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BUSINESS EXCHANGE

How To Adopt An Effective
Investment Strategy
By William Reed
Develop Ways to Pay Yourself First!

No matter how much we talk about "inclusion," "diversity" and "closer understanding among all people" blacks simply are woefully behind whites when it comes to building personal and family wealth. On average, the typical white household earns only two times as much as the typical black household, yet they manage to accumulate ten times as much wealth. The actual figures are \$48,000 in accumulated wealth for white households and a little over \$4,200 for black households.

In order to remedy this situation, African-Americans must rely on themselves, not the government, for redress. Blacks must adopt the same effective techniques of saving and investing that other successful ethnic groups have used to find their way into the American mainstream. The process is not difficult but it does require a moderate level of focus and discipline.

Asians, Jews and white families did not gain their financial straghts through government handouts and programs. Their progress came through personal and collective wealth building. You too can start to build personal and family wealth, and without great personal sacrifice. Here is how:

#1-A Savings Account Comes First

If you are not saving between 5 and 10% of your take-home pay, you can forget about becoming financially secure. No, saving will not make you wealthy but it is a necessary first step to building wealth. Without savings, you will not have any money to invest. You save successfully by treating savings as a "bill" which must be paid every time you get paid. This technique is commonly referred to as "paying yourself first."

#2-Develop Another Source of Income

Most jobs in America do not pay enough for one to become financially secure. Thus, most of us will have to bring another source of income into our lives. Many so-called experts would have you believe that the primary reason blacks are not wealthier is because they do not manage their money properly. There is some truth to this but it is not the primary reason. The key reason for poverty and paycheck-to-paycheck existence is simply, a lack of money. You must develop ways to get more of it. Short of a part-time job, there are numerous ways of accomplishing this goal. They include sponsoring money-making events, becoming an independent distributor of consumer-oriented products such as Amway or Shaklee, or buying and implementing "no money down" real estate programs. Do something to produce additional income so that you will be able to invest without risking the rent or mortgage money!

#3-Start With Safe, Bank-Based Investments

The investing process should begin with safe instruments such as bank CD's (certificates of deposits) and money market accounts. Also, it is to just about every working person's advantage to establish an individual retirement account (IRA). Virtually all such investments are insured by the federal government in case the bank fails. In addition, these investments are relatively liquid (meaning you can get your money quickly in case of emergency). But there is normally penalties for early withdrawal.

#4-Take Some Chances For Bigger Returns

Safe investments have the drawback of not being big money makers. Most pay from 3% to less than 10% a year. For bigger returns you will have to take some chances by either going into stocks and bonds or investing directly in upstart businesses. If you like stocks and bonds, we recommend you form or join an investment club. For more information on forming investment or wealth building clubs, we suggest you send for "How to Form an Investment Club", from the International Exchange Network, 2054 National Press Building, Washington, D.C. 20045. The guide is available for only \$8.95.

#5 - A Can-Do Attitude

Finally, you must believe you can do it. Stop waiting on your financial ship to come in. Swim out to it. And if you cannot swim, learn! The best person to look after your financial success is you. Isn't it time to get started?

The 1999 Mobil African American Women on Tour Promotes Healing and Empowerment

San Diego, CA - The Mobil African American Women on Tour (AAWOT) conference series kicks off its 1999 series with an extensive range of workshops, forums and keynote presentations designed to enrich the personal and professional lives of Black women. But more importantly, African American Women on Tour's success stems from its determination to delve deep into the very essence of the Black female experience.

Now in its ninth year, African American Women on Tour will visit six cities in 1999, including Los Angeles, CA, April 9-11; Brooklyn, NY, July 9-11; Philadelphia, PA, July 23-25; Chicago, IL, July 30-August 1; Washington, D.C., August 20-22; and Atlanta, August 27-29. AAWOT's lineup of speakers includes:

Los Angeles Airport Marriott - Friday, Actress/comedian Phyllis Yvonne Stickney; Saturday, restaurateur Barbara "B" Smith; and Sunday, internationally acclaimed poet/writer Maya Angelou.

New York Brooklyn Marriott - Friday, Activist Attallah Shabazz; Saturday, talk show host Bev Smith; and Sunday, former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Joycelyn Elders.

Philadelphia Adam's Mark Hotel - Friday, Author/playwright J. California Cooper; Saturday, Dr. Maya Angelou; and Sunday, author/minister Terri McFadden.

Chicago's Hyatt Regency McCormick Place - Friday, Radio mogul Cathy Hughes; Saturday, poet Nikki Giovanni; and Sunday, nationally acclaimed orator Patricia Russell-McCloud.

Washington, D.C.'s Omni Shoreham - Friday, Actress/entrepreneur Daphne Maxwell-Reid; Saturday, actress/child advocate Victoria Rowell; and Sunday,

astronaut Dr. Mae Jemison. Atlanta Hilton & Towers - Friday, Rev. Bernice King; Saturday, actress Sheryl Lee Ralph; and Sunday, vocalist Shirley Caesar.

AAWOT's mission is twofold - to help guide women on their healing journeys, as well as offer realistic strategies for managing the challenges of their daily lives. According to its creator and executive producer, Maria Dowd, "African American Women on Tour addresses the profound and far-reaching concerns Black women face - from healing the wounds of sexual abuse and domestic violence, to healing households single-handedly."

"When you add in learning how to better handle the subtleties of sexism and racism on the job, managing stress and promoting wellness, AAWOT delivers an awesome, life-transforming weekend experience," Maria states.

Relationships specialist Dr. Robin Elmore and Essence magazine columnist and family psychologist Dr. Brenda Wade will co-moderate a Relationships Forum in all six cities.

Workshop topics range from "How to Live a Stress-Free, Balanced Life," and "Diffusing Negativity at Work... and Beyond," to "Celebration of Rage: Pathways to Peace and Transformation."

AAWOT also hosts fitness workshops and a forum on preventive health. New to its 1999 lineup, AAWOT offers a forum on Managing Elder and Terminally Ill Family Care, that addresses the responsibilities a growing number of women face administering the health care and estates of their aging and illness-stricken family members.

AAWOT also sponsors in all six cities its popular girls', boys', young women's and women's Rites of



Maya Angelou



Nikki Giovanni



Attallah Shabazz



Dr. Mae Jemison



Shirley Caesar



Barbara "B" Smith

Passage programs that utilize visualization and interactive activities to promote self-discovery and personal empowerment.

African American Women on Tour is title sponsored for the second year by Mobil Oil Corporation and is co-sponsored by American Airlines, Ariel Mutual Funds, Black Enterprise, Charles Schwab & Co.,

JC Penney, Johnson & Johnson, The Longaberger Company, Mahogany, Merck & Co., St. Kitts & Nevis Department of Tourism, Union Bank of California, United States Postal Service, Upscale magazine and Walt Disney World. Conference packages range from \$190 to \$375 with group, student and senior discounts.

For more information about

African American Women on Tour, call 1-800-560-AAWT (2298), fax to 619-560-2190, e-mail aawot@mindspring.com or visit the web site at www.aawot.com. AAWOT is produced by PROMOTrends, Inc., a Black female-owned company located at 3914 Murphy Canyon Road, Ste. 216, San Diego, CA 92123-4491.

Clinton's VA Budget Falls \$3 Billion Short

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Independent Budget, released today, reports that President Clinton's proposed budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in fiscal year 2000 is almost \$3 billion less than is needed to adequately address the health-care needs of our nation's veterans.

The Independent Budget, developed annually for the past 13 years by four national veterans service organizations, provides the nation's decision-makers with a veterans' perspective on federal spending and national policy priorities. Its authors are AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The budget shortfall is so significant that it "imperils the health and benefits of millions of American veterans," stated the report's authors. For example, currently, veterans with heart conditions may have to wait up to three months to see a specialist at a VA hospital because the VA health-care system has been operating for years under stagnant, inflation-racked budgets. Given the Administration's proposal, this situation will continue - or worsen - stated the report's authors.

Another concern, stated the authors of the Independent Budget, is that the VA budget plan proposes new health-care initiatives but provides no new dollars to pay for them. Specifically, VA wants to expand health care and other benefits to veterans suffering from hepatitis C and related illnesses, veterans in need of emergency care,

long-term care, and care for homeless veterans. Yet the budget proposal cuts thousands of VA health-care staff and hundreds of millions of existing budget dollars to pay for these initiatives.

In fact, the President's budget calls for eliminating nearly 8,000 full-time employees from VA health care, which further threatens veterans health-care services. This undoubtedly will place even greater strain on patient services and further endanger the quality of care for this nation's sick and disabled veterans.

The President has proposed a fiscal year 2000 appropriation of \$17.306 billion for veterans health care, exactly the same as provided this year. This budget relies on collections from the private insurance of veterans receiving VA care that are historically inaccurate and grossly unrealistic. Even with these third-party collections, the budget falls far short of the needed funds to counter soaring medical inflation and additional costs associated with an aging veteran population. This would be the fourth consecutive budget year that VA health care has been all but straight-lined. Including past year shortfalls, the proposed budget, if approved, would be nearly \$3 billion short of meeting actual veteran health-care needs as calculated by the Independent Budget.

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), the arm of VA tasked with processing veterans claims for compensation for their service-connected disabilities and other earned benefits, is also

suffering from years of inadequate budgets and neglect. Even considering that some improvements have been made, the claims backlogs still range in the hundreds of thousands. And although the President has included increased administrative funding, this proposal still falls \$31 million short of the amount recommended by the Independent Budget. Congress and the Administration must provide adequate resources and make a solid commitment to address the claims backlog problem and ensure quality and accuracy in the decision-making process.

