assessing King's legacy, Paul Rockwell's article, "Dr. King Was Not a 'Dreamer,'" quotes one of King's successors. "In 1986, Jesse Jackson wrote an essay on how Americans can protect the legacy of Dr. King. Jackson's essay on the trivialization, distortion, the emasculation of King's memory, is one of the clearest, most relevant appreciations in print of Dr. King's work. Jackson wrote: 'We must resist this media's weak and anemic memory of a great man. To think of Dr. King only as a dreamer is to do injustice to his memory and to the dream itself. Why is it that so many politicians today want to emphasize that King was a dreamer? Is it because they want us to believe that his dreams have become reality, and that, therefore, we should celebrate rather than continue to fight? There is a struggle today to preserve the substance and the integrity of Dr. King's legacy.'"

Today, the media often ignore the range and breadth



of King's teachings. His speeches - on economic justice, on our potential to end poverty, on the power of organized mass action, his criticism of the hostile media, his opposition to U.S. imperialism (a word he dared to use) - are rarely quoted, much less discussed with understanding. In fact, successors to King who raise the same concerns today are again treated with sneers, and their "ulterior motives" are questioned.

A genuine appreciation of King requires respect for

the totality of his work and an ongoing commitment to struggle for peace and justice today." Considering the outcry against the Patriot Act, which limits individual civil rights, and the accusations of violations of voting rights in Florida, Tennessee, and elsewhere during the last presidential election, many may wonder if American really benefited from the struggle for civil rights and voting rights. Deemed a failure by many, both black and white, even de-segregation and affirmative action, one

of the tools of integration, has come under attack in the latter part of the 20th century and in this the beginning of the 21st century.

Whether or not King's legacy of social activism, legal recourse, politics and vigilance will persist remains to be seen. However, it is very clear that in the three areas that King used these methods - civil rights, voting rights, and de-segregation - the struggle is not yet over.



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"A New Birth of Freedom:" Any Measure

By Fletcher Ward
Sojourner's Truth Editor



Has there been a time – in the history of mankind – when a member of a minority racial group was elected by a nation's citizens to be their leader?
Forget about the history of the world. Just focus on the history of the United States. The inauguration of the 44th president of the United States next Tuesday at noon is totally without precedent.
Barack Hussein Obama will assume the reins of power next week and, for the first time, an

African-American will be sworn in as president.
There have been significant "firsts" at various times in our history. Andrew Jackson, in 1829, was the first "common man" to assume the office – the first president not from the patrician class that led the American Revolution.
John F. Kennedy was the first Roman Catholic to become president in 1960. That seems of little moment now but, at the time, Catholics were not clearly part of the mainstream culture of this country.

There is no precedent for what will happen next week – not in this country or any other. A racial group that was held in bondage for hundreds of years, dragged forcibly from its native land for the purpose of perpetual servitude, wrenched from slavery by a nation's civil war and then subjected to singularly oppressive living conditions for decades after members of the group were freed, is going to witness an African-American sworn in to lead that same country.

An Historic Inauguration by

African-Americans are going to witness this most surprising of events just 44 years after they were guaranteed the right to vote and in the shadow of the day of celebration for their most inspirational leader – the late Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.
And, in spite of the circumstances surrounding the inaugural ceremony, there will be unbridled joy at the occasion. Those circumstances, however, are not to be minimized. President Obama will face more daunting challenges than any president has previously encountered sat the outset of his term.
The economic crisis Obama inherits is second in gravity only to that which faced Franklin D. Roosevelt when he moved into the Oval Office in 1933. And, only once, has this country changed administrations during the middle of a war. Add to that the energy problem that we

who came for Lyndon Baines Johnson's inauguration in 1965.
Many will arrive on buses. The D.C. security forces are anticipating, or rather fearing, that as many as 10,000 buses will descend upon Washington even though they think they can handle efficiently only about a fraction of that number.
The order of events for January 20, according to the Presidential Inauguration Committee, include:
• Musical selections: The United States Marine Band, followed by the San Francisco Boys Chorus and the San Francisco Girls Chorus
• Call to order and welcoming remarks: Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-California
• Invocation: Rev. Rick Warren, pastor of the Saddleback megachurch in Orange County, California
• Musical selection: Aretha Franklin

• Obama's Inaugural address
• Poem: Elizabeth Alexander of Chicago
• Benediction: The Rev. Joseph E. Lowery
• The national anthem: The United States Navy Band "Sea Chanters"
After President Obama will then make its way down Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the White House, with groups traveling from all over the country to participate.
Then come the evening's Inaugural Balls – 10 of them are "official" balls that will be attended by either the Obamas or the Bidens. These are the



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have postponed dealing with for the last 35 years and, it is clear, that Obama has a set of circumstances unlike those of any previously inaugurated president. But those can wait – at least until January 21. For now there is the pomp and circumstance.
More than two million people are expected to flock to the nation's capital to witness history, many coming from far and near just to be present for the day. The record for such an occasion is the 1.2 million

