

Fall 2007



Colleges & Universities

Black Girls and Golf

Soul Sister

Lil' Mama

Angela Bassett

Thandie Newton

Aisha Tyler

Sanaa Lathan

Chaka Khan



Girl
Genius

WHAT'S NEW WITH

Erykah Badu



NAS
WYCLEF JEAN
MOS DEF
Angelique
Kidjo

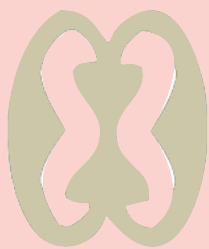


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Sister CONNECTIONS

CAFRA

CAFRA stands for the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action. The organization describes itself as a regional network of feminists, individual researchers, activists and women's organisations that define feminist politics as a matter of both consciousness and action. We are committed to understanding the relationship between the oppression of women and other forms of oppression in the society, and we are working actively for change.

The mission: To celebrate and channel the collective power of women for individual and societal transformation, thus creating a climate in which social justice is realized.

The history of feminism in the Caribbean can be located in women's tradition of resistance during African-Caribbean enslavement, continuing through East Indian and other bonded labour, and the women's movements of the early 20th century and the present. The international women's movement of the 1960's and the

1970's had a catalytic effect throughout the Caribbean. Women increasingly recognized that they had to organize autonomously to fight for their rights and to articulate and struggle for their vision of the Caribbean. As the women's movement in the Caribbean developed, it increasingly recognized the necessity for regional cooperation and networking. The work being done by women's groups in different geographic areas, in a wide range of languages, bore enough similarities and faced enough common problems to justify cooperation.

CAFRA emerged as an autonomous umbrella organization out of this scenario. It was formally funded on 2 April 1985 at an all-day meeting in Barbados of forty feminists and women activists from the region. Activities to date include projects and programmes on Women in Caribbean Agriculture; Women and the Law; Women's History and Creative Expression; Women, Development and Sustainable Livelihood; Women's Health and Reproductive Rights; and Gender and Youth.
www.cafra.org

The Presence of Dawn

By Andrea L. Dansby

I am glad to have met
a sista for sista's
An intellectual with vision
Vision beyond tangible gain

Strong black woman
Youthful, widely accomplished
Embellished with purpose to promote change
A true contribution
To our Blackness
Our Beauty
And our Spirits

Though your guidance has been brief
And still we stumble in the dark
Our eyes are adjusting
We have been graced by the Dawn
Now we stand firm
Confident, learned and motivated

We can journey on
Now that the Dawn has put night to rest
Because of her rise
We can clearly see where to go...

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Sistas in the Struggle: A Movement of Resistance By and For Girls Impacted by the Sex Trade and Street Economies

The girls of Young Women's Empowerment Project (YWEP) take back power and become leaders in their communities through a project like no other.

By Amber Kutka and Dominique McKinney, Youth Staff YWEP

In Chicago, there exists a place like no other, a space where girls are safe to be themselves, a space of resistance. In this project, young women contribute and work regardless of drug use or involvement in the sex trade or street economies. It is a project that is completely dedicated to listening to the needs of young women in the sex trade. Together we develop realistic tools for our lives and communities. It is a safe place where girls ages 12-23 from all over Chicago are leaders, activists, peer outreach workers, popular education teachers and organizers. Wherever we go, Young Women's Empowerment Project creates spaces where we share knowledge, skills, energy and strength. We make a call to all to support our fight, to build our movement and form solidarity with us.

A six year old project and girl-run, YWEP was created to assure that girls and young women of color impacted by the sex trade have a voice and presence at the negotiation table. YWEP is by and for girls who are currently or have been involved in trading sex for money, gifts or survival needs including survival sex and all the other ways girls can be affected by the sex trade and street economies. Girls participate because they want to. We have no requirements, do not need anyone's file, identification, or real name.

YWEP believes that girls and young women of color are especially affected because of racism, sexism, male dominance, ageism, the prison industrial complex, drug war and other systems of oppression. The sex trade and streets economies exist and thrive because of the lack of resources, choices, support, education and respect for girls and young women. We discourage youth and adults from using derogatory language and labels. Just like we discourage the use of criminalizing terms used by the systems.

We train and pay girls to support other girls building networks and sisterhood. In our project young women contribute to our work regardless of drug use or involvement in the sex trade and street economies. It is a project that is completely dedicated to listening to their needs. We want young women to be in control of their lives, to be safe and in charge. We connect individual positive change with positive change in the community.

We respect where girls are at. We support girls by providing a safe non-judgmental and non-condemning environment. When girls come, they feel safe and free of the outside society's judgment and criminalization. This is where they become leaders

and take the power back into their own hands.