Without additional resources, the VBA will continue to face substantial backlogs in processing and adjudicating compensation claims. VA's inability to significantly improve the quality and timeliness of benefits claims has been and continues to be one of the most serious and persistent problems. It is unconscionable that veterans die before the proper resolution of their claims, stated the authors of the Independent Budget.

The Independent Budget provides a framework for a meaningful dialog on such important issues as disability compensation, health care, and other benefits and services for veterans and their dependents. Its recommendations are well-considered policy and funding proposals based on the actual needs of the men and women these programs were created to serve.

A congressionally chartered veterans service organization whose membership dates from World War

II, AMVETS has aimed for more than 50 years to promote world peace, preserve the American way of life, and help veterans help themselves.

The million-member Disabled American Veterans, a nonprofit organization founded in 1920 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1932, is dedicated to one, single purpose: building better lives for our nation's disabled veterans and their families.

The Paralyzed Veterans of America, a veterans service

organization chartered by Congress, has for more than 50 years served the needs of its members, all of whom have catastrophic paralysis caused by spinal cord injury or disease.

The VFW is a 1.9 million member veterans service organization, now in its 100th year, with a nationwide network of some 9,900 posts and service officers working to assist all veterans and their dependents with problems involving VA entitlements and pensions.

LCU TO Present "The Lone Star Chekov"

LUBBOCK, TX—The dates have been set for LCU's spring theatre production of "The Lone Star Chekov" — the Texas versions of three one-act plays by Anton Chekov. The Texas versions are written by Larry Randolph and Lubbock Christian's own E. Don Williams and Laurie Doyle. The show is slated to be performed at the LCU Fine Arts Theatre in the Christian Development Center on March 26, 27, and 29 (Friday, Saturday, and Monday) at 8:00 p.m. each evening. Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$2 for students/children. Tickets may be purchased at the door.

The three Chekov one-act plays which have been "translated" into TEXAN are: "The Proposal", "The Anniversary", and "The Booby". The trilogy, which is directed by Laurie Doyle, will also serve as Lubbock

Christian's entry into the Christian University Theatre Festival held March 10 at Wayland Baptist University's Herral Memorial Auditorium in Plainview. According to Doyle, "these three particular plays of Chekov were chosen because they were all comedies dealing with relationships—always a timely topic." Jill Peterson, a junior theatre major from Lubbock will serve as assistant director and stage manager.

The Lubbock Christian Associates Spring Dinner Theatre will also feature the production on April 17 at 6:30 p.m. in the Baker Conference Center on the LCU campus. Cost for both dinner and "The Lone Star Chekov" will be \$20 and advance reservations are required. For reservations or more information call 798-1902.

Ruby Jay's Corner



The New Hope Baptist Church, 2002 Birch Avenue, is the "Church Where The People Really Care," and Rev. Billy R. Moton is the proud pastor. Our doors are always open for you to come and visit if you are looking for a church home. So join us if the spirit hits you. You'll be glad you did so!

Services began last Sunday morning with Sunday School, which began at 9:30 a. m. All teachers and students were in their various classrooms for instruction. At 10:15 a. m., all marched and sang back to the main auditorium for review of the morning lesson. What a time, we all had studying the word of God.

After the 10:45 a. m. morning devotional period, morning worship services began with sing and praying. The responsive reading was done with the congregation standing.

The pastoral observations were given by Pastor Moton. Each week, he brings something good for the membership. We are just thankful to have such a dedicated pastor. He really preaches from his heart and soul.

Let us continue to pray for our sick and shut in citizens as well as those who have lost loved ones. There are many who are sick among us.

The Youth Department of New Hope Baptist Church is in charge of the devotional period during prayer meeting and Bible study for the month of March. It's just a blessing when we have our young people to be present and study about the teachings of God.

This column would like to know of some of the activities you are planning for the upcoming Easter Holiday. If you would like for us to advise the community, then let us hear from you. It is also always good to have good things printed in this weekly newspaper about our citizens. You may even give me a call at (806) 744-4127 and let us know what you have planned.

Mrs. Ora Jear, Wilson-Keys is able to get out of her residence as she has been shut-in for three weeks. Let us keep Sister Keys in our prayers.

If you want to subscribe to the Southwest Digest, it is only \$20.00 a year. You may call (806) 744-4127 if you would like to become a subscriber.

Study Finds Social Security Narrows Gap in White and Minority Retirement Wealth But Disparities are Still Great

(NEW YORK) — A new study released by the International Longevity Center-USA, Ltd. (ILC-USA) shows how important Social Security benefits are to narrowing the gap in retirement wealth between white and minority households. In "Minorities Face Retirement: Worklife Disparities Repeated?" for the first time Social Security benefits are calculated into projections of the wealth that older households expect to have when they retire. Adding this important source of retirement financing, the total wealth of the median black household more than doubles from \$86,000 to \$ 189,000 and total wealth of the median Hispanic household nearly triples from \$53,000 to \$158,000. In contrast, in the median white household, retirement wealth increases only slightly more than one-and-a-half times, from \$238,000 to \$391,000, when Social Security benefits are included.

During their working life, minorities earn less than whites. Black workers make 76 percent and Hispanic workers make 57 percent of white workers' annual earnings. Disparities in wealth at retirement are even more dramatic. The black median household will have only 48 percent, and the Hispanic median household will have only 40 percent, of the wealth of the median white household at retirement. Findings from the "Minorities Face Retirement: Worklife Disparities Repeated?" study indicate that Social Security benefits account for more than a half (54 percent) of black and two-thirds (66 percent) of

Hispanic median household retirement wealth. They account for slightly more than a third (39 percent) of median white household retirement wealth.

The study's investigator, Marjorie Honig, Ph.D., ILC-USA visiting senior economist, and professor and chair of economics at Hunter College and professor at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, noted, "These findings are very timely and have major implications for the nation's Social Security debate currently underway. Minorities are counting on Social Security for the biggest portion of their retirement wealth. Any tinkering with this program that fails to produce the expected amount of income will have the most adverse effect on black and Hispanic households."

A New Method for Calculating Retirement Wealth

Net worth at retirement is typically measured by adding financial assets, such as savings accounts and stocks and bonds, to housing equity. Expected Social Security and employer pensions are usually not included in the calculation. The "Minorities Face Retirement: Worklife Disparities Repeated?" study, however, includes all four sources of retirement wealth. Results from this new method of calculation improve the outlook for minorities, but a great disparity still exists in the wealth they will have available at retirement. Robert-N. Butler, M.D., ILC President and C.E.O., remarked, "Dr. Honig's study clearly demonstrates that Social Security is instrumental in

preventing poverty among millions of older Americans. I'm deeply concerned about how proposals to change Social Security will impact retirees — especially minorities and the poor."

Social Security Comprises Biggest Portion of Wealth for Most Retirees

Social Security benefits account for the bulk of anticipated retirement wealth for 70 percent of U.S. households. Impoverished households, regardless of race or ethnicity, will be the most dependent on Social Security benefits in retirement. In fact, in the poorest households, Social Security will account for nearly two-thirds of total retirement wealth. While the dependency on Social Security lessens as retirement wealth increases, it is expected to be the major source of retirement wealth for more than two-thirds of American retirees.

For the wealthiest third of older U.S. households, pension wealth will be a more significant source of income than Social Security. Pensions are expected to comprise less than a quarter of the retirement wealth for the median U.S. household, however, and pensions are a minimal source — only 6 percent — of retirement income for the poorest households.

After Social Security, housing wealth will be the second largest source of wealth for all households below the median.

For her study, "Minorities Face Retirement: Worklife Disparities Repeated?" Dr. Honig used data from the first wave (1992) of the Health and Retirement Survey (HRS), a longitudinal survey funded by the National Institute on Aging and conducted by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. She analyzed 4,371 households in which the financially responsible member worked within the last 10 years, reported race and ethnicity, was not self-employed or retired, and the worker, or his or her spouse, was between the ages of 51 - 61. Because black and Hispanic households were oversampled in the HRS, there are 853 and 397 households, respectively, from these

Savings for Retirement are Inadequate

Using the same data from HRS, Dr. Honig subsequently found that regardless of race or ethnicity, few are saving enough to maintain their pre-retirement standard of living. The median white married household, for example, expects to have \$391,000 in wealth at retirement but needs \$469,000 to produce an annual retirement income of 70% (a retirement goal commonly used by retirement advisors) of their current income of \$52,000. This pre-retirement household, in other words, would need to save another \$79,000 by retirement, or \$7,800 annually (15% of income) for the remainder of their working life.

Since blacks and Hispanics will have less retirement wealth, relative to their current income, they would need to save an even greater proportion annually to maintain their pre-retirement standard of living. Dr. Honig found that to retire with an income that is 70% of pre-retirement income, the median black household, with income of \$33,000 a year, would need to save 34.8 percent of their income annually over the remainder of their working life. She also concluded that the median Hispanic household, with income of \$27,000, would need to save 31.9 percent of their annual income to meet its retirement goal.

Dr. Honig warned, "The saving goal for minority households are clearly not achievable. They imply that in retirement minorities will have significantly lower living standards compared to whites than they had during their working lives."

"Minorities Face Retirement: Worklife Disparities Repeated?" will be published this spring by the University of Pennsylvania Press in Forecasting Retirement Needs and Retirement Wealth, Brett Hammond, Olivia S. Mitchell, and Anna Rappaport, eds. The study was made possible with funding from the Brookdale Foundation Group. For a copy of "Minorities Face Retirement: Worklife Disparities Repeated?" call Deane Beebe at the International Longevity Center-USA at 212-751-7745.

How To Trace Your Family Tree

By Courtney L. Cannon-Scott

Local libraries and genealogical societies contain a wealth of information. Reference services are usually free, and the cost of copying information for those researching their family history is minimal. If you are just beginning your search, check out some of the books in the library that explain how to begin.