• Vice President-elect Joe Biden will be sworn into office by John Paul Stevens, associate justice of the Supreme Court
• Musical selection: John Williams, composer/arranger, with Itzhak Perlman, Yo-Yo Ma, Gabriela Montero and Anthony McGill
• Obama will then take the oath of office, using President Abraham Lincoln's inaugural Bible, administered by John G. Roberts Jr., chief justice of the United States

only ones they are guaranteed to visit.
The parade and the balls are significant events, but what will be remembered on this occasion is Obama's inaugural address. It's the opportunity to a new president to frame an inspiring message for the nation, to create a mood.
Obama has rarely failed to live up to the occasion when it comes to crafting a message but he has a few choice phrases as a measuring stick. When it comes to memorable passages, Roosevelt and Kennedy set the bar fairly high: "We have nothing to fear but fear itself," said FDR in 1933. "Ask not what your country can do for you," said JFK in 1961. "Ask what you can do for your country."
We do not know what to expect from Obama. He may try to lift spirits, he may ask for sacrifice. But if he hits the mark in his address, if he nails the moment, we will certainly know it right away.

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Memorable U.S. Presidential Inauguration Moments

Here are U.S. Presidential Inauguration "Firsts" and "Memorable Moments" according to the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies:

George Washington, the 1st U.S. President who served in 1789 to 1797, added the phrase "So help me God" after taking the oath in 1789, and he kissed the Bible—two traditions that have been carried out by most presidents since.



William McKinley, 25th U.S. President, was the first president to be filmed by a movie camera at his 1897 inauguration.



Ronald Reagan, 40th U.S. President, in 1985 (second-term) was the first to be inaugurated on Super Bowl Sunday.

Theodore Roosevelt, 26th U.S. President who served from 1901 to 1909, was the first president not sworn in on a Bible at his 1901 inauguration.

Bill Clinton, 42nd U.S. President, was the first in 1997 (second-term) to have the inauguration broadcast via Internet.

Warren G. Harding, 29th U.S. President, was the first in 1921 to ride to his inauguration in an automobile.

Calvin Coolidge, 30th U.S. President, who in 1925 was

Bible.

Lyndon B. Johnson, also known as "LBJ" and 36th U.S. President, who in 1963 was the first to take the oath of office on a plane and the first to use a book other than a Bible. A Bible couldn't be found on the plane, but Kennedy's Roman Catholic Missal was found in a drawer and used.



Richard M. Nixon, 37th U.S. President, swore on two Bibles in 1969.

Jimmy Carter, 39th U.S. President, in 1977 was the first to have solar heat used to warm the reviewing stand.

William Henry Harrison, 9th U.S. President, was the first to arrive to his 1841 inauguration by railroad. Harrison was the first president to die in office, holding still the shortest tenure in U.S. presidential history—30 days in office from March 4 to April 4, 1841.



Franklin Pierce, 14th U.S. President, in 1853 was the first



to broadcast his inaugural speech on national radio.

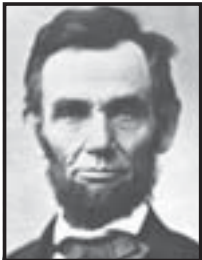
Harry S. Truman, 33rd U.S. President, was the first to have the inauguration televised in 1949.



Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th U.S. President, broke with custom in 1953 by reciting his own improvised prayer instead of kissing the

to affirm the oath of office, rather than swear it. Both are allowed. He used a Bible, but he didn't kiss it.

Abraham Lincoln, 16th U.S. President, in office 1861 to 1865,



was the first in 1865 (his second inauguration) to include African-Americans in the inaugural parade.



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The Lima Truth

January 14, 2009

The Sojourner's Truth

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Just Get Here, If You Can: Lima Celebrates President Obama

By Vickie Shurelds
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Where will you be when it happens? An historic event is heading our way with the impending force powerful enough bring about change in America. Where will you be at 12 pm on January 20, 2009?

Limanative Daryl Upshaw, Jr. has a suggestion. He says you can be a part of history. "This is a chance to participate in the future of America," he says.

Upshaw is the owner of Luxury Events out of Huntsville, Alabama. "It's a chance of a lifetime to be there as history unfolds," says Upshaw. "America welcomes its first African American President, a record crowd will be on hand to experience this monumental occasion!"

Upshaw has coordinated two bus trips to the inauguration; one leaving from Huntsville, the other from his hometown of Lima, Ohio.

"The bus leaves Eastgate parking lot at 10 p.m. on January 19," he says. "We'll arrive at the park for the ceremony by 9 a.m., we'll even stay to enjoy the parade, then back on the bus by 5 p.m. with arrival back in Lima scheduled for 3 a.m. on January 21. It's affordable, just \$150.00 a person, and that's a small amount to pay to be a part of history."

The event includes breakfast, and a commemorative t-shirt. The bus will make a short stop on the way to DC and on the return trip to allow participants to purchase food for an additional meal.

