



The Sojourner's Truth

Volume 15, No.14

"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

January 21, 2009



Mr. President



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This Strikes Us ...

A Sojourner's Truth Editorial

By the way, our president is black. President Barack Obama is a black man. In fact, the 44th president of the United States is our *first* African-American president.

Now we know it's fashionable for some to insist that they don't really see a black man as our president, that what they see instead is a president who happens to be a black man.

That's just total nonsense. It's also a total denial of one of the most important dynamics of American life for the last several centuries.

Here we are in America, having just sworn in, as the rest of the world saw this week, a man of African descent to lead the most powerful nation in the history of this planet, and some of us are blasé enough about this most historic event to proclaim that we don't see him as a black man. Good luck with that.

Here we are in America, the country that virtually invented the modern concept of racism, and some of us are pretending that the election of a man with darker skin than that of most Americans is a totally unremarkable event.

Two years ago, Tony Dungy became the first African-American coach to win a Super Bowl and the country was all atwitter over that and now some would have us believe that the first black president is ... excuse us, the first president who happens to be black is one of those occurrences of little note.

Stop it, people!

This is a *black* man leading the country.

Now that President Obama is finally tucked away in the Oval Office – after what seems to have been the longest transition in recent history, now that the inaugural hangovers have subsided, now that reality has set in that we have a new president, a new administration and a new attitude towards so many of the issues that have plagued this country and this world for the last eight years, we can open up the paper, go online, turn on the TV and see what we are going to be seeing for the next four to eight years ... a black man in charge.

For the next four to eight years we are going to see an African-American First Lady undertake projects dear to her heart and we are going to see her do that just about every day as we examine what she wears, how she styles her hair and when she hugs and encourages those who have been visited by calamity or bad fortune.

For the next four to eight years we are going to watch two little African-American girls blossom into beautiful teenagers.

Everything is different now. Let's not pretend otherwise. The nation has changed, the world has changed because, in large measure, America has a black president. The very fact that our president is black sends a number of messages to a number of constituents.

The fact that a president of African heritage now leads America re-affirms the American dream around the world. For more than two centuries, citizens of the world have viewed America as a land of possibilities. Events such as this one reinforce the idea of those possibilities.

The fact that America now has a black president changes the perspective that so many white Americans have of African-Americans. Even for those dwelling in red America, even for those inhabitants of states such as Wyoming and Oklahoma which voted overwhelmingly for Obama's opponent, comes the realization that they can be led and are being led by a black man.

For some of those living in the Deep South, with that region's long tradition of open racial animosity, what happened this week may be the culmination of a nightmare realized. For many, however, acceptance of that stark reality will dawn during the next four years.

And for so many African-Americans – those who grew up in an era when the sight of a black person on television was a distinct anomaly and those who have come of age in an era in which black heroes tend to either dribble balls or spew rhymes – the frequent sightings of a black president carry a different message.

A black president carries hope for so many African-Americans. That message is not that the brother is going to reach down into your neighborhood and personally empower you. The message is that black folks don't have to feel helpless; African-Americans don't have to perpetually see themselves as victims because of the color of their skin; they don't have to wallow in failure and feel that it is their lot in life.

So why would anyone look at our black president and try to pretend that he is just another commander-in-chief ... who happens to be black?

In some distant future, when this country has elected its second, third or fourth black person to the presidency, then we can afford to shrug our shoulders. Now is the time to relish the latest chapter in ever-evolving American dream.

The Sojourner's Truth

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"Breathe Free: The Plan to Stop Smoking;" Collingwood Center; Smoking cessation program with sessions on January 20, 22, 26, 29, 30, February 3, 10; 5:30 pm each day; Facilitated by healthcare practitioners and a support team: 419-474-6639 or 419-345-6452

January 24

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

January 26

Look Good Feel Better: Training and certification session for volunteer licensed cosmetologists and estheticians; 12:30 to 4:30 pm; Regional office of the American Cancer Society, 740 Commerce Drive, Perrysburg; 888-227-6446

January 26-27

Owens Community College: Open auditions for area residents for student production of "The Curate Shakespeare As You Like It;" 6 to 9 pm; Center for Fine and Performing Arts: 567-661-2798

January 31

Black Bridal Expo: "Creating Your Special Day;" Bethlehem Life Center; Noon to 5 pm; Wedding vendors, event planners: 419-346-5275 or www.gcreationsproductions.com

"Keeping It Together:" One-day event for couples; Reignite the sexual passion, overcoming difficult financial times, more money, getting your point across; 9 am to 4 pm; Lunch included: 419-255-0097, ext 103 or email brenndaahaley90@sbcglobal.net

February 1

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

February 6

St. Luke's Hospital: *Wear Red for Women*; 7 to 8:30 pm; Hospital auditorium; Guest speaker Patti Hathaway, CSP: 419-897-8484

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Karyn McConnell Hancock Sentenced to Four Years

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Former attorney Karyn McConnell Hancock was sentenced, on Thursday January 15, to a term of imprisonment of four years for the theft of more than \$600,000 from 22 former clients.

The sentence, imposed by the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas, will be carried out at the state's facility for women in Marysville, OH.

McConnell Hancock, a former city councilman, had been in private practice for a number of years. She became the focus of national attention in November 2007 when she claimed to have been kidnapped and spirited off to Georgia. She later pled guilty of a misdemeanor of raising a false alarm and sentenced to two years of probation with a suspended three-month jail sentence, a fine of \$300 and 40 hours of community service.

Last November, she pled



guilty of the current crimes for which she will serve prison time and have to pay restitution to the victims of her offenses.

McConnell Hancock, the daughter of Toledo Municipal Judge C. Allen McConnell and Tempie McConnell, is a graduate of Toledo's Notre Dame Academy and Miami University. She earned a law

degree from Case Western Reserve in 1997 and then went into private practice with her father's law firm which she subsequently took over. She was appointed to a seat on Toledo City Council in early 2003 and won election to an incomplete at-large term on her own merits. She lost her campaign for re-election in 2005.

Connecting Point May Find a Way to Survive After All

*By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor*

Connecting Point, a Toledo non-profit agency that serves thousands of area youth with substance abuse and mental illness problems, was pronounced dead last week by all concerned. It appears, however, that those predictions were merely part of the roller coaster ride the agency has been on over the last several months.

Some connected with the agency are quite a bit more optimistic this week that the group can weather its financial woes, restructure and continue providing services. Those services reached over 2,000 children in 2008.

Last Thursday, however, was definitely a low point. On that day, the agency told staff members – there are approximately 150 employed by Connecting Point – and parents of their clients that the non-profit would be shuttered within 30 days.

"We just did not see this coming," said Diana Chatman, chairman of the board of directors. "I'm in shock."