In the meantime, here are a list of ideas: (1) Start with yourself - never begin a family history search by looking up someone you think may be related to you. Once you start with yourself, work backward in time, from the known to the unknown.

(2) Find out if anyone in your family has already written down the family history. If so, get a copy and update the information linking

yourself and current family members to it. If there is not a family history written down yet, begin gathering documents and papers such as wills, family Bibles, deeds, letters, photos, birth certificates, obituaries, military discharge papers and even resumes for information.

(3) Interview family members and write down information elders have about their lives. Things such as their birthplace, schooling, friends, job history, hobbies, likes or dislikes and stories passed down to them, are always interesting, especially when combined with a family tree chart of names and dates.

Once you have decided to begin your research, you must also decide how far you want to go. Do you want to just fill in names and dates on a chart? Do you want to

include personal stories? Or, do you want to find out what role your ancestors played in history?

Attending special workshops will also help. Do not expect to find all your information in one place. There are many sources available including: Census records, deeds, county histories, death certificates, wills, phone directories and more.

Your local librarian can assist you in locating your library's genealogy collection and information about the local historical society. Either of these resources can direct you to people to assist you or to classes intended to help you conduct research on your own. The fees to hire a researcher will vary and may be anywhere from \$10 to \$50 per hour. The actual cost will depend on many things. If you have the time though, doing the research

yourself is not only inexpensive, but also fun!

Most historical societies have membership opportunities that offer reduced prices for classes to members. However, it is not necessary to be a member to attend the programs or classes they sponsor. If you have access to the Internet, a list of genealogical societies is easily found for just about any ethnic group. If you do not have access, the same information should be available at your local library.

We welcome and will respond to all letters. Please be sure to mention where you saw this column to receive a free gift. Send your suggestions, comments or questions to Courtney L. Cannon-Scott c/o Back In The Day, P.O. Box 162516, Atlanta, Ga., 30321-2516. E-mail address: clscott@BellSouth.net.



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Contempt: The Cause of Racism

By Edward Green

Jay Scott Ballinger was arrested this Sunday in Indiana, having admitted to setting church fires in perhaps as many as eleven states. And in Texas, a jury this week found John William King guilty of the almost unspeakably brutal murder of James Byrd, Jr. — dragged to his death last year on a southern road for the "crime" of being black.

As a white American who is an organist at a predominantly African-American church in New Jersey, I am ashamed such horrors still occur in our country. To make sure America's next century is kinder than its last, we need seriously to ask: Why do people act in these horrific ways? And what do these terrible events have to do with the everyday racism that doesn't make it to the headlines — the racism, for instance, that can show itself in a factory cafeteria as a man gets a table of friends to laugh at a "joke" which makes millions of people of a different skin color look ridiculous?

Eli Siegel, the great educator who founded the philosophy of Aesthetic Realism, explained that racism begins with the hope for contempt — the "false importance or glory" a person gets by making less of the reality of other people. "There is," he said, "a disposition in every person to think he will be for himself by making less of the outside world."

Before a person can participate in a racist act — can make an unkind joke, use a demeaning word, refuse to hire someone or rent to him, or even attack him on the streets — that person, I learned, first

has to have years of everyday contempt, moment after moment in which there is a lack of desire to see who other people are and what they deserve.

No one begins life racist; but all of us can yield to the temptation of hoping to feel superior to other people, especially when we feel unsure of ourselves. This is one reason why racism can flourish at times of economic uncertainty — like our own.

And it is this hope for contempt, Aesthetic Realism explains — the desire to think other people's feelings are less important than our own, that we have a right to put aside, even annihilate their feelings any time we please — that, quietly accumulating over years, leads eventually to the terrible things which shock us in the newspapers.

In his book *James and the Children*, a consideration of the Turn of the Screw by Henry James, Eli Siegel writes: "According to Aesthetic Realism, the greatest sin that a person can have is the desire for contempt. Because as soon as you have contempt, as soon as you don't want to see another person as having the fullness that you have, you can rob that person, hurt that person, kill that person."

One of the clearest places where contempt can be seen as the cause of racism is in the terrible wave of church burnings. I know from my work as a church musician that there are large emotions bound up with a church building — the emotions of many people: what they felt as they saw baptisms, weddings, funerals; as they sang hymns, heard sermons, and had moments of deep spiritual feeling — of sweet and

large gratitude to God. All this emotional matters, is real, runs very deep — and whoever burns a church scorns it all; feels he has a right to turn it into nothing.

Contempt is a national danger. It makes many of our state governments heartlessly cut medical and hospital care at a time of budget surpluses; it made the federal government slash welfare support while clearly knowing that for many poor people jobs did not yet exist to support their families, feed their children.

And contempt is also a personal emergency. It is what causes the everybody pain between men and women, parents and children. It is at work in every conversation where we talk, not to understand another person, but to have our way with them.

At the Aesthetic Realism Foundation in New York City, a not-for-profit educational foundation

where I am honored to be on the faculty, people are learning the alternative — the one honest, intelligent use of our minds: the hope for respect. Respect is the feeling — the accurate feeling — that we grow bigger every time we try to be fair to what is not ourselves. Respect is what our minds were meant for — it is the sanest, the most beautiful emotion.

And I learned that respect for people begins with asking, and honestly trying to answer, this greatly kind and urgently necessary question which Eli Siegel first presented: "What does a person deserve by being alive?" It is impossible to think deeply about this question and hurt another person.

Edward Green is a professor at Manhattan School of Music. The Aesthetic Realism Foundation is located at 141 Greene Street, NY, NY 10012; tel: (212) 777-4490; web site: www.AestheticRealism.org.

City Council Vote Will Enable LCU To Issue Tax-Free Municipal Bonds

LUBBOCK, TX — The Lubbock City Council voted in their regular council meeting on a proposal to create the Lubbock Educational Facilities Authority. This authority will provide LCU as well as other local educational institutions a means whereby they can issue tax-free municipal bonds, and the action should pave the way for future growth of Lubbock Christian University.

is excited about its future and believes major advancements will take place in all areas of the University over the next few years. The establishment of the Educational Facilities Authority is a small step in this overall plan for the future."

Why is LCU anticipating selling bonds?

Lubbock Christian University is considering a significant bond issue sometime this spring—a move which will facilitate its plans to accommodate a much larger student body. The Board of Trustees is pursuing a program of planned growth. The goal is to reach a student body of 1750 students by the year 2005.

Why should the city of Lubbock do this?

No public funds are involved at all. There is no risk to the city. This is a common practice in major cities. Other authorities like this are in existence in Lubbock. This provides one for education. Since LCU is a vital part of the Lubbock community, what is good for LCU is good for Lubbock. A recent study shows that the economic impact of LCU on the city of Lubbock is over \$37 million annually. With the addition of major building projects and the anticipated planned growth of the University, the economic impact will prove even greater.

What is the Lubbock Educational Facilities Authority?

Very simply LEFA is a legal entity set up by the city. The authority consists of 7-11 members who have no connection to LCU or the city of Lubbock. Municipal bonds can then be issued to LEFA. Simultaneously, LEFA will turn around and loan the same amount to LCU. The benefit is that these bonds will be tax-free to the holder. The entity is set up for LCU, but it has the potential to help other educational institutions in the Lubbock area as well. The setting up of such authorities is common practice among major cities. The city of Lubbock will not be taking on any liability, and no public money or taxes are involved. According to Dr. Ken Jones, "Lubbock Christian University is positioning itself on all fronts in a very proactive way. This is one step in that positioning. Lubbock Christian

Texas Tech To Offer Texas Healthy Kids Program

LUBBOCK — Texas Tech officials announced today the open enrollment for Texas Healthy Kids, a new program offering affordable health care insurance for uninsured children.

Texas Healthy Kids was established by the state Legislature to cover the nearly 1.3 million uninsured children in Texas. HMOs and private insurance carriers across Texas have partnered together to extend this coverage. Coverage in Lubbock County is extended

through the Texas Universities Health Plan (TUHP), and HMO owned and operated by Texas Tech Medical Center and the University of Texas system.

"This is a great opportunity to provide a better quality of life for our youngest Texans," said David R. Smith, M.D., president of Texas Tech Medical Center. "This plan guarantees comprehensive health care for Texas children at a minimal cost to parents. We think that Texas Healthy Kids has great promise, and we encourage all those eligible to apply."

Joel Kupersmith, M.D., Dean of the Texas Tech School of Medicine, said the program will provide a safety net for a new generation. "Quality health care is absolutely essential for children," Kupersmith said. "Texas Healthy Kids guarantees that all of Texas' children will have access to the best possible health care, and Texas Tech is excited to be a part of this great program."

For those in Lubbock County, the cost is \$55.75 per child, per month, and financial assistance may be available for some families. Coverage includes physician office visits, immunizations, well-child visits, prescription drugs, eye/glasses, laboratory tests, X-rays, hospitalization, basic mental health and treatment for chemical dependency, rehabilitation and home health services.

To be eligible, candidates must be 2 to 17 years old; enrolled in a certified educational school or program; if school age; not covered by any other health care plan/program; be uninsured for at least 90 days before enrolling; and have been Texas residents for at least six months.

Parents in Lubbock County interested in enrolling their children can apply by calling 743-2493 for more information. Parents outside the Lubbock area can receive more information by calling 1-877-WELLKID. Open enrollment in Lubbock will continue through May 15.

30th NAACP Image Awards: Bank Of America Receives 1999 Corporate Award

Baltimore — The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is pleased to announce that NationsBank - now Bank of America - received the 1999 NAACP Image Awards' Corporate Award.