"I've been able to coordi-



nate several major events, and people enjoy it," continues the tour coordinator. "They meet others that are just as excited as they are and, sometimes, they even find themselves meeting up with old friends. Lima is my hometown and I won't forget how much the people in the community gave to me coming up. Even when I was in college at A&M, I kept Lima in my heart. Now that I'm starting my business, I still want to give back to the town where it all began—that's Lima!"

Lima was at the forefront of the Obama campaign receiving one of the first Ohio headquarters with a volunteer staff from California, New York and other major states teaching, strategizing, and encouraging

local volunteers to rally and stand up for what they wanted.

There were visits from well-known celebrities such as Cuba Gooding, Jr. who stopped by to say "hi," to encourage early voting and to push for voter registration. In the end, it was the strongest showing for a Democratic nominee to date in this usually Republican stronghold. Connecting supporters together by e-mail and text messaging, it became, for the Obama campaign, an easy task to assemble crowds in a relatively short amount of time.

Obama's visit to a local church was kept under wraps until his arrival, yet within moments the streets and the church were filled with those who believed that they could

be standing just inches away from the next President. They were right.

Upshaw says supporters might as well witness the transition up close and personal—"They've earned the right to be there," he says. "They believed, they worked hard, and they made happen what a lot of people believed would not happen in their lifetime. They shouldn't stop until they've witness the climactic moment; when he becomes the President!"

Space on the bus can be reserved up to January 15. Those interested should call him directly at 614-446-5112.

For those who plan to watch the inauguration in the comfort of their own warm living rooms but would still like

to celebrate the occasion, the Minority Caucus Committee of the Democratic Party, which is also the local chapter of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus, has put together an evening of social elegance.

In the newly remodeled Event Center now managed by the University of North

western Ohio, a black tie affair will be held. Tickets for the event are just \$25.00 in advance, \$30.00 at the door and will include food, jazz music and two 15-foot television screens that will display similar parties going on in major cities.

augural balls were popping up all over the city. From \$50.00 a plate to \$1,000.00 a plate—and they were selling out! I said, Lima has got to have one, too!"

The ball is planned for 7 p.m. to midnight and will also include a champagne toast. The event is open to the pub-

"They shouldn't stop until they've witness the climactic moment; when he becomes the President!"

lic regardless of heritage or political affiliation.

"It's just an evening of celebration with friends," says Mathew. "A way for us to come together; to begin to know one another again. To laugh, eat, talk, dance and strengthen friendships. That's all it's about—who you are, or even who you voted for doesn't have anything to do with it. He's our president. All of our president, and we need to give him our support. Tickets to the Inaugural Ball can be obtained by calling 567-204-8818, or 419-227-1770.

January 20, 2009. Inauguration Day. Where will you be? It doesn't matter if you can travel to DC, or just in your own community—but it's time to celebrate—whatever you do, document it in some meaningful way.

Just Get Here, if you can.

Thomas. "She said these in-

Thomas. "She said these in-

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January's VIP - Denise Williams

Denise Williams' second play opened this past December at the Collingwood Arts Center. "The House I Live In is about faith," says Williams. "It's about a family, a church and the different levels of faith in one house. When things happen - traumatic things - can we sustain that faith and know that God will take care of us?"

Williams wrote *The House I Live In* three years ago on the heels of her successful debut - *Second Chance at Christmas* - which she wrote six years ago after one of those inspirational moments about which one usually only dreams. Indeed the inspiration was a dream. "I was asleep, having a dream. Everything just played out in my mind. It was about three o'clock in the morning and I had to get up and start writing."

While Williams may be new to the world of crafting stage plays, given her background and love for musical plays, it may only have been a matter of time before she began to devote her full energies to creating plays.

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BOOK REVIEW

Barack Obama: Son of Promise, Child of Hope

by Nikki Grimes, Illustrated by Bryan Collier

c.2008, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers \$16.99 / \$19.99 Canada

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Sojourner's Truth Contributor

When you are older and able to make big decisions on your own, what do you hope to do to make money?

Will you go into business with your father or mother, or will you take another, different job that makes your dreams come true? If you could see your future, what do you hope it will look like?

Long ago, a young man searched for courage within himself. He decided to listen to the voices of his ancestors, to get an education, and to hang on to hope. In the book *Barack Obama: Son of Promise, Child of Hope* by Nikki

Grimes (illustrated by Bryan Collier), another little boy wonders if he could do that, too.

One evening after school, a boy named David was watching TV and he saw someone he didn't recognize. He asked his mother who it was.

"That's Barack Obama," she said. Then she told David a wonderful story.

Once upon a time, she said, there was a boy named Barry whose mama was white as whipped cream and his daddy was black as ink.

Barry, his Mama, and his grandparents lived in Hawaii. There, Barry had



friends from many places around the world but no-

he wondered if he could help them someday. He thought about his life and his choices. He looked inside himself for courage and hope. And he studied hard in school. Education was important!

Through his life, Barry (who started using the name he'd been born with, Barack) kept hope in his heart. It was hope that he held when he learned how to be a leader. It was hope that he had when he said he wanted to be our president.