What took the board by surprise was a meeting with officials from Fifth Third Bank during which Chatman and her colleagues were informed that the bank would no longer "float any more overdrafts for the every other week payroll," said Chatman.

For the staff and board, that appeared to be the end of the agency.

Connecting Point has had serious financial difficulties for a number of years. Part of the debt stems from a line of credit from Fifth Third that has placed the agency in debt to the financial institution to the tune of \$2 million. Since September, the bank has been working with Connecting Point to float overdrafts caused by the semi-weekly payroll when funds to cover the payroll arrive late.

During last week's meet-

ing, bank representatives informed the board and interim Director Delores Williams, they could no longer assist with the payroll.

"They recommended we seek legal counsel and retain our billing personnel," said Chatman.

According to Chatman, the bank's immediate concerns were operating losses the agency has experienced in the last three years, turnover of key management and finance personnel, the inability to meet projections along with the overdraft status of accounts.

For the board and management, the decision was all the more shocking because they felt that they had a plan in place with the bank to deal with such issues.


That was on Thursday.

By Friday, however, help had arrived at Connecting Point in the form of outside consultants from the community who are eager to see

(Continued on Page 4)

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
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**"25 Years Later...Rekindling the
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at
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Keynote title:
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A panel discussion on student empowerment

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Opportunity for Free Tuition Expanded to 21 Ohio Cities, U of Toledo President Announces During MLK Speech

Special to The Truth

During the fall, The University of Toledo introduced a groundbreaking new scholarship program designed to provide academically prepared, but financially challenged students in Ohio's six largest public school districts a chance to attend college by offering them 100 percent free tuition and fees.

The UT Guarantee, as it is known, has now been broadened to include public school students in the state of Ohio's 21 urban centers, known as the Urban 21, UT President Lloyd Jacobs announced today during an MLK Unity Celebration speech on campus.

"That means thousands of additional students will be eligible to benefit from the UT Guarantee, from the most under represented portions of our state," said



Jacobs.

"We believe this scholarship will not only help us attract high-quality students, but also help us improve diversity at The University of Toledo. This will help our recruitment efforts in areas of the state that are all-too-often left behind by higher education."

Originally focused on Ohio's largest cities — Toledo, Akron, Columbus, Cincinnati, Cleveland and Dayton — the offer will be extended to public school district students in 15 additional cities:

- Canton;
- Cleveland Heights;

- East Cleveland;
- Elyria;
- Euclid;
- Hamilton;
- Lima;
- Lorain;
- Mansfield;
- Middletown;
- South-Western;
- Springfield;
- Trotwood-Madison;
- Warren; and
- Youngstown.

Students attending the public school districts in the Urban 21 can now attend UT without pay-

ing for tuition or general fees, if they meet the following eligibility requirements:

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

Jacobs added, "So let me encourage the high school seniors in the au-

dience to fill out the FAFSA and start thinking about enrolling at UT this fall. And to all the junior high and high school students in the crowd... keep your grades up and we'll find a way to get you on your way to a college degree."

The UT Guarantee program is good for all four years, as long as its recipients maintain a 3.0 grade-point-average, complete 30 credit hours each school year, and file a FAFSA annually.

Connecting Point

(Continued from Page 3)

the agency survive. Together the management and consultants reached out to the bank to re-establish communication and it appeared as if survival was a possibility.

"A major community outcry ... calls made on our behalf and we had an agreement to sit down again," said Williams.

Then another devastating blow — Connecting Point's two primary psychiatrists announced that they were moving to another agency. From Williams' perspective, that sealed the agency's fate.

"That's it," Williams told The Truth early Monday morning. "Our psychiatrists have made a decision to move on."

But staff, board and consultants worked feverishly throughout the day to regain their footing. By the end of the day, it appeared as if the agency could weather the loss of such key staff and that there was yet a possibility that its financial difficulties were not insurmountable.

"I am very optimistic," said Chatman in marked contrast to her doom-and-gloom report of the previous week. "There is a possibility that we can turn the corner. We are working with the bank. Last Thursday we were not hopeful that the bank would be willing to work with us. Than help arrived with other sources. We now feel we can re-open talks with the bank ... it sounds good. I'm very excited but we have to move fast."

Stay tuned.

APICS Toledo Announces 2009 Student Scholarship Recipients

Special to The Truth

The APICS Toledo chapter announced the winners of its annual college scholarship program last week. The focus of this scholarship program is the recognition of academic excellence among college and university students majoring in operations management, supply chain management, or other closely related academic programs.

The theme of this scholarship program is "operational excellence begins with academic excellence." This year's recipients are: Ashley Timmons, Teresia Dulle, Myles Stewart, Myles Knechtges, Cynthia Knechtges and, Katherine Eboch. Each of these students will receive \$500 towards their educational expenses.

A major goal of the APICS Toledo Chapter is to better educate and inform the professional community in the Northwestern Ohio area. One way that is accomplished is to aid in the education of highly talented students planning careers in operations manage-

ment, supply chain management or other closely related fields. As such, a major objective of the scholarship program is to encourage stronger ties between the local academic community and APICS Toledo. The purpose of this objective is to support the

efforts of students enrolled in local colleges and universities who will most likely be employed by firms operating within the greater Toledo area.

In addition, the APICS Toledo Board of Directors also approved the contribution of \$500 to the Toledo Northwest-

ern Ohio Food Bank and \$5,000 to the APICS Toledo scholarship endowment funds at Bowling Green State University and The University of Toledo. Each school's endowment funds will receive \$2,500.



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Laura, Willie's Wife

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

Joya, Willie's Daughter

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EDGE Hosts Forum to Motivate Construction Business Owners

By Artisha S. Lawson
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Dozens of local construction business owners filled The University of Toledo's Scott Park Campus auditorium on Monday, January 12, 2009 to hear more about the Ohio EDGE (Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity) program, which aims to assist businesses with state government contracts and services.

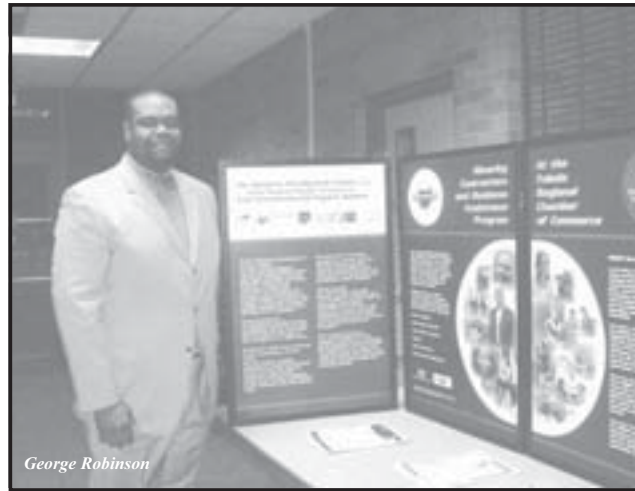
The brief open forum and networking social answered important questions which included financial assistance availability, minority business bonding program, and Ohio mini-loan programs.