Our beliefs are important to us, and our community. We believe in empowerment and to us this means that girls are experts in their own lives. YWEP creates spaces where girls are in charge. Our project is special because we practice harm reduction, which means giving practical options. We respect the choices that girls make, by supporting them. We help girls find safer ways to practice risky behavior; risky means anything that might put a girl in harm. We offer realistic information and we educate. We offer syringe exchange, give out condoms, health information and we help them find any resources girls need.

We practice self care, which means taking care of our body, mind and soul. It is important to take care of yourself mentally, spiritually, and physically, to develop strength and confidence in who you are, what you do, and who you want to become. Before you take care of others, you to have to take care of yourself. Because we are in the sex trade doesn't mean we are less than any other human and deserve the right to any positive change. Don't believe the myths; believe in your own decisions.

Girls do what they have to do to survive. Although society blames us, we call out the systems that are responsible for the oppression faced by girls, young women and youth everywhere. Girls are being oppressed everyday and we are here to fight against misogyny and hold our oppressors accountable. We support all girls building and keeping sisterhood and support their fight for social justice. We fight back because girls are being locked up for trying to survive.

We give real options for real situations. Our youth to youth outreach workers have reached over 700 girls in 2006 alone. They go all over Chicago to their friends, family, and people they've never met before and have the big job of educating people on their self care, rights, health, and safety. If one girl finds out some good information she most likely will share it with others. Outreach has a lot to do with community change because if you make enough people aware in one area change is made.

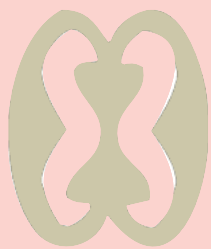
Our workshops have reached hundreds and hundreds of girls in schools, group homes, foster care facilities and community organizations. Through girls' lived knowledge, we talk and learn about the causes of inequalities and injustices in society, faced by youth impacted by the sex trade and street economies. Our popular education helps us build the tools that support girls' reclaiming their power to fight against injustices.

YWEP has been upholding its commitment to youth leadership in the forefront. We need your continued support! With your solidarity and strength behind us- nothing will hold us back. Write us, ask us questions and check out our website!

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Sister CONNECTIONS

Defying Tradition

To Rescue Maasai Girls from Cut

By Denis Cathanju

IT HAS BEEN HAPPENING FROM one generation to the next, but very few who underwent the ritual Maasai cut knew why it happens because it was taboo in their culture to talk about it. The Kenyan government has for years tried to make the practice illegal, but nothing comes in the way of a determined people keen on holding cultural and tribal practices they regard as sacred.

However, a dissenting voice is emanating deep within the heart of Maasailand in Kenya's expansive Rift Valley Province. The noise coming from that quarter has made Maasai tribal chiefs twist and turn in their beds not knowing how to stop this tribal and cultural dissident.

But what could perhaps be a thorn in their flesh is that the dissident in question is a woman. Women in the Maasai culture, as they are in many other African cultures, were there only to be seen and not heard. Women were not allowed to make decisions of whatever kind and had to follow without question what community men and warriors deemed right.

Agnes Pareiyo has chosen a different path and has continued to raffle Maasai leaders and tribal chiefs the wrong way with her constant outbursts on the dangers of practicing what she terms as archaic cultural traditions that have been overtaken by time.

"Such barbaric traditions no longer fit into the world we are living in today," the fire-spitting activist says

from her Narok office. "Times have come when the Maasai people should take the path other communities in Kenya have taken by doing away with harmful and irrelevant cultural traditions that serve no purpose whatsoever."

The Maasai people are the most photographed community in the world and are known for their adherence to centuries' old cultural traditions that seem to pass the test of time. But with the likes of Pareiyo, these traditions are now facing a battle for survival.

"Of what value is a circumcised woman?" she questions, "what makes her more of a woman than an uncircumcised woman?"

"Maasai women and girls should wake up and fight this inhumane practice that is harmful to their health and bodies. They should be taught that in today's fast-paced world, education is the key to a better and more fulfilling life and not the cut," she argues.

Pareiyo's outbursts have made her a hero in some quarters and a curse of the community in others. Maasai elders and leaders have branded her a serious threat to their long-held customs and traditions and she has consequently been excommunicated as a member of the Maasai community.

For Pareiyo, her resistance started some thirty years ago when she was told by her mother that she and her elder sister would be facing the *ormunya* or the circumcision knife.

"My sister and I had just come from school when we found villagers in our homestead celebrating. On enquiry, my mother said that my sister and I were to undergo the *emuratare* – circumcision – ritual that would make us women," she reminisces.