As he listened to the story of Barack Obama, David wondered. Could he do what Barry did? Could David make a difference someday, too?

Kids aren't dumb, as you know. They recognize exactly what's going on in the world, even though they may not grasp the back story. *Barack Obama: Son of Promise, Child of Hope*, though written months be-

fore the November election, explains an historic event in terms that kids can understand.

Author Nikki Grimes says in her back-of-the-book note that "The air crackled with excitement..." during the primaries, and she does a great job conveying that emotion here. Illustrator Bryan Collier's colorful drawings also tell the story well, so that even the smallest kids can follow along.

While we mark yet another history-making event, look for *Barack Obama: Son of Promise, Child of Hope*. As a book to read now, this one is perfect for kids ages three to 8. It would also make a great historic keepsake for anyone who holds hope in their heart.

Visit us online at
thetruthtoledo.com

University of Toledo Extends "Guarantee" Scholarship to Washington Local Students

Special to The Truth

The University of Toledo has extended its "UT Guarantee" full-tuition scholarship program to Washington Local Schools, beginning with Whitmer High School's Class of 2009.

Parents of grade point-eligible seniors are invited to an Information Night at Whitmer on Tuesday, January 13 (7 p.m.). Kevin Kucera, UT associate vice president, Division of Enrollment Services, will distribute information packets and share details about the program.

More than 200 Whitmer seniors will visit the UT campus on Friday, January 30 (9 a.m. – 1 p.m.), to learn more about the possibility of 100 percent free tuition and the many academic opportunities at UT. The campus visit will include a tour, a college fair and an opportunity to talk with UT students who graduated from Whitmer.

Washington Local Superintendent Patrick Hickey contacted the University of Toledo in the fall, when UT announced the scholarship program for Toledo Public Schools, and asked university officials to consider expanding the program to Whitmer. UT enthusiastically agreed, and now all eligible public high school students in Toledo will have the opportunity to attend tuition-free.

"This is truly a landmark day for students and families in our district," Hickey said. "We are the largest feeder school for the university, and we value our partnership in helping students achieve their goals and aspirations."

"I know these are tough economic times for many families," Hickey continued. "The UT Guarantee is an incredible opportunity. I hope that this new partnership enables Whitmer students, who previously believed college was not an affordable option, to be able to attend UT and pursue their dreams."

UT created the "Guarantee" to attract more students from six Ohio urban communities with a scholarship program that covers 100 percent tuition and general fees for academically qualified students that also have financial need. In addition to Washington Local and Toledo Public, students at Akron, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus and Dayton can attend UT for free under the "UT Guarantee," if they meet the eligibility requirements for the Blue and Gold Scholar Award:

- Minimum high school grade-point-average of 3.0
- Apply for admission by April 1, 2009
- File Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by April 1, 2009
- Display eligibility for a Pell Grant

Lawrence Burns, vice president for external affairs, says the UT Guarantee is about more than just increasing enrollment and spreading the UT name.

"Due to today's high cost of a college education, many high school students and their parents don't think about it as a realistic opportunity," said Burns. "We want to change that mindset and get our urban students to begin preparing themselves for a university education when they're in junior high school."

The UT Guarantee program is renewable for four years, as long as its recipients maintain a 3.0 G.P.A., complete 30 credit hours each school year, and file a FAFSA annually.

Enrollment at UT surged by almost six percent university-wide in the fall, marking the third consecutive year of increasing numbers. The enrollment increase includes 3,899 direct-from-high-school students, the largest number of incoming freshmen in UT's history, and a jump of 8.5 percent over last year. UT currently has nine colleges, more than 250 areas of study and enrolls more than 22,000 students.

For more information about the program and a complete list of the eligible schools, please visit <http://www.utoledo.edu/admission/scholarships/bluegold.html>.

The Notorious B.I.G.: Greatest Rapper EverBy Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

Understand this:

The rap game you see before you at this very moment in 2009 is still influenced by Christopher Wallace/The Notorious B.I.G.

Never mind how much of a fan I am, I'll get to that later.

Trust: when you listen to hip-hop/rap music right now you are hearing his legacy.

It was the blue print of The Notorious B.I.G. and Puff Daddy to intentionally make commercial singles that would smash radio but still have an album that was solid and artistic.

It was the blue print of The Notorious B.I.G. to be a successful rapper with a mogul

mentor who helped him become a mogul himself.

A rapper with a record label, his own crew selling millions in addition to his own sales, his own clothing line...that was B.I.G. and that's off his first album.

The blue print for the successful rap star you see today, was authored by Biggie Smalls.

Biggie in the 90's was on the radio just as often as Tupain is right now.

A rapper that can rhyme over anything... before B.I.G., people didn't mix rap's sub genres. East Coast rappers rhymed over East Coast beats and so forth.

Now you had a dude who was so revolutionary he changed the way all rappers after him approached making an album. Now rappers had to please listeners beyond their normal fan base.