During the forum portion, Todd McGonigle of MBE/EDGE Unit answered several questions about the basic services provided by EDGE. "Each EDGE office can serve as a locator service for when contractors and agencies

call us asking for individuals that may produce their needed product or service, so then we generate lists for them of those individuals that we have determined based on the nature of your business that could provide that service," said McGonigle.

Since state agencies provide contracts, not the Department of Development's EDGE offices, many participants asked specifically about what they can expect when they contact their local EDGE office.

"State agencies administer contracts, when they come to us it's already been contracted and they're trying to find a certain subcontractor. You can contact any of the state agencies. They have underneath Governor Ted Strickland's executive order that there was a re-



George Robinson

quirement that each state agency has an EDGE-qualified personnel responsible that program is being administered properly so you can ask specifically about that," said McGonigle.

Along with the EDGE

program, Toledo Chamber of Commerce representative George E. Robinson, who also serves as the president of Toledo Mi-

program, bonding program, and educational training opportunities that assist our clients in completing

tomers. Some of the certifications interested us the most, since most of the other businesses are construction related. We're in laundry and uniforms, and it's a little harder for my husband Ron and I, but if you listen intently there is still work out there for us," said Mrs. Murdock.

The University of Toledo partnered with EDGE to work with EDGE-certified businesses and intends to help minority-owned businesses access EDGE services and compete for business at UT.

"The University takes very seriously the commitment to the EDGE program. We want to increase our numbers, not only fulfill our five percent obligation but improve on that. So we are seriously engaging with the EDGE community. So please get your certifications done, it's been said several times, it's not a hard thing to do. There are people who will assist you, take advantage of opportunities presented to you," said Charles Lehnert, VP of Facilities & Construction for the University of Toledo.

According to the state of Ohio's EDGE webpage, the criteria necessary for quality for EDGE includes: disadvantaged due to race, ethnic origin, gender, physical/mental disability; long-term residency in an environment isolated from mainstream Ohio society; personal net worth of each owner must not exceed \$250,000 at program entry and personal net worth of each owner must not exceed \$750,000 during program participation.

The EDGE program is designed by the state of Ohio to facilitate access to state government contracts and business services for socially and economically disadvantaged business enterprises. To find out more information about EDGE contact their office at Equal Opportunity Division, EDGE Certification Office, 30 E. Broad St, 18th Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414 or visit their website <http://www.ohio.gov/das/EDGE>.



Inger and Ron Murdock

nority Business Enterprise, explained to the participants that the Chamber of Commerce will help the contractors in various areas of business which include both technical and development strategies. "Specifically to construction we're also introducing scheduling development," said Robinson. "We realize our constituents need assistance in many areas and we also provide financial assistance, through our capital assistance program with Fifth Third Bank. We also provide minority business loan

EDGE certifications and any other certifications you can think of, give us a call at 419-243-8191."

Besides construction business owners, local laundromat owners Inger and Ron Murdock of Odella's Washland, located at 539 Dorr Street, attended because they wanted to learn about ways to expand their growing business.

"We need new business, we need business. This is a place where we can find our programs that are available to mature our business to get new cus-

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The Alpha Phi Alpha MLK Scholarship Breakfast

By Artisha S. Lawson
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, the men of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Alpha Xi Lambda Chapter held their annual scholarship breakfast on Saturday, January 17, 2009 at the Park Inn Hotel.

The 17th annual event opened with the Negro National Anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing" which was led by LaToya Williams and sung by 150 breakfast attendees. An inspirational dance was performed by Nikki Morris to the selection "I Believe," which featured upbeat melodies and inspirational words.

During 2008 due to great success of the fraternity's annual golf tournament and scholarship breakfast, the



Schylar Meadows

the chapter's director of education. "The golf outing and scholarship breakfast – all proceeds of ticket sales here – go towards putting scholarship funds towards academic seniors in the Toledo area to attend college."

tant to the president at The University of Toledo but has now transitioned to the role of executive director of Student African American Brotherhood Organization (SAAB) National Headquarters. He is the founder of SAAB which strives to instill a caring spirit into participants. He is also a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

During his speech Bledsoe opened with a prayer for President-elect Barack Obama while the audience created a unity circle. Bledsoe said that America needs to pay more attention to black males to ensure that future black families are strong with black fathers.

"Before America loses another generation of young people, especially black males, we should ask our-

selves if black males are the topic of discussion, if not then who will our black women marry," said Bledsoe. "Who will be good fathers to educate black children? Who will build the economy of black communities? Who will black boys immolate to become black men?"

The breakfast closed with special recognition given to The Drum Major Award winner, Schylar Meadows, a Toledo native who began her public relations career in 1999. However, her passion is both local and national

politics which included active involvement in The Young Democrats. Currently she's a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., ambassador for Go For Red campaign, and host of 107.3FM Juice Talk.

"Go out in your community and bring it. It's no secret that the former award winners have held influence in my life, so I'm just following in their footsteps," said Meadows.

The men of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., Alpha Xi Lambda Chapter expressed

their thanks to sponsors Columbia Gas of Ohio, University of Toledo College of Pharmacy, University of Toledo Undergraduate Admissions, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. was founded on December 4, 1906 as the first intercollegiate Greek-letter fraternity established for African-Americans at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York by seven college men.

Locally, the chapter of Alpha Xi Lambda's history began on November 3, 1928. The members have spent the last 81 years serving the Toledo community through various projects including: March of Dimes, Alpha Towers Senior Citizen Complex, Scholarship Golf Tournament, Project Alpha Monthly Mentorship Program, voter registration and Northwest Ohio Centennial Celebration.



Scholarship Breakfast Committee

chapter was able to award over \$7,500 in scholarships to three high school senior males, reported Craig Teamer,

The guest speaker, Tyrone Bledsoe, PhD, is the former vice president for Student Life and special assis-



Robert Langford and Tyrone Bledsoe



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The Work That Remains

By State Senator Teresa Fedor
Guest Column



continues. The fight will continue until every child receives a quality education, many. When I think about the challenges that face the men

I am confident that the only way to overcome our obstacles is to face them head-on

As the nation pauses to remember the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., I am humbled by his many contributions to humanity and encouraged to continue the work that he began. It is clear that our nation is better because of Dr. King and others who came before him, stood alongside him, and will certainly follow him.

I am grateful to Dr. King, yet sobered by the work that remains. I understand that although the nation has elected our first black president, our fight for social justice and equality con-

every parent and/or guardian receives quality, affordable healthcare, and until our families receive real opportunities to meet their financial needs through robust economic development. But there are other challenges.