The award is among several presented by the Association as part of our 30th NAACP Image Awards: 30 Years of Celebrating - 90 Years of Courage. The NAACP Image Awards are presented to those individuals and organizations who strive for the portrayal of positive images and meaningful opportunities for African-Americans. A two-hour television broadcast of the awards will be presented on the Fox network on Thursday, March 4.

Kweisi Mfume, President and CEO of the NAACP said, "NationsBank - now Bank of America - has determined it wants to be a leader in making loans and providing financial services to African-Americans. We are proud to recognize Bank of America with our Corporate Award."

"This award means my company has been successful in tackling one of our greatest challenges - that is, making sure that in running our business, we do the right thing for everyone in our communities," said Hugh L. McColl, Jr., Bank of America's Chairman and CEO.

In 1992, the NAACP entered into a unique partnership with NationsBank to increase the availability of bank services and products to African-Americans. This led to the creation of the NAACP Community Development Resource Centers (CDRC) in cities served by NationsBank: Atlanta, GA; Austin, TX; Baltimore, MD; Charlotte, NC; Columbia, SC; Fort Lauderdale, FL; and Richmond, VA.

NAACP professionals staff the centers and provide financial counseling and education to Association members as well as the larger African-American community.

Using several million dollars in operational funds resulting from the seven-year partnership, the CDRCs funnel capital to African-Americans and provide counseling on bank products and services, and information on qualifying for loans, purchasing a home, or expanding a business.

Through referrals from the centers, the company has made more than \$100 million to African-Americans in mortgage, consumer and small business loans. Since 1992, more than 10,000 individuals and businesses have received counseling or technical assistance through the resource centers.

Bank of America's outreach efforts include:

- The Minority Business Development Group, which since 1990 has spent \$728 million with minority and women-owned businesses.

- In 1998, spending \$258 million with 1,700 wide-ranging minority owned companies.

- Being named the National Minority Supplier Development Council's Corporation of the Year for two consecutive years.

- Investing \$3.1 million in 10 minority owned banks across the country.

Small Business Investment Corporation (SBIC). Started in 1994, the SBIC provides investments between \$50,000 and

\$500,000 to women and minority-owned companies with annual revenues under \$2 million. Through 1998, the company has invested over \$15 million in more than 50 companies.

In 1998, making more than \$7 billion in home mortgage and improvement loans to minorities throughout the United States.

"Access to capital and financial services is critical to communities of color," said Mfume. "Bank of America's steadfast efforts with the NAACP to enable increasing numbers of African-Americans, Latinos and Asians to participate in our economy as home owners and entrepreneurs make it a most worthy recipient of our 1999 Corporate Award."

Bank of America, the largest bank in the United States, has full-service operations in 22 states and the District of Columbia and provides financial products and services to 30 million households and 2 million businesses.

The NAACP, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Founded in 1909, it has an active membership of 500,000 people throughout the U.S. and around the world. The principal mission of the NAACP is to ensure political, educational, social and economic equality for people of color.



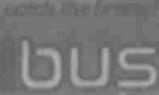
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Prescription Drugs Available at Low Cost

Is your medication too expensive for your budget? If so, information in a new booklet might help.

The Cost Containment Research Institute in Washington, DC has just published a 32 page booklet, "Free & Low Cost Prescription Drugs." The revised third edition booklet gives information on how and where to get free & low cost prescription drugs.

"Many major drug companies provide free or low cost medication, but rarely, if ever publicize the programs", says Allen Nichols, Director of the

Institute. "We've published a A to Z listing of all drugs that are available to certain qualified groups for free or at very low cost directly from the manufacturer."

Consumers can receive a copy by sending \$5 to cover the cost of printing, postage and handling to: Institute Fulfillment Center,

Prescription Drug Booklet #: FD-370, P.O. Box 462, Elmira, NY 14902-0462. Consumers can also get this information for free from The Institute's Internet web site: www.institute-dc.org.



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THIS N THAT

TIME BRINGS ABOUT A CHANGE! THIS N THAT ... would like to remind us ... AFRICAN AMERICAN ... when ... MALCOLM X ... was a man once considered a ... PARIAH ... One ... DESPISED ... TOO MILITANT ... to be recognized by the great ... WHITE FATHERS ... of this country ... BUT THAT HAS CHANGED ... Wisdom has prevailed ... AND ALL OF US ... BLACK ... WHITE ... BROWN ... RED ... AND YELLOW ... can see clearly now what a giant this man was ... That is ... MALCOLM X ... Because of a change in attitude ... A MALCOLM X STAMP ... has been issued ... recognizing and honoring ... MALCOLM X ... Think about it! ...

FREEDOM'S MOTHERS! THIS N THAT ... in looking back over history ... and there is no doubt about it ... TWO WOMEN IN BLACK HISTORY ... who bears the title of ... FREEDOM'S MOTHERS ... would have to be ... HARRIET TUBMAN ... and ... ROSA PARKS ... As you may recall BOTH ... made outstanding contributions toward our people ... TUBMAN ... who was the ... CONDUCTOR ... of the ... UNDERGROUND RAILROAD ... and ... PARKS ... who was the catalyst in the ... MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT ... There is no doubt about it ... THESE TWO HEROIC WOMEN'S LIVES ... illustrate that ... TRUISM ...

PENNY HASTINGS THE BARBER SAYS: "THE BEGINNING ... don't mean ... THING ... it's really the ... END ... which really ... COUNTS ..."

LUBBOCK HABITAT FOR HUMANITY MOVING! THIS N THAT ... hears nothing but ... GOOD NEWS ... about ... LUBBOCK HABITAT FOR HUMANITY ... as they have begun a ... making preparation for ... THE NEW CENTURY ... Should be some exciting programs on behalf of the ... LUBBOCK HABITAT FOR HUMANITY ... More on this program later

NEED THIRTY MORE MARCHES! THIS N THAT ... has been sitting back and making plans for the ... COMPLETION ... of the goal set in ... 1995 ... after the murder of ... DERRICK WRIGHT ... After the first march ... it was affirmed to make decision to have ... ONE HUNDRED MARCHES AGAINST DRUGS AND GANGS ... in our community ... After walking in the ... ANNUAL BLACK HISTORY PARADE ... sponsored by the Lubbock Black Chamber ... it is necessary we continue this effort ... There are still ... OPEN SIGNS OF DRUGS AND GANGS ... in the neighborhood ... and we can't afford to sit back and let it continue ... So when you hear the ... CHARGE ... come and be with us ... Surely ... we can complete this important task ... Will you join us?? ...

OFF TO WASHINGTON, DC!! THIS N THAT ... is attending a national conference in Washington, D. C. ... at the time you ... read this column ... Will report on some of the highlights in the very near future. ...

IN CINQUE

By Renetta W. Howard



Following Black History Month, February, we are into the Lenten Season. This is a good time of the year to renew our new year's vows to ourselves by taking them to a higher plane and earnestly committing to follow through.

Our resolutions, vows and promises for the new year should take on a new meaning after being inspired by all of the positive acts and information about people of color which have been made available to us through the various forms of the media. Seeing and hearing about all of the accomplishments of people who used their God-given talents to the best of their abilities and made important contributions to the American continent as well as the world should change the way we feel about ourselves. It should make us proud and instill a sense of perseverance

into us ... it has made believers out of the business world.

The new wave of celebrating Black History Month in schools, churches and civic and social organizations is having an impact on the world of commerce. You can now buy African styled cloth and clothing for as little as ten dollars a dress in some stores. There is variety in choices that one can select. Making, buying, or just wearing the African styles give you a sense of identity and a feeling of oneness which can build character and enhance the ability to do whatever in this life that one has to do in making and keeping resolutions, vows and promises.

Character counts. Without character, it is difficult to get a job done. We must commit to the task at hand and take the long hard road instead of the shortcut. We need to get 'in cinque' and show our children how to be proud and demonstrate the kind of character that will help them to be proud and work toward keeping resolutions, vows and promises that they have made in their journey of life.

NIAID Open First AIDS Vaccine Trial in Africa

The first AIDS vaccine trial in Africa, under preparation for years, has begun in Uganda. The opening of this Phase I trial, sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), "is an important step in an attempt to develop HIV vaccines for countries hardest hit by the AIDS pandemic," comments Anthony S. Fauci, M.D., director of NIAID.

The Ugandan Minister of Health, Crispus Kiyonga, M.B.Ch.B., adds, "This trial is part of a long-term, joint program that began in 1991 with our U.S. and French partners to develop a safe and effective HIV vaccine for Africa. Broad consultations have taken place and consensus has been reached among the various stakeholders and interested groups."

The HIV vaccine to be tested in the trial, called ALVAC vCP205, is based on a canarypox virus that cannot cause disease in humans. Canarypox-based HIV vaccines, made by Pasteur Merieux Connaught (Rhône-Poulenc Group, France), have been tested in more than 800 volunteers in the United States and France with no serious side effects reported.

The trial is being carried out at the Joint Clinical Research Center in Kampala and the Uganda Virus Research Institute in Entebbe. Both laboratories have state-of-the-art equipment and are staffed by highly trained Ugandans who with their U.S. counterparts will be conducting the relevant investigations. The study is under the direction of Professors Roy Mugerwa, M.B.Ch.B., M.Med., of Makerere University, and Jerrold Ellner, M.D., of Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. They also oversee one of the NIAID HIV Network for Prevention Trials (HIVNET) sites in Uganda, which conducted the groundwork studies in preparation for this and future trials of HIV vaccines.

"Every person enrolled will be fully informed by our medical staff as to what will be done in the trial and what risks or benefits may result from their participation," says Dr. Mugerwa. "The ethical standards applied in this trial are internationally accepted and are the same as those in the United States."