How can someone only be in the game for a mere four years but then still have a lasting influence 12 years after his untimely death?

If you don't think he's the greatest rapper ever, you just might... yeah... you just might be hating.

See, we all have opinions but do the research.

You can see who was ruling the charts, who sold what, who said what and all that.

If you've been shooting your mouth off about B.I.G. and you don't know or have forgot about B.I.G. If you only remember B.I.G. as another rap icon target of controversy, if you don't know... just read what I have to say. And we'll all go see Notorious this week and start 2009 off with some clarity.

CLASSIC DEBUT

Naw, he didn't get in the industry because of whom he knew.

The Notorious B.I.G. made a demo, submitted it to the Unsigned Hype column in The Source and was discovered by a young dude looking for talent so he could start his label.

A lot of this I just imagine everyone knows, but I'll kick it to you just in case you don't.

Before B.I.G. was signed to Bad Boy, Puffy had him at Uptown Records after scooping him from the underground.

Uptown Records was home to Father M.C., Mary J. Blige, Guy, Jodeci and Heavy D.

Not a hardcore hip-hop act among them, right? Right.

So Biggie was Puffy's hardcore act and it wasn't no shiny suit/pretty b.s. - it was gritty on purpose because that's what was honest. Bad Boy wasn't always about dancing in videos. Craig Mack was the second artist signed but the first released.

A platinum certified single for "Flava In Ya Ear" meant the remix was gonna be a monster (and who, really, who was having platinum singles like that? Not many).

Not only did Biggie get open on movie soundtracks, R&B remixes and a legendary mixtape leading up to his album... it was the perfect plan to put him as the opening verse for the "Flava In Ya Ear" remix just as his buzz was expanding. Puff brilliantly planted B.I.G. everywhere leading up to his own release so by the time *Ready To Die* came out it was one of the most highly anticipated hip-hop debuts of all time.

A concept album built around human struggle... it was brilliant.

There are college professors who study B.I.G.'s rhymes as a window into the mind of someone so stressed with life's worries that he is teetering on the brink of sanity and contemplating suicide. It was conceptual but it was also actual.

But as gritty as it was, it was also funny ("...you fat, black..fried chicken eating mutha...") - okay, all my true heads know what I'm talking about).

Biggie's album was emotional, raw and had an underground feel even though he enjoyed high-profile status.

But the singles Puffy chose to release were the flip side of the coin, making for a perfect blend of substance on the album but all crossover hits on the radio.

"Juicy" was certified gold. "Big Poppa" was certified platinum.

By the time "One More Chance" came out, Biggie was on a level where his songs were knocking Michael Jackson out of the number one spot on the pop charts.

Going on to multi-platinum status, it is one of the most successful debuts of any rapper.

A groundbreaking artistic achievement and also a hall mark in East Coast hip-hop resurgence.

THE LEGEND GREW

The skills were legendary. Imagine how many ring tones B.I.G. would have sold if you

compare his radio/commercial success to the standards of today.

Not only did he take the number one spot from Michael Jackson, he did a joint WITH Michael Jackson. B.I.G. did features and cameos on other people's hits even outside of Bad Boy and as often as he guest starred, you never got tired of hearing him.

But with all his radio dominance, he never sacrificed his position as THE lyrical beast of his time period.

He dominated the rap game in a way I have not seen since.

Even Jay Z's dominance over the game (which spanned years as he took the King of New York crown after B.I.G. passed) was not as absolute as when B.I.G. was on top.

And besides just the music, there was a persona being built around Biggie.

The mafia don dipped out in the suit and tie was fun and all but Biggie's darker image was much more powerful. A dude so on edge with the life he was living that his debut album ends with his figurative suicide attempt and then his sophomore album opens with Puffy crouched over him as he's on life support. That's some genius s***!

And as much as B.I.G. talked about hustling, as much as he talked about poppin' bottles, as much as he talked about name brands... the most recurring theme in most of his material is depression and stress. Backpackers who hated Bad Boy still had to listen to Biggie because the skills were undeniable and the subject matter was so easy to relate to.

The clubs had to play Biggie because his hits were more than hits, there were atomic smashes that impacted listeners and dominated charts across the planet.

Underground cats who wouldn't listen to B.I.G. on a R&B remix still loved joints like the classic "Who Shot Ya." I mean this is a dude with classic material.

This is a dude with more memorable lines than just about any rapper in history.

Crossover appeal without sacrificing his artistry or integrity and it all amounted to mind-boggling success

THE CONTROVERSY

"A wise man once told me never argue with fools, cuz people from a distance can't tell whose who" - Jay Z

The Bad Boy vs. Death Row beef was...not what I would call a beef.

Beef is when two sides equally work to destroy each

other, when two sides are equally invested, when two sides have a real disagreement.

The Bad Boy vs. Death Row was more an issue of straight playa hating than anything.

Death Row watching their dominance starting to recede and just straight turning bitch as the new challenger makes a run for the throne. Like the psychological profile of any bully, them dudes felt threatened and went on a hate campaign that was completely unprovoked.