Having spearheaded the effort to pass Human Trafficking legislation, I know that our country continues to face unprecedented challenges. From predators, who prey on the unsuspecting and the vulnerable, to those who would deny that such problems exist, the enemies of justice are

and women, boys and girls in this state. I am confident that the only way to overcome our obstacles is to face them head-on. I concur with Dr. King's when he said: "when you are right you cannot be too radical; when you are wrong, you cannot be too conservative." That's why I'll spend January 19 and each subsequent day working to uphold Dr. King's vision for a more just and humane society. I hope that you too will put your hands to the plow and join me in helping to make this state, and country the best that it can possibly be!

Winter Safe Sitter® Classes Show Kids How to Be Better Babysitters



To teach boys and girls ages 11 to 13 how to be more responsible babysitters, St. Luke's Hospital will offer two sessions of its Safe Sitter® class this winter.

The sessions will be held Saturdays, Feb. 7 and March 14, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the hospital, 5901 Monclova Road, Maumee. Taught by nurses, youth will learn safe and nurturing child-care techniques, behavior management skills and appropriate responses to medical emergencies.

The class costs \$35 and includes lunch and snacks. Because the classes fill quickly, early registration is recommended by calling 419-897-8484. Special reservations can be made for groups of six or more, such as Girl Scout Troops or 4-H Clubs.

Buckeye Provides Relief

Special to The Truth

On 12/23, Buckeye CableSystem provided two local charities with warm gloves, hats, scarves and socks. As part of its winter campaign, Project Bundle Up, Buckeye CableSystem delivered hundreds of warm items to the Cherry Street Mission and the Battered Women's shelter.

"As a local company, Buckeye CableSystem is deeply committed to our community. While our focus is always on quality service and providing the best value we can for our customers, at this time we wanted to help those who

may be in need this holiday season," said Florence Buchanan, vice president of Sales & Marketing at Buckeye CableSystem.

"It has been a particularly cold winter already and these charities can really use the items for the men, women and children they serve within our community," she added.

The delivery of gloves, hats, scarves and socks follows Buckeye CableSystem's recent marketing campaign that committed these charitable contributions when customers upgraded their services to a VIP Bundle. As customers "bundled up" to

become a Buckeye Video, Internet and Phone customer, Buckeye CableSystem purchased the winter items on their behalf.

"We are very appreciative to Buckeye CableSystem and their customers for this generous donation. We are serving more men, women, and children than ever before, and we can only do this through the generous support of our community," said Cherry Street's Vice President of Development Rodney Schuster.

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MLK Classic Hosts Classic High School Matchups

Sojourner's Truth Staff



Scott vs. Akron Buchtel

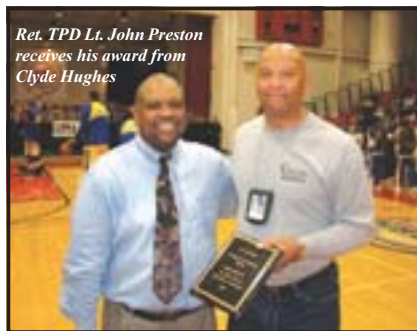


Libbey vs. Pershing

The 13th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Classic came to Toledo again this past Monday presented by the Northwest Ohio Black Media Association (NOBMA).

Toledo's Scott High School's boys' basketball team faced off against Akron Buchtel in the 1 p.m. tournament opener and lost 64 to 52. In the second game, Libbey High School lost to Detroit Pershing, Michigan's No. 1 ranked team, by a score of 86 to 57.

The Classic, which was held at Owens Community



Ret. TPD Lt. John Preston receives his award from Clyde Hughes

College, is part of NOBMA's fundraising effort to provide scholarships to college students. Each

year NOBMA awards three such scholarships in the names of William A. Brower, the late associate editor of the Blade; Art J. Edgerton, the late Clear Channel broadcaster and Al Smith, the late award-winning WTOL-TV reporter and founding member of NOBMA.

In addition to the games, NOBMA also takes the time at the Classic to honor those who have made outstanding contributions to the community in the past year. This year NOBMA honored Robin Wheatley,

Ph.D., principal of Early College High School; John Jones, executive director of the Greater Toledo Urban League; Toledo Police Department retired Lt. John Preston and Justin Chapman, student and athlete who died prematurely several years ago. John Chapman, Justin's father,

(Continued on Page 9)



Honoring the U.S. Marines



John Chapman accepts award in his son's name



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Classic

(Continued from Page 8)



NOBMA honors Robin Wheatley

accepted in his son's name. Pershing's Deon Dismuke and Keith Appling, Scott's Vernon Freeman, Libbey's Brandon Ham and Buchtel's Tiondre Johnson and Marwan Muhammad were named to the MLK Classic All-Tournament Team.

NOBMA, the Toledo-based affiliate of the National Association of Black



Journalists, was founded in 1990 with the purpose of bringing together African-American communicators to honor outstanding achievement, to assist in expanding job opportunities for black communicators and to identify potential black communicators in local high school and colleges.

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Commercial Real Estate 101

By Rodney Neely
Real Estate Contributor

Ah yeah, commercial real estate! This is my personal passion. It's been said, that "if you find a job you love you will never work again". Well this is it for me!

The hustle, the deal making, as well as the strategy of negotiation makes this business perfect for anyone who is smart, a self starter and a go-getter.

The light bulb went off in my mind years ago as I watched my grandparents buy house after house as rental properties. It occurred to me that if each tenant pays \$400 to \$500 dollars per month on those houses, then a 200 or 300-unit apartment complex paying the same must be worth millions. From that point I had to know more about the business, so I began to study.

The realization that this kind of investing is the primary vehicle that creates most of the wealth in world peaked my curiosity and led me into

the brokerage side of the business where I received a very thorough training by some of the best sales agents in the industry during my 10-year career.

If you were to look at the biographies of the vast majority of the wealthy people in this country and around the world you would find that there is a substantial amount of investment real estate in their portfolios.

What is commercial real estate you ask? The best way to answer that is that anything other than a home would qualify. We're born in it, hospitals. We go there when we die, cemeteries. Shopping malls, schools, medical buildings, restaurants and the list goes on and on. That's what's great about it. It's everywhere and we hardly recognize it when we see it because it's part of the natural landscape.

Even in today's tough in-

vestment market there are many ways to make money using commercial real estate properties. Although very different from the residential kind, these acquisitions require a bit more sophistication to be a successful investor.

Personally, I see opportunity lined up and down every street and boulevard, in every city and state in this country. The chance to own and operate a business, lease out space or buy a property to improve and resell at a profit is limitless.