"Although small in size, this trial is important symbolically as a first critical step in developing an effective vaccine for Africa," says Dr. Ellner.

The Phase I trial, known as HIVNET 007, will enroll 40 healthy,

HIV-negative adults between 18 and 40 years old who are at low risk for becoming infected with HIV. The volunteers will be randomly assigned to one of three groups: 20 individuals will receive the HIV vaccine; 10 individuals will serve as controls by receiving a similar experimental canarypox vaccine for rabies; and 10 additional control individuals will receive a placebo that does not contain any vaccine.

Each person will get four injections over six months. During the study, neither the study participants nor the health professionals involved will know which type of injection each volunteer receives. At every clinic visit, volunteers will be counseled about how to avoid HIV exposure during the study.

The study will last one year, with one additional year of follow-up to monitor safety and the durability of the immune responses to the vaccine. Specifically, they will monitor reactions to the vaccines and look for immune responses directed against HIV itself (neutralizing antibodies) or against cells infected with HIV (cytotoxic T lymphocytes, or CTLs). Apart from this information on the vaccine's safety and potential for protection, no information on its effectiveness can be obtained from this small trial.

The Vaccine

The ALVAC vCP205 vaccine cannot cause HIV infection. First, the vaccine contains only three HIV genes, which by themselves cannot produce an infectious virus. Second, these genes are inserted into a weakened version of the canarypox virus. Canarypox virus serves solely as the gene carrier, or vector, to safely express specific HIV proteins known to elicit immune responses against HIV. Because canarypox virus can not replicate in human cells, no new canarypox viruses are formed.

Searching for Cross-Reactive Immune Responses

The genes in the vaccine come from only clade B viruses, the predominant subtype of HIV found in the United States and Europe. However, the researchers will look for immune responses to clades A and D, as well as clade B viruses, because the former two subtypes cause most HIV infections in Uganda.

Recent experiments have revealed that CTLs taken from people naturally infected with clade A or D viruses can recognize clade B viruses in the laboratory. This is known as cross-reactivity.

"Although laboratory data suggest

that some vaccines such as this canarypox vaccine stimulate broadly reactive CTLs, this needs to be evaluated in human clinical trials," says Margaret Johnston, Ph.D., assistant director for HIV/AIDS vaccines at NIAID and associate director of the vaccine and prevention research program in NIAID's Division of AIDS.

"If the answer is yes, and the levels of cross-reactivity in most volunteers are significant, then Uganda and its partners can consider moving this vaccine into larger trials," adds Dr. Johnston. "If not, we will need to more strongly encourage development of vaccines based on viruses circulating in different countries."

The Urgent Need for HIV Vaccine Research in Africa

Notably, this study represents the first systematic test of any HIV vaccine in an African population. One of the urgent needs in HIV vaccine research, says Dr. Johnston, is to understand how human differences influence the immune response to candidate vaccines. The outcome of this study, she says, will guide NIAID's future HIV vaccine strategy and is an important step in a long process toward developing safe and effective HIV vaccines for worldwide use.

Today, Uganda's population numbers 20 million. According to Dr. Kiyonga, the rates of HIV infection range from 4 to 10 percent in rural areas to between 10 and 25 percent in urban locales. Nearly half a million Ugandans have already died of AIDS. As is true in all of Africa, the disease is primarily passed from person-to-person through heterosexual sex. A devastating consequence has been the 1 million orphaned Ugandan children.

In addition to NIAID and the government of Uganda, organizations involved in facilitating the trial include Makerere University; the Joint Clinic Research Center; the Uganda Virus Research Institute; UNAIDS; Case Western Reserve University; the Fogarty International Center of the National Institutes of Health; and Pasteur Merieux Connaught.

NIAID is a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). NIAID conducts and supports research to prevent, diagnose and treat illnesses such as HIV disease and other sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, malaria, asthma and allergies. NIH is an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Nutrition Insurance for the 21st Century

By Shirley R. Watkins

USDA Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services

The Clinton Administration has proposed \$36.5 billion to maintain support for the nation's nutrition assistance programs in Fiscal Year 2000. As we prepare to take these critical programs into the new millennium, this proposal will provide help for one in five Americans, including improved health and learning opportunities for children, and assurance that elderly legal immigrants have enough to eat.

The nutrition assistance programs, operated by the Department of Agriculture, make a difference in the lives of millions of Americans in every community every day. More than 18 million needy people know they have a nutrition insurance policy in the Food Stamp Program that helps them through lean times or in their tough transition from welfare to work. More than 26 million school children are assured of nutritious meals at school through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

Among the highlights of the 2000 budget are two proposals of special importance: the restoration of food stamp benefits to qualified

elderly legal immigrants, and the funding of pilot projects to provide free breakfasts to all children in six school districts across the country.

The restoration of benefits to some elderly legal immigrants is a recognition that more needs to be done for people who lost their food stamps under provisions of the welfare reform law of 1996. Congress wisely restored those benefits for many people in legislation last year, but a substantial number of legal immigrants are still not eligible for food stamps.

Given limited resources, we think it is most important to restore benefits to the most vulnerable of these people — the elderly. We have proposed to restore food stamp eligibility to some 15,000 qualified legal immigrants who have reached the age of 65 and who had legal permanent residence status at the time the welfare reform law was passed. Similar proposals have been submitted by other Cabinet Departments to restore benefits such as Medicaid.

The School Breakfast Program provides a nutritional jump start for some 7 million children every day, giving them the energy they need to learn and grow through the school day. Our mothers always told us

that breakfast was the most important meal of the day, and teachers have told us for years that children do better in school when they eat a nutritious breakfast. Recent research and experience have backed them up. Preliminary data indicates that in schools that provide free breakfast to all their students, test scores and student health have clearly improved, and behavior problems have declined. The improvement has been especially marked for low-income students. The link between nutrition and learning has never been clearer.

Congress authorized us last year to go ahead with a test of free school breakfast, and we have requested \$13 million to conduct pilot projects in six school districts across the country. During the three years of the pilot, we will provide free breakfasts to all students in those districts. This will provide substantial documentation of the impact of breakfast on behavior and academic performance.

The mission of USDA's nutrition assistance programs is to reduce hunger and food insecurity by providing children and needy people access to food, a healthful diet and nutrition education. The critical importance of this mission is clear. Poor diet is a significant contributing factor in four out of 10 of the leading causes of death in the United States. Diet is a key factor in heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes, which together account for 1.4 million deaths annually.

By fighting hunger and promoting good nutrition, these programs help to ensure the well-being of all Americans. They are especially crucial in supporting working poor families and those making the tough transition from welfare to work. Even as we enjoy prosperous times and a healthy economy, the role of nutrition assistance in helping make that transition highlights the importance of these programs for self-sufficiency.

Lubbock NAACP Regular Monthly Meeting

The Lubbock Branch of the NAACP will hold its regular monthly meeting Saturday, March 13, 1999 at Smith Temple Community Church at 6508 Ave. P at 7:00 p.m.

Guests at the meeting will be Ms. Lory Knowles from the Fine Arts Center and Mrs. Julie Pratt from Posey Elementary. President Rose Wilson is asking all members to please be present. The public is invited to attend this meeting.

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The Southwest Digest is an independent newspaper serving the Lubbock, West Texas, South Plains of Texas and Eastern New Mexico areas printing the news impartially supporting what it believes to be right without opposing what it believes to be wrong without regard to party politics.

Devoted to the Industrial, Educational, Social, Political, and Economical Advancement of African-American People.

We may be critical of some things that are written, but, at least you will have the satisfaction of knowing they are truthful and to the point.

People will react to that which is precise, and we will publish these articles as precisely and factually as is humanly possible. We will also give credit and respect to those who are doing good things for the Lubbock Area and the people. We will be critical of those who are not doing as they have said they would, and this, we think, is fair.

So, this is our resolution to you. "Feel free at any time to call this office for information concerning this newspaper or any other matter that is of concern to you."

This is not a propaganda sheet made to chastise or vilify. This is a newspaper made to educate and not to agitate.

The opinions expressed by guest columns or editorials are not necessarily the opinions of the publishers/editors or those of the advertisers. Comments and pictures are welcome but the publishers are not responsible to return articles unless a self-addressed envelope is submitted. All notices must be paid in advance. Story deadline is 12 p.m. Monday. Advertisement deadline is Monday 5 p.m. the week of publication.

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Inside AJHS



Wendell J. Brown
Principal

The Hornets are poised for our best year ever! This is thanks to the support of the families of our students, the tremendous support that we have received from the community, the hands on assistance working directly with students from the central office, and the hard work of the best and most dedicated teachers anywhere. When you walk the halls at the "Nest", you will see students enjoying the school experience. We welcome you to participate in the positive learning environment of which your children and our students have the privilege of attending each day!

It is time again to recognize the students who have exemplified quality and excellence in academics for the past six weeks period.

Seventh Grade:

LaKendria Bell, Lamicka Byrd, Christina Cervantes, Alicia Davis, Eric Garces, Alexandra Garcia, Jamar Green, Phylcia Isaac, Danyelle Jackson, Shantivia Johnson, Tavaris Johnson, Monica Luna, Albert McCleod, Anissa Parson, Erica Prieto, Joe Rodriguez, Nikki Torres, Quanisha Williams, Gerren Woodard, Skena Young.

Eighth Grade:

Veronica Altamirano, Gilberto Castro, Richard Cervantez, Ruben

Dominguez, Trachia Duttin, Ernest Elias, Brandi Evans, Tracy Garcia, Brandie Givens, Matthew Gonzales, Latrice Johnson, David Kinney, Charlie Knighten, Idris Lateef, Erika Martinez, J-annette Martinez, Amber Monroe, Toni Neloms, Tameka Patterson, Laelton Poch, Maggie Ramirez, Magdalena Sanchez, Snerry Sanders, Johnny Tanguana, Tameka Taylor, Jannie Urutia, Nathan Villarreal, Melvin Williams, Dramarquis Woodard.