Read the interviews: Bad Boy was completely caught off guard by all of this.

There are pictures with Tupac standing in front of Bad Boy posters with Biggie.

There was a history of Tupac hanging with Junior Mafia.

Tupac Shakur was born and raised in New York City and by all accounts shared a mutual respect for Biggie. Even their mothers say that they both valued each other's talent and had a positive relationship. All up until Suge Knight needed a pawn to start his hate crimes. The Source Awards, the inuendo and the rumors all culminated into a widespread discord between Bad Boy Records and Death Row Records.

I can tell, even before I went to New York as a producer and met people so close to B.I.G. that you can see their names in the liner notes of his albums... even before all that - being here in Toledo was still intense with the East Coast/West Coast rap hostility.

It involved much more than just Tupac and Biggie.

We felt the tension here as teens arguing back and forth and battling with our own evolution and the art/music we identified with.

When Tupac got shot while coming out of Quad Recording studios in New York during the height of the conflict, it took an already powder keg situation and made it nuclear.

Even though all eye witness accounts and investigations prove Biggie, Puff and members of Bad Boy and Junior Mafia had nothing to do with it, the average knucklehead went along with the lie that Tupac was set up by the people who openly said how much they respected and admired him.

Even though there's surveillance video of members of Junior Mafia running to check on Tupac and actually searching the premises for whom ever was really to blame until they themselves were stopped by police... the nar-

(Continued on Page 14)

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Notorious

(Continued from Page 13)

row-minded rap fan ignored all the evidence and followed Tupac down a hate-fueled path of ignorance.

Rap music became a nation divided. Whereas The Notorious B.I.G. had become the biggest rap star the world had seen in years, his quick ascent to the top of the music world was smudged by a controversy he had no part in starting.

He even went on record saying he didn't have anything but respect for Tupac

even after he was made the target of a pointless beef.

See, what the average thug dude on the street doesn't understand is... B.I.G. was on his grown-man status while everyone else running around like 10-year-olds trying to start fights over nothing.

THE TRAGEDY AND WHAT ATTRACTED IT

Sadly, Christopher Wallace succumbed to an untimely death at the age of 24 while still in the midst of

a controversy that threatened to undermine his amazing success.

He never fell off, didn't really have a downfall because when he died he was still on top.

After becoming one of the highest-selling (one of only a handful of rappers to go diamond status), most critically acclaimed and most dominant figures in hip-hop music history, The Notorious B.I.G. has become an icon even in me-

mori- am.

People still have their opinions, but I think it's worth everyone's time to check out *Notorious* when it starts showing in theatres this week.

Go see it... and don't act up in the movie theater, y'all.

Have some self respect Peace

Contact Michael Hayes at glasscitytruth@yahoo.com



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CLASSIFIEDS

January 07, 2009

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TEACHERS

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Job 994780 & 994781 – University Computing Administrator:

The University of Toledo seeks two University Computing Administrators to provide university-wide info technology support, planning, and designing of desktops; and is also responsible for providing info tech support for faculty, staff, research computing and students.

Required qualification include: a Bachelor's degree in Computer Technology or related field. The qualified candidate must have a min 7 years job related experience to include: min 6 years providing desktop support in Microsoft and Apple hardware and software environments; min 5 years working with wireless networks; min 6 years of Microsoft Windows 2000, XP and Vista; min 3 years working with Active Directory; min 3 years with remote systems management tools; min 5 years building and deploying images using tools such as Ghost or SMS; min 5 years with Apple OSX operating systems and mastery of these operating systems; min 6 years NT 4 Server, Windows 2000 Server, and Windows 2003 Server; min 6 years with database setup and administration using SQL Server, OLAP Server and Oracle; min 6 years with multiple Unix based Operating Systems such as FreeBSD, OpenBSD, Linux, etc.; min 6 years working with various industry standard software packages; min 2 years providing supervision to student employees.

To apply, submit a cover letter (include position title and job #), a resume, as well as the names and contact information for three professional references to: The University of Toledo, Human Resources Department, Toledo, Ohio 43606-3390; Fax (419) 530-1490; or email recruit@utoledo.edu, which is preferred. Use only one method of application. **Resumes must be received by Friday, January 16, 2009.**

The University of Toledo is an Equal Access, Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer and Educator.

INTERESTED BIDDERS:

TOLEDO PUBLIC SCHOOLS – ARLINGTON, RAYMER, REYNOLDS AND SPRING ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AND GROVE PATTERSON ACADEMY– FURNISHINGS AND EQUIPMENT PACKAGE

Sealed bids will be accepted by the Board of Education of the Toledo Public School District until **1:00 p.m. on January 21, 2009**, at the Toledo Public Schools Treasurers' Room 3, 420 E. Manhattan Blvd., Toledo, Ohio 43608, for all labor, material and supervision necessary for the Furnishings and Equipment of Arlington Elementary, Raymer Elementary, Reynolds Elementary, Spring Elementary and Grove Patterson Academy, as more fully described in the drawings and specifications for the project prepared by The Collaborative Inc., Munger Munger & Associates Architects Inc. and Duket Porter Associates and will be opened publicly and read immediately thereafter.