Nevertheless, the barrier to entry is much greater than in residential buying and leasing. Strict credit requirements and high down payments keep most people of modest means out of the game but it is possible for each of us to get into the business.

First, get educated on the property types and what you plan to do with it. Each prop-

erty has its own use based on the zoning of each particular parcel. Commercial, multifamily, industrial, retail or office are the major zoning designations issued by the municipality. This is what determines how a building or land can be used at a location.

Second, spread the risk by taking on experienced partners. This will reduce your liability and diminish the individual equity required. By sharing this down payment cost you will be able to buy a property that gives a better return on investment than the smaller deals. This is only the beginning of the process of building wealth through real estate.

In determining if this type of investing is right for you I would suggest that you seek out experienced professional help. Contacting any of the top local commercial real estate brokerage firms would be a good start in the search for the right property.

Of course there are some fundamental things you will need to be educated on before you take that step. Those lessons can be had inexpen-

sively by using the library, commercial loan officers at your bank, the internet and by tracking the latest sales and lease rates in your target area.

Or they can get extremely expensive by jumping into deals without doing your homework. This is a guaranteed way for you to lose your investment if your instincts are wrong. Like all investments there are some inherent risks to each opportunity, but no risk, no reward.

Each investor at every level should know his or her risk tolerance. I suggest creating a personal risk profile to determine just how far you want to be exposed to losing your down payment or possibly more. You should understand that there is no such thing as the perfect deal.

If you are waiting on the perfect situation with no risk at all then you will never complete a deal. With that said, you must realize when it's a deal that you should walk away from. Some of the deals that I made the most money on were the ones I chose to pass on, because I didn't lose

anything.

Once the decision has been made to get into this side of the business there are several key things you will need: a great banking relationship, contacts in the commercial real estate brokerage community and patience. Furthermore, as you review each of the opportunities brought to you the first and most important consideration in my opinion is, what is my exit strategy? How do I get out of this deal if it goes sideways?

Develop as many ways to mitigate your risk by exiting a deal with a profit before you make the deal. These tried and tested tactics have helped create wealth and cash flow for investors in the past and continue to be used by many experienced businessmen in the industry today.

Although historically this wealth and legacy generating tool used for generations by others had been unavailable to the minority community, yet today it's an ideal source of income and upward mobility for our generation. Always remember that in life success is the greatest revenge.

Teri Scott: Intent on Giving Back and Helping Young Artists

Sojourner's Truth Staff



Meet Teri Scott.

Former Miss Toledo beauty pageant winner, promoter of local artists, music recorder, show producer ... dedicated to a goal of giving back to the community.

And to accomplish her goal of giving back, she has chosen to work with young artists, particularly her son, Yung Weble, an aspiring rapper in his own right.

"I want to open doors for Toledo youth by empowering them with their talents and giving them positive knowledge the way I was empowered as a teenager full of ambition," says Scott.

As a teenager, Scott had a lot of support, she recalls. She competed in numerous pageants with the help of her parents and was

named Miss Pre-Teen Toledo, Miss Talented Teen Toledo and Miss Toledo, in large part because of her talents as a vocalist, says Scott.

Now, she's on the other side of the talent search.

Recently Scott produced a show at the Club Bijou that she says was "very successful" because of the large crowd that turned out for her artists. Scott is working with five groups currently as she tries to groom them for the competitive world of entertainment. She also manages one of the area's top DJ's - D.J. Keith Success.

T. Scott Entertainment is looking for more talented young folks to work with ... they can be reached at 419-870-5627.

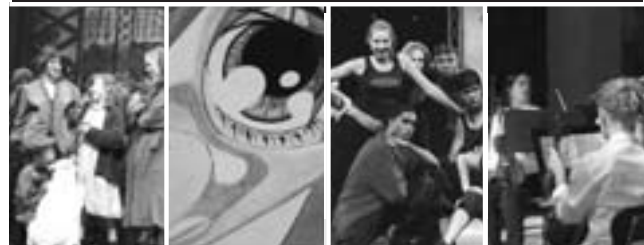
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2009 North American International Auto Show

By Annette Wright
Special to The Truth

With much of the nation and, in fact, the world still expressing their varied opinions about the nearly \$18 billion automotive bailout, the 2009 North American International Auto Show opened in Detroit, Michigan on Monday, January 12.

The Sojourner's Truth got a sneak peak of the big event during the press preview.

to impress investors and consumers alike. With automotive stocks plunging to record lows and the consumer credit crunch, this year's auto show is about restoring confidence by validating the need for investing in the auto industry. The vehicles look a lot better, inside and out. The 2009 NAIAS is all about the greens this year, as in



In stark contrast to last year's show, you won't find nearly as many large trucks and SUV's at this year's event. The most noticeable exceptions were the award-winning 2009 Ford F-150 Pickup, named North American Truck of the Year at the NAIAS; the 2009 Hummer H3T (2009 Four Wheeler Magazine Truck of the Year), the new hybrids such as the 2009 GMC Yukon and the new EV's (electric vehicles) like the new 2009 Jeep Range Extended Electric Vehicle.

This year's auto show, under the watchful eyes of government and taxpayers, refreshingly looks and feels much more like an industry event designed

the environment and cash. The message that people are genuinely concerned about the environment and America's dependence on oil seems to finally have been heard by auto manufacturers. In addition to the impressive number of alter-



native fuel vehicles on display, this year's show hosts a number of educational opportunities for students to consider in the fields of alternative fuel technologies and automotive design technologies. Educational exhibitors include Wayne State University, University of Michigan Solar Car, and MEDC EcoXperience, just to name a few.

The 2009 NAIAS is worth the one hour ride to the D. Whether you're interested in buying that cute little 2009 GEM EV, by Chrysler, for \$7,395 or perhaps something from the Bentley family like the Azure T (maximum speed 179 mph), or the Continental Flying Spur (only \$174,000), this year's auto show has something for every-

one. General public admission to the 2009 NAIAS began on Saturday, January 17 and runs through Sunday, January 25. Admission is \$12 for adults, seniors \$6, children seven-12 years \$6 and children under six years are free. All children 12 and under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.



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The Lima Truth

January 21, 2009

The Sojourner's Truth

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Lima Mourns SpongeBob Fan

By Sharon Guice
Sojourner's Truth Reporter



On a cold snowy day, Lima turns out to celebrate the life of Courtney Nicole Coleman at Philipian Missionary Baptist Church. The day is cloudy and snow predicted but that does not stop the hundreds of family and friends who show up in support of Coleman's family.

The church starts to fill with friends and family around 12:15 p.m. on Thursday, January 8, 2009. The house is packed with well wishers as each person tries to maintain composure at the loss of such a beautiful young lady. Some come far away like, McClellan, former principal of Lima Senior High School because of his love for the kids of Lima.