Ninth Grade:
Samon Bienaimé, Joline Bolden, Shaqueena Cooper, Erica Esquilbel, Diana Garcia, Melissa Garcia, Rebecca Garcia, Marlon Hastings, Michael Herrera, Alicia Jones, Chene Kelly, Adam Lopez, Nahum Lopez, Chassidy Martin, Tabardrick McNeal, Rosalinda Mendoza, Matero Moss, Ana Palacios, LaBrandon Scheles, Kieves Shelby, Ashanti Shepherd, Ruby Sierra, Elizabeth Soto, Ebony Toliver, Ladeivia Wiley, Sherelenna Willis.

The knowledge these students gain will provide them with the power to be leaders in the future. Join us in congratulating these models of academic quality and excellence.

The 21st Century Community Learning Grant is off to a great start. We have begun implementing the after-school program with Alderson students and are integrating students from the elementary school as the program evolves. Mr. Alvin Hargers, the program coordinator, reports that nearly 100 students have signed up for the program and more than 50 students participate each day. Saturday, February 13, students participating in the engineering component of the program competed in the "Hook Competition". The students had to build a hook made of balsa wood.

The hooks are judged by the amount of weight they hold. Alderson Junior High students finished first, second, and third in the junior high division. Congratulations to Jennifer Atkins, first place, Eroy Holmes, second place, and Adam Lopez, third place. Jennifer's first place hook in the Jr. High division held 42 pounds. Her hook would have finished in the top 20 of all participants. Thanks go to Mr. Brian Foreman who works with our BEST (Boosting Engineering Science and Technology) program students.

Each day students are enjoying cooking, technology, engineering, the "Mysteries" program from Voyager, tutoring, and recreational activities. If you are interested in your child participating in the program, give Mr. Alvin Hargers a call at 766-1500.

The Parkway/Cherry Point Neighborhood Association met jointly with the Alderson PTA on Tuesday, February 16 to extend its support to the school. We appreciate Mr. Sam Rodriguez and the board of the neighborhood association for participating and sharing insights and wisdom with our students. Students from band, choir, Student Council, Jr. Historians, and the Sting Team performed in celebration of Black History.

Each day during the morning announcements, students share a "Black History Moment". Many of the announcements celebrate the contributions of people from our community. We would like to extend our thanks to those who shared the successes of their lives with our students. Each day of our lives we create history. It is not known how the acts and actions of today will impact tomorrow. Your example may be the ray of light that leads a child to success.



Meet Alderson Junior High School Champion Wrestlers!

The Southwest Digest is proud to present to you some outstanding young men who have developed themselves well in the field of wrestling. We salute each of them as their parents. Here they are and the medal they received in competition: Jarvus Burgess, Gold Medal; Corey Conners, Silver Medal; Tananis Johnson, Gold Medal; Mark and Matthew Gonzales, Silver and Gold Medal; Arthur Kelly, Silver Medal; and Chris Robinson, Silver Medal.

Nationally Known Story Teller Keynote Speaker for SPC Cultural Diversity Event

LEVELLAND, TEXAS — A nationally-known storyteller who has helped people appreciate the impact of blacks on the American West went to do the same for multiculturalism March 4 during a special event for high school seniors sponsored by South Plains College.

Eric E. Strong, director of Texas Tech University's Upward Bound Programs and a lay historian in his spare time, will be the keynote speaker March 4 for the Los Tejanos Cultural Diversity Event, a part of SPC's annual Senior Sneak Preview. An estimated 700 high school students from nearly 80 high schools on the South Plains are expected to attend Senior Sneak Preview.

The Los Tejanos Cultural Diversity Event is designed to help promote higher education and cultural diversity for high school students, said Gracie Quinonez, an event sponsor and guidance associate and coordinator of testing and assessment at SPC. The event will include a keynote address by Strong at 3 p.m. and a mariachi duet at 3:30 p.m. by Lubbockites Amanda Perez and Oscar Castillo in the Sundown Room of the Student Center. Strong's address is titled "Knock Knock Who's There — the Future." "I will be speaking to members of the last high school class graduating before the new millennium, and I want to talk to them about multiculturalism and how important it is for us to embrace the diversity of other cultures and try to understand each other," said Strong.

Strong, who has worked with the Upward Bound program for more than 17 years, founded the Roots Historical Arts Council in 1977, a charitable education, arts and humanities group and organized the first-ever reenactment of Nolan's Lost Expedition, the tale of a troop of black cavalrymen or "buffalo soldiers" who survived incredible hardships on the West Texas Plains in 1877.

He is the recipient of a number of awards, including Award for Cultural Inclusion from Tech's Multicultural Services Center in 1993, National Coming Home to America's Roots Award in 1994, Outstanding Community Service Award from the

NAACP in 1996 and the Outstanding Volunteer Award from the Volunteer Center of Lubbock in 1997. He has been a guest on the nationally-syndicated talk show, Tony Brown's Journal, the Discovery Channel's series, Rediscovering America with David Hartman, and the BBC Worldwide's internationally-syndicated radio program, Meridian Arts.

Strong is also a writer of poetry

and fiction as well as a nationally-recognized storyteller. He brings the trappings of America's forgotten black heroes of the Old West to thousands each year.

He holds a bachelor's degree in social welfare from Prairie A&M University and a master's degree in interdisciplinary studies in history, art and education from Texas Tech University.

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JUNETEENTH INFORMATION

Texas has once again made history in being the first and only state to establish a Juneteenth Cultural and Historical Commission. During the 75th Legislative Session, House Bill 1716, sponsored by Rep. Al Edwards of Houston, was signed into law by Gov. George W. Bush. Thereby creating the Texas Emancipation Juneteenth Cultural and Historical Commission. The Commission consists of six commissioners appointed by Gov. Bush of which one being Eddie P. Richardson of Lubbock, Texas; two state senators appointed by Lt. Governor Bob Bullock; two house of representatives appointed by Speaker Pete Lacey; and the executive director of the Texas Historical Commission.

The purpose of the Texas Emancipation Juneteenth Cultural and Historical Commission is to erect monuments and markers, raise funds, establish a national Emancipation Cultural and Historical Museum, and establish a headquarters. In addition, the Commission was also established to develop effective historical and cultural programs, educate citizens on the effects and significance of emancipation, and develop leaders and role models for the citizens of Texas.

Anyone interested can be a part of the local activities. Here are the meeting dates you may look forward to: November 9, January 11, February 8, March 8, April 12, May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and June 7 and 14.

All meetings will be held at Mae Simmons Senior Citizens Center, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Everyone interested in making a positive contribution to this program is invited to attend and bring their ideas and input.

All area and South Plains Juneteenth Programs are urged to contact Commissioner Richardson at 902 E. 28th St., Lubbock, Texas or 806-762-3612 to become part of the statewide and national effort. For information or to participate, call Eddie Richardson 762-3612.

If you are interested in becoming a part of the local please fill out the following and send to Eddie Richardson at 902 E. 28th St., Lubbock, Texas:

Name: _____
Address: _____
Day Phone (____) _____ Night Time Phone (____) _____

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"LORD BLACKS FORGOT NOT TO FORGET!!"

DEUTERONOMY 6:10a, 11:12a, IT SHALL BE, WHEN THE LORD THY GOD SHALL HAVE BROUGHT THE INTO THE LAND,

AND HOUSES FULL OF GOOD THINGS, WHICH THOU FILLEDST NOT, AND WELLS DIGGED, WHICH THOU DIGGEDST NOT, VINEYARDS AND OLIVE TREES, WHICH THOU PLANTEDST NOT; WHEN THOU SHALT HAVE EATEN AND BE FULL; THEN BEWARE LEST THOU FORGET THE LORD.

LORD THANKS, FOR KEEPING YOUR PROMISE; YOU MADE WITH OUR FORE-FATHERS; BUT BLACKS KEEPING THEIRS; WE DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER!!!

PSALM 103:2, BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL, AND FORGET NOT ALL HIS BENEFITS.

WHEN WE CAME TO THIS LAND; WE WAS A TOOL; CALLED A SLAVE; BUT WE GOT BLACK AND PROUD; AND WORSHIPPED; WHAT HANDS MADE!!!

DEUTERONOMY 4:23,24, TAKE HEED UNTO YOURSELVES, LEST YE FORGET THE COVENANT OF THE LORD YOUR GOD, WHICH HE MADE WITH YOU, AND MAKE YOU A GRAVEN IMAGE, OR THE LIKENESS OF ANY THING, WHICH THE LORD THY GOD HATH FORBIDDEN THEE. FOR THE LORD THY GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE, EVEN A JEALOUS GOD.

LORD, OUR FOREFATHERS WORKED THE FARM AND FIELDS; ALL DAY LONG; BUT PRAYED AND KEPT A SONG ON THEIR HEART; AND YOU MADETHEM STRONG!!!

ISAIAH 26:3,4, THOU WILT KEEP HIM IN PERFECT PEACE, WHOSE MIND IS STAYED ON THEE: BECAUSE HE TRUSTETH IN THEE. TRUST YE IN THE LORD FOR EVER: FOR THE LORD JEHOVAH IS EVERLASTING STRENGTH.

*****THE LORD IS OUR SHEPHERD; WE SHALL NOT WANT!*****

LORD, THERE WAS A CRY MADE IN THE LAND; YOU HAVE YOUR RIGHTS; THE BLACKS SAID: THAT IS WHAT I NEED; TO BE LIKE THE WHITES!!!