Bid Documents for the project may be examined at the F.W. Dodge plan rooms in Columbus, Builders Exchange in Toledo, University of Toledo – Capacity Building, E.O.P.A. – Hamilton Building, Northwest Ohio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and The Plan Room in Ann Arbor, Construction Association of Michigan, Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce and Ohio Construction News.

Bidders may obtain copies of the documents starting **January 7th, 2009 which can be purchased from Becker Impressions, 4646 Angola Rd, Toledo, Ohio 43615 Phone: 419-385-5303. Drawings may be obtained on CD-ROM for no cost with the purchase of the specifications.**

A PREBID CONFERENCE is scheduled for **January 12th, 2009 at 1:00 p.m.** at Toledo Public Schools' Board Room, 420 E. Manhattan Blvd., Toledo, Ohio 43608

If you have any questions or a need for additional information, please direct all questions in writing to LeShay.Hadley@lgb-llc.com, by phone at (419) 776-5600, or (fax) (877) 281-0784.

Bid Item #1: Arlington Elementary School FF&E	\$232,348.00
Bid Item #2: Arlington Elementary Office FF&E	\$90,357.00
Bid Item #3: Grove Patterson Academy School FF&E	\$323,384.00
Bid Item #4: Grove Patterson Academy Office FF&E	\$125,760.00
Bid Item #5: Raymer Elementary School School FF&E	\$307,155.35
Bid Item #6: Raymer Elementary School Office FF&E	\$128,000.00
Bid Item #7: Reynolds Elementary School School FF&E	\$333,015.17
Bid Item #8: Reynolds Elementary School Office FF&E	\$135,000.00
Bid Item #9: Spring Elementary School School FF&E	\$255,814.82
Bid Item #10: Spring Elementary School Office FF&E	\$103,000.00
Total Estimate:	\$2,033,834.34

INTERESTED BIDDERS:

TOLEDO PUBLIC SCHOOLS – OLD BOWSER HIGH SCHOOL, BIRMINGHAM ELEMENTARY, OLD ELMHURST ELEMENTARY, RIVERSIDE ELEMENTARY, AND WALBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS DEMOLITION

Sealed bids will be accepted by the Board of Education of the Toledo Public School District until **1:00 p.m. on January 21st, 2009**, at the Toledo Public Schools Treasurers' Room 3, 420 E. Manhattan Blvd., Toledo, Ohio 43608, for all labor, material and supervision necessary for the demolition of Birmingham, Old Elmhurst, Riverside, and Walbridge Elementary Schools and Old Bowsher High School, as more fully described in the drawings and specifications for the project prepared by The Collaborative Inc, Munger Munger and Associates Architects Inc, and MacPherson Architects and will be opened publicly and read immediately thereafter.

Bid Documents for the project may be examined at the F.W. Dodge plan rooms in Columbus, Builders Exchange in Toledo, University of Toledo – Capacity Building, E.O.P.A. – Hamilton Building, Northwest Ohio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and The Plan Room in Ann Arbor, Construction Association of Michigan, Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce and Ohio Construction News.

Bidders may obtain copies of the documents starting **January 7th, 2009 which can be purchased from Toledo Blue Print, 6964 Mc Nerney Rd., Northwood, Ohio 43619, phone: (419) 661-9841. Drawings may be obtained on CD-ROM for no cost with the purchase of the specifications.**

A PREBID CONFERENCE is scheduled for **January 12th, 2009 at 2:00 p.m.** at Toledo Public Schools' Board Room, 420 E. Manhattan Blvd., Toledo, Ohio 43608. A walk-thru schedule will be provided at the pre-bid meeting.

If you have any questions or a need for additional information, please direct all questions in writing to jessica.dandino@lgb-llc.com, by phone at (419) 776-5600, or (fax) (877) 281-0784.

Bid Item No. 1 Old Bowsher High School Demolition:	\$ 797,643.00
Bid Item No. 2 Birmingham Elementary School Demolition:	\$ 216,540.00
Bid Item No. 3 Old Elmhurst Elementary School Demolition	\$ 171,325.00
Bid Item No. 4 Riverside Elementary School Demolition	\$ 348,911.00
Bid Item No. 5 Walbridge Elementary School Demolitions	\$ 255,427.00

Total \$1,789,846.00

“Yes We Can Through Five Years of Leadership and Change”

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Rev. James H. Willis, Sr. celebrated five years as pastor of St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church last Sunday with the help of family, friends and congregants.

“I am honored to be here with one of the great leaders of our community,” said Toledo Councilman Michael Ashford in tribute to the pastor near the conclusion of Sunday’s morning service. “I appreciate all he does outside of the walls of the church.” Ashford, who is a member of Indiana Avenue Baptist Missionary Church was in attendance to bring greetings from that pastor, John E. Roberts, and the congregation.