Courtney Nicole known as Muff (nick named by her grandmother) to her closest friends and family was born May 23, 1992 and at the age of 16, she died at 3:21 p.m. on December 31, 2008 at St. Rita's Medical Center.

In his eulogy, Rev. Lamont Monford tells the congregation that Coleman's parents, Stanley Clyde and Susan Marie (Clark), and her brother Josh took a trip to Findlay, Ohio on May 22, 1992 to shop and eat. After the family returned and settled in for the night, Susan awakened Stanley about 5 a.m.

to say her water had broke. Off to the hospital they go and from the time Susan's water broke to the birth of Courtney on May 23 was two hours. This was the start of her journey.

Coleman was a junior in the Multiple Intelligence School of Lima Senior High School, where she was on the honor roll and where she also lettered in soccer.

The service begins with LaDonna Jones singing "Be Blessed" accompanied by Mia and Brian, while Lewis Jones plays the piano. Pastor Fayne Wise of Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church, who is well known by many of the youth due to his involvement with Lima Senior High School, instructs the congregation that it's not about knowing the why and how could this happen but about knowing Jesus. He reads an imaginary prayer as if it is written by Courtney to give peace to those grieving and to bring understanding when someone dies and answers to questions of why may not be answered.

Prayer of consolation is given by Pastor Edward Tibbs of New Life Christian Ministries and Old Testament scripture is read by Pastor Earnest Stephens of Fourth Street Missionary Baptist Church. New Testament scripture of John 14 versus 1-6 is read by Pastor

Steve Wash from Christian Convention Center. The Choir sings "Savior Do Not Pass Me By." A Word of Expression from Elder Kenneth Keys admonishes the congregation to get to know Christ for themselves not historically or by what someone else say, but by the Spirit of God, especially the youth.

NaQuaya Jones reads a poem written by Dorrissa Luckett, titled "Without a Last Word to Say." She describes Courtney as a goofy friend who will be missed and never forgotten even by the ones that barely knew her. She was such a good person and you have a friend in everyone here. Jones states Courtney was fun and the life of the party and desired to bring laughter to everyone else.

Two young ladies, Amber Ingram and Alyshia James, come to the platform to sing "Can't Give Up Now." They call up other friends to sing with them - Allyssa Schimillory, Jessica Johnson, Diffini Johnson, Shuquana Greeno and Kristy Norris. The girls hold hands to show strength and unity as they sway from side to side as they softly sing with confidence, "Can't Give Up Now." Ending the song hugging each other as if saying, 'yes we can make

it.'

Courtney's aunt on her father's side of the family, Esther Renee, steps to the platform with praise and thanksgiving. She tells the congregation Jesus is the one who will get you through and you must give him the praise because he has been good to us. She tells the story of how Courtney had everyone watching SpongeBob. She loved to laugh and make you laugh too.

Louise Jackson with her deep melodious voice sings at the family request "I Won't Complain."

Monford, senior pastor of Philipian Missionary Baptist Church tells the congregation he is a SpongeBob fan too. He pulls out SpongeBob paraphernalia of Coleman's expressing her love for the character. Coleman had a SpongeBob blanket and pillow. "I have SpongeBob drawers," says Monford and holds up pair of SpongeBob undergarments. The congregation laughs.

Monford says: "No kidding, these are mine. My wife, Teresa, gave them to me one Christmas." He pulls at his pants as to attempt to

indicate that he was wearing a pair but states he better not do that. The congregation again laughs. Monford says that a person is representative of her personality. Coleman loved to make people laugh and that is the character of SpongeBob. He names the characters in the cartoon: Patrick Star, Mr. Eugene H. Krabs and Squidward Tentacles. He calls out questions to the congregation at which adults shout out the answer. Monford says he is not the only old person in the place who watches SpongeBob.

As Monford closes the eulogy of Coleman, he calls all the youth to the altar. He pulls up a chair and sits down instructing the youth to sit with him and talk a moment. Youth from all over the sanctuary fill the aisles of the church as they sit and listen to a message about love. Monford quotes John 10:10 of the Bible and tells them that their wholeness and quality of life is not based on others. Courtney always had a smile in her pictures, but suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. His prayer for them is to never feel with-

out hope. Commit to be all God has called you to be. It is OK to be a SpongeBob, to smile, to cry when you want to, but do not be a Mr. Krab.

I am here because someone told me I can do all things through Christ. You all should join up and be a part of the fellowship, a disciple of Jesus. He reads to them a poem titled "The Fellowship of the Unashamed." He tells the youth the best gift to give the parents of Courtney is to one day return to her parents and tell how Courtney had helped to shape their life and they will know she did not live in vain.

Courtney Nicole Coleman was laid to rest at Woodlawn Cemetery. She will be sadly missed by her gaggle of friends: Jennifer, Courtney, Kelsey, Mashasin, Morgan and Leslie, along with her family and friends.

Note: you may join the family in remembering Courtney Nicole Coleman by visiting the memorial at www.MeM.com. Through this site, you can share your thoughts and fond memories with her family.

Vickie Shurelds

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Reel Review

Notorious

Jamal Woolard, Derek Luke, Angela Bassett

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture



Notorious is a movie based on real characters instead of fiction.

It's a tough sell to convince an audience to sit through a re-telling of a story that we all know like the backs of our hands. It's a lot to ask of an audience to buy into actors/actresses portraying people who we are all so familiar with.

We all know what Biggie looks and sounds like. We all know Puff's mannerisms and Lil Kim's delivery. For years we have all been inundated with the imagery of the real people and the real situations portrayed in

this movie. So it does take a little getting used to as the film begins. You have to set yourself inside the realm of the story as it is onscreen and just accept that the people look different.

But even with the time it takes to get used to looking at people pretending to be people you already know so well, this film still does a great job of inviting you into a world all it's own.

Beyond the resemblance of Notorious' main cast to the real subjects of this saga, even more important is this epic story and within the first 10 minutes you are enraptured by the plot as it unfolds.

Even though any Biggie fan or hip-hop head already knows this story, this film wastes no time in putting you on the edge of your seat.

I do have a bit of criticism in terms of the story arc, however.

The Notorious B.I.G. only had three solid years in the music industry so

Reggie Bythewood and George Tillman (two of Black Hollywood's most noted writer/producers) had no choice but to try and linger on certain aspects of the life of Christopher Wallace in order to stretch out the movie a bit.

It really feels like it starts moving way too fast around the time of Ready To Die's recording and release.

As a fan, I would've appreciated a more in depth approach to the artistry behind Biggie's most heartfelt and emotional lyrics. The film does make the slight mistake of just assuming that everyone in the audience is deeply familiar with how remarkable Biggie's writing style really was.

I mean I didn't even like B.I.G. the very first few times I heard him when I was younger, but older cats told me to listen, truly listen ... and then I was hooked.