"In our tradition, women or men who refused to face the cut were



Activist Agnes Pareiyo educates a group in Kenya.

regarded as cowards and were a disgrace to the family and the entire village," she adds. It is like a curse, Pareiyo says, when one is regarded a coward in the Maasai culture, who are known for their courage and bravery; so having this tag around you made one the ridicule of the entire village. "I wanted to show everyone that I was no coward," reminisces Pareiyo.

The initiation ceremony got into top gear when a pot full of cold water was placed in the middle of the *manyatta* or Maasai homestead with an iron axe inside. The pot had to stay outside overnight for the water to get cold and with the help of the iron axe, would get even colder under the night skies.

At the crack of dawn, the roof of the calf pen was opened up and the ice-cold water from the pot was poured on their bodies and in the private parts to cool down the body to avoid excessive bleeding.

Pareiyo's elder sister was the first to get the cut that morning and when it was her turn, her age mates and peers milled around waiting with bated breathe to see if the coward was going to scream and wince in pain, "but I was determined to disappoint them and prove them wrong."

Says she: "The circumciser approached me menacingly waving the blade in my face as if to terrify me, but I just watched, ready to be cut." And perhaps due to her earlier resentment, Pareiyo faced the more painful and severe traditional circumcision.

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romance of Africa and women of African descent, in particular. Cowrie shells, once used as currency in Africa, symbolize wealth, status and beauty. As shells from the sea, some believe that the cowrie shell comes as a token of recognition by the Coddess of Water.



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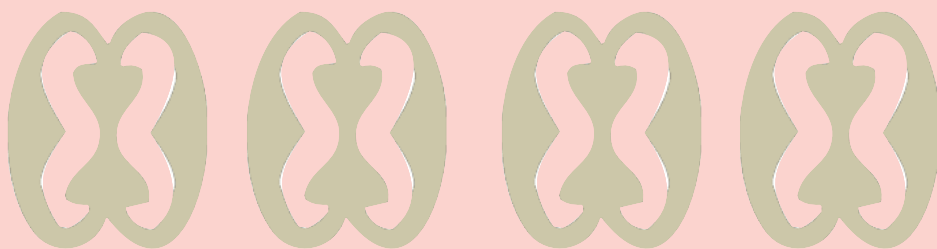


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feminine power, beauty, sensuality, love and healing abilities. Hand-wrapped in small, medium and large sizes on a black leather cord with a clasp, natural variations occur. (A variety of sizes with varying prices available).

Available at the Sister Store:
www.sisterhoodagenda.com



"I had my clitoris, the labia majora and labia minora gorged out with the sharp blade as I watched," she says thoughtfully, "the circumciser then inserted two fingers into the fresh wound to make sure that the work was complete and that nothing was left."

It was excruciatingly painful for the fourteen year old, but not one tear drop did she shed or wince in pain. She had to be strong.

Of the three common forms of female genital mutilation (FGM), the traditional circumcision is the most painful, most severe and most horrendous of female genital mutilations that a woman can ever undergo. It is known as infibulation.

The other two, clitoridectomy and excision are less painful and savage. Clitoridectomy, also called *sunna* involves the clipping of the tip of the clitoris while excision involves removing the clitoris.

While it is taboo in the Maasai tradition to speak openly of sex and

FGM, Pareiyo took it upon herself to educate the young women from her ethnic tribe to stop the tradition that in most cases led to early forced marriages. "I got married off soon after the circumcision ceremony to a man who was my father's age," explains Pareiyo.

Says she: "This is something that I would not want my daughter or any other girl in Maasailand or anywhere else in the world to undergo. It gives me great pride to rescue a girl and help mold her life and future for a better tomorrow by giving her an education that makes her self confident, independent and empowers her to make wise decisions that affect her life. Nothing gives me better satisfaction," she adds as her eyes light up with joy and passion.

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Sisterhood T-Shirt Sale

"Sisterhood" is spelled in Egyptian hieroglyphics. Embrace the power of Black Womanhood! Showcase your unique style and spirit of sisterhood in this feminine, fitted baby doll t-shirt with capped sleeves. Metallic gold symbolizes wealth and black symbolizes our ethnicity.



\$9.95 SALE

Available at the Sister Store: www.sisterhoodagenda.com



Sisters Obtaining Sisterhood Program Will Serve High School Girls Through The East St. Louis Center By Amber Suggs

HIGH SCHOOL FEMALES WILL BECOME MORE SELF-CONFIDENT, develop strong interpersonal skills and increase self love through a new program developed and offered by the SIUE East St. Louis Center TRIO Program, Educational Talent Search.