“We’re honoring a great man,” said one member of the St. Paul congregation in trib-



James Willis, Jr., First Lady Linnie Willis, Rev. James Willis, Sr., Shelby Jr. and Shelby Willis, Sr.

ute to her pastor. “God hand-picked this man.”

The morning service at St. Paul featured a proclamation by Rev. Timothy Brinkley of Mt. Hermon Baptist Church in West Point, Mississippi. Brinkley and his wife of 22 years, Glenda Willis-Brinkley

(Rev. Willis’s sister), braved the weekend snow storm and drove to Ohio from Mississippi to participate in the celebration.

The evening service featured a sermon by Rev. W. L. Perryman of Jerusalem MBC.

During his five years as pastor of St. Paul, Willis has added more than 125 new members, added parking space, established a Young Adult Ministry, established a Praise Dance Ministry, ordained four deacons and one minister, consecrated three deaconesses and blessed five babies, developed a Youth Bible Study, among other accomplishments.

First Lady Linnie Willis and sons, James, Jr. and Shelby, also were on hand to help celebrate the fifth anniversary.



Rev. Timothy Brinkley, Glenda Willis-Brinkley, First Lady Linnie Willis, Rev. James Willis, Sr.

Inauguration Celebration – January 20, 2009

Aretha Franklin is scheduled to sing, Elizabeth Alexander will recite a poem, Pastor Rick Warren will pray, and Yo-Yo Ma will play the cello

Six locations of the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library invite the community to view the historical inauguration on **Tuesday, January 20, 2009** of President-Elect Barack Obama, as he becomes the 44th President of the United States of America, and Vice President-Elect Joseph Biden becomes Vice President.

Each Library location is scheduled to air the Inaugural coverage at various times. Please see start times below. The Oath of Office Swearing-in ceremony is scheduled to begin at noon.

Light refreshments will be served at each Library location. Celebrate this historic event with your neighbors, children, friends and family in a welcoming Library location, where knowledge is fostered!

Participating locations:

- **Main Library**, 325 Michigan St. (Huntington Meeting Room) – 10 a.m.
- **Kent Branch Library**, 3101 Collingwood Blvd. – 10 a.m.
- **Lagrange Branch Library**, 3422 Lagrange St. – 11:30 a.m.
- **Mott Branch Library**, 1085 Dorr St. – 10 a.m.
- **South Branch Library**, 1736 Broadway - noon
- **West Toledo Branch Library**, 1320 Sylvania Ave. - noon

This public viewing of the Inauguration is free and open to the public. For more details, please call 419.259.5207.

Black Contractors

(Continued from Page 3)

(5) Notable Achievement Award for saying one thing but doing another: white contractors who got fat and greasy off of public monies but were constantly crying about not being able to find minority contractors. Note: with that much money flowing to my bank account, I would fake it also!

How did this debacle come to this point? Very simple. When this huge public funding project first came to light some six years ago, the enabling legislation did not include oversight that could call these smarmy contractors on the carpet for their intentional negligence.

After the usual PR statements and photo ops of the contractors and the oversight committee members, everything went downhill and stayed there. Meaningful oversight was a sham and black contractors lost millions of dollars to this charade.

What was needed from the inception was an overseer who was akin to a pit bull on steroids who did not give a whit about who was who and the size of the contracts. The kind

of person when you would say, “Good Morning”, they would answer, “what’s so good about it?”

This person would have the job of pulling down their pants and shaking their “financial jones” in the public when these fat cats started doing their usual dog and pony show of denying, delaying, obfuscating, contorting and twisting and simply playing stupid when they were not living up to the expectations that they would seriously seek out minority contractors to feed with them at the public trough.

But no...these white contractors and their conjoined confederates wanted it all. Even at the last meeting to discuss this outrage, **none** of the contractors even showed up to discuss their lack of commitment to minority inclusion.

Why should they? Their reasoning was: “What can they do to us? We got the money and they can not get it back!”

Their arrogance and audacity was profound and almost as embarrassing as the black contractors and the school

board and the oversight committee (what a farce!) standing around looking clueless as they **now** try to sound tough and assess blame.

Note to oversight committee and TPS: the money is gone. The deed is done. Too little...too late.

What is even more exasperating is the fact that this con will continue to play out in other current and future awards of public taxpayer monies until someone has the guts to demand that before these wily fat cat white contractors can touch another public dollar that there be, in black and white (no pun intended), real biting sanctions for their refusal to including worker contractors and workers at the job sites.

White contractors in Toledo for decades have had the run of the roost when it comes to public money and contracts and the entrenched good ol’ boy network has led to systematic exclusion of minority contractors and their ability get a firm toe hold in this lucrative industry.

For decades, Jim Crow and outright racism has been a barrier against minorities trying to enter the skill trades and much less becoming a contractor and getting bonding and having the owner of the projects tell their general contractors to be inclusive.

If the owners and funding sources were to get a modicum of a backbone and tell the general contractors to do the right thing, we would not have this problem.

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