That's how it really was back when he came out. Everybody was awestruck by

how B.I.G. would rhyme and capture so much imagery and wit in his wordplay. I mean everybody, even people who weren't fans at first. And that is a major piece that has been overlooked in this film. It wasn't just his boys who thought he was ill...it was hordes of fellow artists, writers, critics, professors, and etc. Dude, I remember Will Smith quoting some B.I.G.

his indiscretions, the story of him and Faith getting married, the story about the hotel beat down, the story about which single to push, the story of his fallout with Tupac, the story of him making a demo tape, the story about hiding his clothes on the roof - ALL of that is portrayed in the film the exact way we all learned about it back in the 90's from the interviews and

should win something.

Maybe not an Oscar, but something...damn!

Derek Luke as Puffy, Naturi as Lil Kim - outstanding!!!

Angela Bassett as Ms. Wallace and Antonique Smith as Faith Evans...ummm... good enough.

As I said before, from an acting standpoint it's tough to portray someone whom



rhymes during an episode of Fresh Prince.

It would've been nice if Notorious could have captured The Notorious B.I.G.'s decisive stranglehold on the game. He was a dominant figure in rap and music in general and the film only hints at it.

But with so many haters still in the midst and with B.I.G.'s spellbinding success right out the gate, perhaps it was seen as unnecessary showboating to depict how absolute his reign over rap really was.

However, Notorious does shed light in some otherwise darker areas of the life and times of Christopher Wallace.

I'm a fan to the heart, yo. I got all the Source, Vibe, XXL covers. I got the books written by Voletta Wallace.

I've watched the interviews. As a producer, I rarely let anything touch my musical equipment but a keyboard that has been part of my arsenal for years has one sticker on it...and that is a "Remember B.I.G." sticker. So even with all I know about Biggie's life and career, there were still elements in the film that showed me I surely didn't know everything.

I don't want to give too much away, but I will say that besides a few shockers... everything portrayed is true to life. The story of

articles done on B.I.G. and everyone else.

It's nice to have consistency and authenticity in an epic story such as this.

Whereas Eminem and 50 Cent acted in their own half-biographies on film offering audiences a few glorified moments that were more Hollywood than real, Notorious comes to life by sticking to the script of his actual life with little-to-no filler.

See, this isn't someone's dreamed up fantasy.

This isn't an installment in an already growing legacy just to sell records.

This wasn't about convincing you of someone's gangster credentials.

This is historic.

Christopher Wallace was murdered nearly 11 years ago.

The events in this film are not so much about a screenplay, it's just the actual account of people who were there...people who lived this story right alongside B.I.G.

And when it comes to the people in Notorious, I have got to give some of the biggest props ever to ya boy Jamal Woolard a/k/a Gravy. His speech became as close to B.I.G. as anyone could've asked for.

The lisp, the heavy breathing, the charm, the wit - I mean this brotha

your audience already knows and has a connection with. But for the most part, the main characters in Notorious offer the best performances anyone could have requested.

Notorious is funny, heartfelt, informative and compelling and the best part... it's true.

Christopher Wallace became The King of New York... the black Frank White... a Don sipping Cristal as the haters got angrier and angrier. But he will be remembered for being a profoundly introspective poet touching millions with his piercing account of the psychological ills troubling black men.

Brilliantly, it serves as an introduction to the whole B.I.G./Brooklyn/Bad Boy saga for those who may not know about it, yet simultaneously pleases those of us who are already life-long fans.

It's a must have for anyone who considers themselves a hip-hop fan.

Go and spend that guap on this one, you'll be happy you did.

As for me, I'm going to see it a few more times and buy the DVD (the real one, not the bootie boot - LOL)

The true grade for Notorious is A-.

Contact Michael Hayes at glasscitytruth@yahoo.com

Putting Your "Good Hands" To Work In Your Community

Special to The Truth

According to the calendar, February is Black History Month. But many people would argue that honoring the strengths and accomplishments of the African-American community requires more than a single month; it takes the whole year.

For example, as part of Allstate's commitment to the African-American community and volunteerism, it has created Beyond Februaryism

Give Back Day. This special initiative will further the ideals and vision of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Atlanta, his hometown and nationally, by inspiring people to donate their time to worthy causes in their own communities--on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and throughout the entire year. To facilitate these volunteer efforts, Allstate has created a special Web site at beyondfebruary.com where people can research and sign

up for volunteer projects in their own cities.

To kick off the event, Allstate has partnered with The King Center in Atlanta to host a volunteer rally after the annual ecumenical service honoring Dr. King at Ebenezer Baptist Church on the morning of January 19. The thousands of people in attendance will be encouraged to "put their good hands to good use" by signing up for volunteer opportunities

in their community at beyondfebruary.com.

After the rally, more than 1,000 volunteers will spread out across Atlanta to donate their time and efforts to a variety of projects in conjunction with several charities and nonprofit organizations, including the 100 Black Men of America, 100 Black Women of America, the Ryan Cameron Foundation, the Atlanta ToolBank and several public schools.

"Allstate Beyond February Give Back Day reinforces the importance of giving back to your community in the spirit of my father and everything he fought for," says Bernice King, Dr. King's youngest daughter.

"But an even greater tribute to my father's legacy is evidenced by the people who demonstrate the passion and the commitment to serve their communities throughout the year, not just on MLK Day or

during Black History Month."

To find volunteer opportunities in your ZIP code on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and throughout the year, visit www.beyondfebruary.com. The interactive Web site provides links to VolunteerMatch, an online search engine that promotes volunteerism and civic engagement by matching volunteers with charitable organizations and nonprofits.

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CLASSIFIEDS

January 21, 2009

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Want to make a *real* difference in someone's life? Come and join us

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE) is establishing a Mobile Benefit Bank (MBB) in the greater Lucas County area. The MBB will help low-income individuals and families access and apply for public benefits and credit programs for which they may be eligible using the Ohio Benefit Bank online system.

ABLE is seeking to enroll 5 Advocates through the AmeriCorps Program to identify and screen individuals for benefit eligibility through outreach events at a variety of community access points.

Individuals will work from ABLE's Toledo Office. Candidates must be able to work well with low-income individuals and groups; have excellent communication skills; be computer proficient; and committed to the principle of equal justice.

Relevant college degree highly preferred. Experience working in the area of government benefits is preferred. Fluency in Spanish is highly preferred.

Compensation is set by federal statute. Participants are eligible for a living allowance, health insurance, and an education award for each full year of service. Eighteen month commitment required. Minimum 35 hour work week with some weekend and evening activities required.

Positions will be filled before February 15, 2009.

To apply send via email a cover letter, resume, and list of references to jobs@ablelaw.org Attention AmeriCorps Member Position.