JUDGES 3:6, THEY TOOK THEIR DAUGHTERS TO BE THEIR WIVES, AND GAVE THEIR DAUGHTER TO THEIR SONS. AND SERVED THEIR GODS.

LORD, NOW THE WHOLE COUNTRY IS CORRUPTED; THE LIES AS A WHOLE; OUR GOD'S ARE LIKE THEIRS, ON TV; AND THEY ARE SO COLD!!!

ROMANS 1:22,23,25, PROFESSING THEMSELVES TO BE WISE, THEY BECAME FOOLS, AND CHANGED THE GLORY OF THE UNCORRUPTIBLE GOD INTO AN IMAGE MADE LIKE TO CORRUPTIBLE MAN, AND TO BIRDS, AND FOURFOOTED BEASTS AND CREEPING THINGS. WHO CHANGED THE TRUTH OF GOD INTO A LIE, AND WORSHIPPED AND SERVED THE CREATURE MORE THAN THE CREATOR, WHO IS BLESSED FOREVER.AMEN.

***** WILL BLACKS ROB GOD???*****

LORD, NOW THE ALL AMERICA IS IN TROUBLE; AS WE ALL CAN SEE; ITS IN FOR A GREAT FALL; BECAUSE YOUR WORD, SAID IT WAS TO BE!!!

DEUTERONOMY 28:15a,16-20a, IT SHALL COME TO PASS, IF THOU WILT NOT HEARKEN UNTO THE VOICE OF THE LORD THY GOD, CURSED SHALT THOU BE IN CITY, AND CURSED SHALT THOU BE IN THE FIELD. CURSED SHALL BE THY BASKET AND THY STORE. CURSED SHALL BE THE FRUIT OF THY BODY, AND THE FRUIT OF THY LAND, THE INCREASE OF THY KINE, AND THE FLOCKS OF THY SHEEP. CURSED SHALT THOU BE WHEN THOU COMEST IN, AND CURSED SHALT THOU BE WHEN THY GOEST OUT. THE LORD SHALL SEND UPON THEE CURSING, VEXATION, AND REBUKE. GOD IS NOT THROUGH WITH US YET. SO LETS PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER ALWAYS.

WRITTEN BY EVANGELIST BILLY B.J. MORRISON, III, YOUR BROTHER CHRIST JESUS!!



from the Desk of Parson D.A. Smith

The Struggle of Sin

The fallen state of man can best be described by one word, sin. Sin is failure, error, iniquity, transgression, trespass, lawlessness and unrighteousness. It is unmitigated evil. The most characteristic feature of sin, in all of its aspects, is that it is directed against God.

The effect of sin has polluted our world's system, our nation's values, our state's government, our city's policies. It is responsible for the inequities in our neighborhood. The stench of sin has visited our own homes making its characteristic expression in and through our lives.

Romans 6:23 tells us that, "the wages of sin is death." So devastating is the impact of sin in our lives that it leaves a wake of death and destruction everywhere it has been. Where would we be without a Savior?

In John 10:10 Jesus described the contrast between His

work and the devil's as it related to people. "The thief (devil) cometh not," saith the Lord, "but for to steal, and to kill and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

Jesus is able to give us abundant living by wiping away our sin. He took our sins to the cross with Him so that we might have access to a Holy God, and so that we might walk this life here on earth in victory. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we were healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

City Wide Ushers To Meet

The City Wide ushers will meet at St. Matthew Baptist Church, Saturday, March 13, 1999, at 2020 E. 14th at 5:00 p.m. Where the Rev. Canady is host pastor.

We need to bring our non-perishable can goods so as to help some needy families. Please come cause we need (all hands) this way we can learn to work together when necessary bring another usher, we welcome all churches.

Sister M.J. Cage, President, Sister Minnie Banthand, Reporter.



The Dixie Hummingbirds roll into 1999 with a new set of wheels from soul superstar Stevie Wonder. Wonder promised to provide the new transportation at last summer's Gospel "Bird" Roast, celebrating the Hummingbirds' 70th anniversary, and enlisted the help of Los Angeles radio station KJLH-FM. Standing outside Philadelphia's African American Museum, members of the legendary gospel quartet, (LEFT TO RIGHT) Paul Owens, Howard Carroll and Ira Tucker, Sr., accept the keys to a 1999 Ford Custom Travel Van from Derek Leggins (FAR RIGHT) of John Kennedy Ford in Feasterville, PA. The Dixie Hummingbirds' new album, "Music In The Air" (House of Blues Music Co.), features Wonder as well as special guests Paul Simon, Isaac Hayes, Deniece Williams and Bobby Womack. The album is scheduled for release in May 1999.

Dixie Hummingbirds Flying High With "Vantastic" New Wheels

February 18, 1999 — The Dixie Hummingbirds are rolling into 1999 in style, with a brand new Ford Custom Travel Van courtesy of Stevie Wonder.

"What a fricad we have in Stevie," said Ira Tucker, Sr., lead singer of the legendary gospel quartet, paraphrasing a hymn that speaks of appreciation, gratitude, privilege and prayer — emotions that echo the Dixie Hummingbird's heartfelt feelings and thoughts about receiving the gift. "Happy New Year? You got that right."

Wonder promised the new transportation for the Dixie Hummingbirds' 70th Anniversary Tour, when he was a guest speaker at the June 1998 Gospel "Bird" Roast. With help from the gospel music programming department of KJLH-FM, Los Angeles, Wonder fulfilled his promise when Derek Leggins of John Kennedy Ford in Feasterville, PA, presented the Dixie Hummingbirds with the keys to a shiny black 1999 Ford Custom Travel Van at Philadelphia's African American Museum, where the roast took place.

Wonder and the Birds will hook up again in late Spring 1999,

when House of Blues Music Co., a subsidiary of Platinum Entertainment, Inc., releases *Music In The Air*, a commemorative CD marking the group's 70th anniversary. The album features the Birds performing with Wonder and Paul Simon on Simon's classic "Loves Me Like A Rock," plus a version of Wonder's "Have A Talk With God." Other performers who have been recorded for the album include Isaac Hayes, Deniece Williams, Bobby Womack and Howard Hewitt, with additional commitments to participate from Aretha Franklin, Patti LaBelle, James Brown and Shirley Caesar.

"This is really something special," said Benni Diggs, who is producing the album along with Tucker and John Snyder. "The Birds are a national treasure, and we're having a great time working with all of these great vocalists." For additional information about the Dixie Hummingbirds, contact Ira Tucker, Jr., 215-875-3336, Devon Devick at House of Blues, 630-769-0033, Ext. 207, or Darryl D. Lassiter at Platinum Entertainment/Atlanta 770-664-9262 Ext. 2223.

- MUSICIAN WANTED -
A musician is needed at the Greater St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church, 306 East 26th Street. If you are interested, then please contact Rev. J. H. Ford, pastor, at (806) 744-2728 or (806) 744-0659.

ATTENTION SOVEREIGN GRACE BELIEVERS
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Rev. J.H. Ford, Pastor

The Outreach Prayer Breakfast

The report of the Saturday morning, March 6, 1999, meeting will appear next week. However, in the meanwhile, we will speak on one of our favorite subjects, "Faith." Now Faith is, Hebrews 11:1.

Now Faith is the substance ground or confidence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. We've covered this far by Faith. Hope that is seen is not hope for what a man seeth why do he yet hope for? But, if we hope for that we see, not then do with patience. Wait for it? Now Faith is! It's like saying, now God is. Two words describe our Faith, Confidence, and Certainty. These -- Confidence and Certainty. These two words need a secure beginning and ending point. The beginning point of faith is believing in God's character. He is who He says. The end point is believing in God's promises. He will do what He says He will do. We believe that God will fulfill His promises even though we don't see those promises materializing now, but we know they will.

Do you not know that Faith will move mountains, open blind eyes, even cause lame to walk, cast out devils, solve your problems and cure, but Faith does not work over unforgiveness. You might not remember doing anything to anyone. Do you remember speaking a little bit negative about your Church Sister or Brother, go to them and ask for forgiveness. Don't hold any grudges. Lift one another up. Don't run down your Sister and family's name. They need your prayers at all times.

The only way this generation will know we are Christians is by our love.

May God bless you today in a big way. Read and believe the Word Mark 11:22-26 and II Chronicles 7:14.

Write to us: Outreach Prayer Breakfast, P. O. Box 4223 Lubbock, Texas 79408.

Post Script: Keep doing those drive by prayers in target areas of this city. Let's pray the Holy Spirit of God will turn the lives of many around. Love all, no matter the color.

Sister Dorothy Hood, president; Rev. Sister Christine Burleson, vice president; Sister Ernestine Fraizer, secretary; and Sister Elvora Jones, acting secretary.

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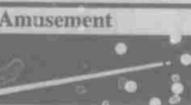
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UniWorld Films Presents The Third Annual Acapulco Black Film Festival

NEW YORK, NY. - UniWorld Films, a division of the UniWorld Group, Inc., and the Black Filmmaker Foundation announced today that the internationally recognized Acapulco Black Film Festival (ABFF) will return to the beautiful city of Acapulco, Mexico, Tuesday, June 8 through Sunday, June 13, 1999. African American independent filmmakers interested in submitting feature-length films, short films or documentaries for screening consideration at the Festival must submit them to UniWorld Films by Monday, March 1.

The Acapulco Black Film Festival, now in its third successful year, was created to provide a platform for generating greater exposure and support for independent films and to facilitate networking among African American professionals in the film industry. The Festival is presented by UniWorld Films and the Black Filmmaker Foundation. Home Box Office (HBO) is the presenting sponsor.