TEACHERS

We are looking for experienced **Teachers** who have high standards and believe that the care they provide is invaluable. The ideal candidates will have demonstrated the ability to establish effective relationships with parents and children. As a company, we recognize our greatest strength is in the quality and talent of the professionals in our organization.

You will plan and implement activities to promote the social, physical, and intellectual growth of children. You will be responsible for the care, hygiene, learning, and developmental activities, specialized programs, and sanctioned discipline of the children. You will maintain classroom records, cleanliness, and orderliness.

Requirements for this position include:

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Excellent organizational skills
- Ability to provide a positive, nurturing environment for children
- Clean driving record and ability to drive Center vehicles
- Ability to be flexible in assignment and work hours
- Ability to provide superior customer service

Additional Requirements

- High school diploma
- State education requirements for a teacher preferred
- 1+ year of experience working with assigned age group desired.
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For more information on Greenfield Health Systems, a division of Henry Ford Health System, visit ghsrenal.com

Henry Ford Health System is an AA/EEO employer.



Sunoco, Inc., an independent refiner and marketer of petroleum in Toledo, has an immediate need for a First Class Instrument Mechanic. The selected applicant will be responsible for installing, repairing, maintaining, and troubleshooting various types of instruments such as: differential pressure transmitters, flow meters, level transmitters, level switches, pressure switches, control valves, smart positioners, thermocouples, and control systems.

To be considered, applicants must:

- Have a 2 year Technical Degree in Process Control Instrumentation/ Electronics or completion of an instrument mechanic apprentice program
- Have a minimum of 4 years experience in repairing, maintaining and installing instrumentation in the chemical, refining or other similar industries.
- Have a working knowledge of good industry practices for repairing instruments
- Be a self-starter in repairing and demonstrate the ability to make sound decisions while working with limited supervision
- Be able to work 8-hour shifts and temporary off-shifts to include weekends, holidays and overtime, and a willingness to perform physically active job tasks in all types of weather

For confidential consideration, please submit your resume through our website career center at www.sunocoinc.com. Applications will not be accepted at the refinery location. Applications will be accepted from 8:00 am Tuesday, January 20, 2009 through 8:00 am Monday, February 2, 2009.

EOE/MF/D/V



Sunoco, Inc., an independent refiner and marketer of petroleum in Toledo, has an immediate need for a First Class Electrician. The selected applicant will be responsible for installing, inspecting and maintaining all types of electrical equipment and systems in the Refinery, including high voltage electrical switchgear.

To be considered for this position, applicants must:

- Have a 2 year Electrical Technology Degree or completion of Electrician Apprenticeship Program
- Have a minimum of 4 years experience as a journeyman electrician
- Possess good verbal / written communication skills, be computer literate, and have good mathematical and problem solving skills
- Demonstrate the ability to read and interpret drawings, instructions, procedures, rules, regulations, and standards
- Be a self-starter
- Be able to work 8-hour shifts and temporary off-shifts to include weekends, holidays and overtime, and a willingness to perform physically active job tasks in all types of weather

For confidential consideration, please submit your resume through our website career center at www.sunocoinc.com. Applications will not be accepted at the refinery location. Applications will be accepted from 8:00 am Tuesday, January 20, 2009 through 8:00 am Monday, February 2, 2009.

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Book Review

The Thin Black Line by Hugh Holton

c.2009, Forge

\$25.95 / \$28.95 Canada

320 pages

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Sojourner's Truth contributor

Last night promised to be a nice, quiet night. Just you, a bag of something salty, and the remote control for the TV.

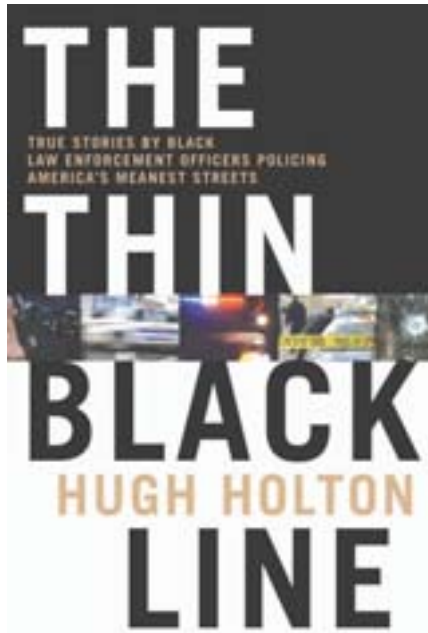
And then you heard a loud noise. Knowing it was no slamming door, sure it wasn't a car accident, positive that it was gunshot, you called 9-1-1. Suddenly, your quiet evening wasn't quiet any more.

Imagine what it's like to be on the receiving end of your emergency call.

In the new book The Thin Black Line by Hugh Holton, you'll read stories - in their own words - from African-American policemen and women who patrol our toughest cities.

Just over 200 years ago, a New Orleans "free man of color" pulled on a uniform and became America's first documented black police officer. In this book, through stories from almost 30 active and retired police men and women, homage is paid to the high level of commitment possessed by those who marched to that first cop's beat.

From Los Angeles and



a cop who was influenced as a child by the Watts riots to Washington D.C. and a policewoman who knew her indifference to corpses meant it was time to find another line of work, this book takes a look at what it's like to fight crime

on the streets and racism on the job.

In Chicago, a policeman investigating a rape finds that it coincidentally hits too close to home. Also in Chicago, a black undercover cop learns to trust his fresh-faced, blonde,

white female partner on a drug bust.

A cop from Louisiana recalls the juvenile cases he's been involved with, and the sometimes-heartbreak that comes with such crimes.

Many law enforcement careers are birthed in the

read the New York officer's story of a run-in with a cool cat - literally.

I was a bit surprised by The Thin Black Line, for several reasons.

I expected a lot of shoot-'em-up stories and while gun battles are in here, that's not the focus. I

many of the stories lack the extreme heart-pounding excitement you'd expect in a True Crime oral history book.

Still, I liked it.

Before his death, author and Chicago Police Department veteran Hugh Holton gathered officers from several states and metropolitan areas to talk about whatever it was they wanted to discuss. Therefore, some of these stories ramble. Others are funny. Some will make you check your doors. Some will make you angry.

All of them will make you glad there are people brave enough to become cops.

For better or worse, if you've ever connected with a police officer, read this book. The Thin Black Line is one to do time with.

Imagine what it's like to be on the receiving end of your emergency call.

military. In this book, you'll read an Indiana cop's memories of Vietnam, and how it tempered him for his current job as a corrections officer in a prison.

And before you think this is all really serious stuff,

thought this book might be much more emotional - ranging from overt chest-thumping to tattling rants about bad departmental practices - but there wasn't much of that, either. Most surprising,

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