Byron Lewis, chairman and CEO, UniWorld Group, Inc., and founder of the Acapulco Black Film Festival said, "We've had tremendous success and support for the Acapulco Black Film Festival which has attracted actors, directors, writers, and studio and music industry executives. The ABFF has successfully provided a valuable marketplace for the development and distribution of films that are truly indicative of the African American experience."

Warrington Hudlin, president of the Black Filmmaker Foundation and curator of the Acapulco Black Film Festival adds, "The Acapulco Black Film Festival is unique among the growing number of festi-

vals celebrating Black cinema. Serving as both a festival and a retreat, our film program is smaller and more selective. We have emerged as the filmmaker's choice for world premiere screenings and serve as a festival of festivals by showcasing the best films of other film festivals."

For the second year, Home Box Office will present the HBO Short Film Award at the Festival. The award was created last year to celebrate and develop the writing and directing talents of young minority filmmakers. The grand-prize winner will receive a grant and paid apprenticeship with HBO NYC Productions, one of the network's movie divisions. Two runners-up will also receive paid apprenticeships with HBO NYC.

The key sections of the ABFF are the American and international independent feature film competitions, where filmmakers vie for the Magic Johnson Theatres "Best of Festival Award" and the HBO Short Film Award. In 1997, the independent film competition yielded Chris Cherot's *Hav Plenty*, which was acquired and released by Miramax. In addition, the ABFF features a Classic Black cinema section.

In addition to the film screenings, the Festival will include panels, dialogues with prominent filmmakers and actors, entertainment and workshops. This year's schedule includes a three-day workshop series presented by the Writers Guild of America. In addition, new to the ABFF's workshop schedule, is actor/director Bill Duke's Actors Boot Camp.

The highlight of the Festival is the Black Film Awards which will be held closing night. The Black

Film Awards recognize the achievements of African Americans in Hollywood. At last year's Festival, actor Denzel Washington presented Career Achievement Awards to actor Morgan Freeman and actor/director/producer Debbie Allen.

Other sponsors of the Acapulco Black Film Festival are Nielsen Media Research, Upscale, The Walt Disney Company, NetNoir Online, Magic Johnson Theatres, the Writers Guild of America (WGA), the Directors Guild of America (DGA), Naya, Black Pearl Entertainment and Cinemark Theatres. Host sponsors are the Acapulco Hotel Association, Expomarketing, the State of Guerrero, and the Acapulco Convention and Visitor's Bureau. Media partners are *Suburban Styles*; *NV Magazine*; *WBLS-FM*, New York; *WVAZ-FM*, Chicago; *KJLH-FM* and *KACE-FM*, Los Angeles and *WJLB/WMXD*, Detroit.

Individuals interested in submitting a feature film or film short must complete a film submission form and forward a 1/2" videocassette by March 1, 1999, to Cherita McDowell, UniWorld Films, 100 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-1699. All cassettes become the property of UniWorld Films and HBO and will not be returned. To obtain a film submission form, Festival brochure or for information about ABFF registration, please call 212/219-7267 or visit our Web site at www.uniworld-films.com.



From left to right - Warrington Hudlin, president, Black Filmmaker Foundation, Byron Lewis, Chairman and CEO, UniWorld Group, Inc., and Jeff Friday, President, UniWorld Films. Photo Credit: Mychal Watts

UniWorld Group, Inc., is the nation's largest African American-owned-and-operated marketing communications agency. UniWorld's clients include AT&T, Burger King Corporation; Colgate-Palmolive Company; Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc.; Lincoln-Mercury Division; Mars, Inc.; Mead Johnson Nutritionals;

NationsBank; Pepsi-Cola Company; Pfizer, Inc. and the Quaker Oats Company.

The Black Filmmaker Foundation (BFF) is a not-for-profit organization established in 1978 to assist the next generation of Black filmmakers and build audiences for their work. Over the last 20 years, BFF has programmed over a dozen

Black film series and festivals in the U.S. and abroad.

Home Box Office is the premium television programming division of Time Warner Entertainment Company L.P., providing two 24-hour premium television services, HBO and Cinemax, which serve more than 33 million subscribers in the United States.

A TALE OF TWO SYSTEMS: Minority Consumers Devalued by Advertisers

By William F. Keenan
Chairman, Federal
Communications Commission

Blacks don't buy Volvo.
Hispanics don't bathe.
African-Americans are "prospects" not suspects."

All of these are stereotypes, generalizations that we all thought and hoped had gone the way of the black-and-white television and the rotary phone. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

All of these sentiments were expressed by various advertisers and advertising executives. They were excuses given for not advertising on minority-formatted radio stations, even on outlets that are some of the highest-rated stations on the dial.

In a first of its kind study of the advertising industry, the FCC has found that the story of the radio business is a tale of two systems. Some companies refuse to advertise on urban-formatted or Spanish-language stations or are told by their advertising firms to do so. And others will only do so, but only after demanding deep discounts - often as large as 59 percent.

Because of these practices, minority-formatted radio stations find it harder and harder to generate the revenues they need to remain profitable. In fact, our study found that these practices reduce revenues to these stations by as much as two-thirds. The bottom line is clear. They are being deprived of advertising, the lifeblood of their business.

This is a system whose tale must be told, and whose story must end.

These practices are not only unfair. They do not make any business sense. Madison Avenue needs to understand today's Main Street. There is not only a diversity of peoples in America, but a diversity of types of people within each group - rich and poor, educated and unskilled, blue and white collar.

Unfortunately, the examples offered in this study suggest that some advertisers do not recognize the reality of minority consumers and the power of minority-formatted stations in reaching them. They fail to realize that there are untapped markets right here at home in the neighborhoods of our long-neglected minority communi-

ties.

In the end, we all suffer from these practices. If minority-formatted stations can not make themselves profitable, then they have less money to invest in the quality programming - news, public affairs, entertainment - that communities expect from their radio stations, as well as less money to invest in the equipment that brings it to them.

Moreover, bypassed by some of our biggest companies, African-American and Hispanic families find themselves on the outside looking in to our national marketplace. If radio stations can't tell its listeners about new products or great sales, how can they serve their listeners? And how can these listeners be equals in the most equitable arena there is - the marketplace?

And these policies hurt us, as a nation, too. Economically, we can not continue to prosper if the purchasing power of all Americans is not unleashed. Politically, our democracy is weaker if our airwaves and our national debate lacks strong voices from all corners of our country.

If "sunshine is the best disinfectant," then the FCC study is a first step to ending these practices. There are many companies and advertisers who do treat minority stations fairly, and they can be our partners in educating those who do not. That is why I, along with the American Advertising Federation, the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts, Representatives Menendez and Cheeks Kilpatrick, will host a February 22 summit. The meeting will bring together minority broadcasters, advertising firms, and companies to begin to assess the full extent of the problem. Once we gather the data, I believe that we will have a powerful tool to convince errant companies that ignoring minority consumers is not only wrong, but it is also foolish.

In the end, all of us will win. Minority broadcasters will get the attention and revenue that they deserve. Companies will be steered to untapped markets. Those that listen to these stations will be respected and better served by the marketplace. And we, as a nation, will have one system - open and fair to all.

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT DRUGS.



It's never too early to start.

The best thing about this subject is that you don't have to do it well. You simply have to try.

If you try, your kids will get the message.

- That you care about them.
- That you understand something about the conflicts they face.
- That you're there when they need you.

The alternative is to ignore the subject. Which means your kids are going to be listening to others who have strong opinions about the subject. Including those who use drugs. And those who sell them.

ACCEPT REBELLION.

At the heart of it, drugs, alcohol, wild hairstyles, trendy clothes, ear-splitting music, outrageous language are different ways of expressing teenage rebellion.

That's not all bad. Part of growing up is to create a separate identity, apart from parents - a process which ultimately leads to feelings of self worth. A step along that path is rebellion of one kind or another - which is to say rejecting parental values, and staking out new ones.

You did it. They're doing it. And that's the way it is.

The problem comes when kids choose a path of rebellion that hurts them, destroys their self worth, and can ultimately kill them.

That's the reality of drugs.

DON'T GET DISCOURAGED.

When you talk to your kids about drugs, it may seem as though nothing is getting through.

- Don't you believe it.
- The very fact you say it gives special weight to whatever you say.
- But whether or not your kids let on they've heard you, whether or not they play back your words weeks or months later, keep trying.

START ANYWHERE.

- "Have you heard about any kids using drugs?"
- "What kind of drugs?"
- "How do you feel about that?"

"Why do you think kids get involved with drugs?"

"How do other kids deal with peer pressure to use drugs? Which approaches make sense to you?"

"Have you talked about any of this in school?"

However you get into the subject, it's important to state exactly how strongly you feel about it.

Not in threatening tones. But in matter-of-fact, unmistakably clear language:

"Drugs are a way of hurting yourself."

"Drugs take all the promise of being young and destroy it."

"I love you too much to see you throw your life down the drain."

SOME DO'S AND DON'TS.

The do's are as simple as speaking from the heart.

The biggest don't is don't do all the talking. If you listen to your kids - really listen and read between the lines - you'll learn a lot about what they think. About drugs. About themselves. About the world. And about you. They'll also feel heard and that, too, is a step along the path towards self esteem.

There are other do's and don'ts: Don't threaten. Don't badger them. Don't put your kid on the spot by asking directly if he or she has ever tried drugs. They'll probably lie, which undermines your whole conversation.

If you suspect your child is on drugs - there are all sorts of symptoms - that's a different matter. Then you've got to confront the subject directly.

In the meantime, just talk to them.

It's okay if you don't know much about drugs.

Your kids do.

But they need to know how you feel about the subject.

And whether you care.

For more information on how to talk with your kids about drugs, ask for a free copy of "Keeping Youth Drug-Free." Call 1-800-729-6686.