Sisters Obtaining Sisterhood is the new program and brainchild of Tasha Williams, Educational Talent Search program coordinator. Williams had noticed that many female students in the TRIO Program seemed to be emotionally restless. "Several young ladies came to me and said they wanted an outlet to express themselves," said Williams. She believed in the need so much that she began the program without a budget in 2005.

Later, SIUE's Meridian Society gave the TRIO Program a grant to fund Sisters Obtaining Sisterhood. The Meridian Society is an organization of women in philanthropy dedicated to supporting a variety of SIUE programs.

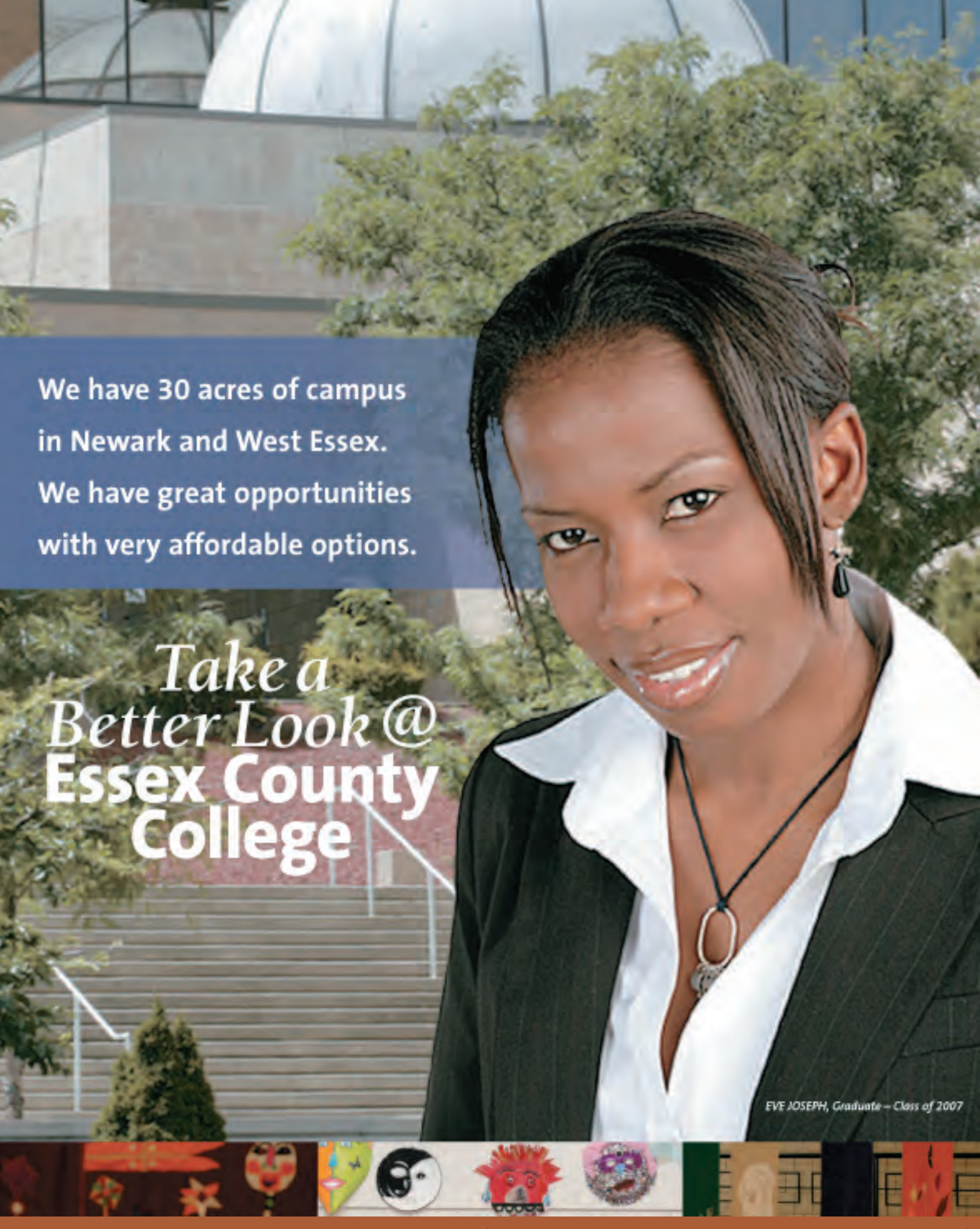
Now in its second year of operation, Williams recruited Catrice Woods and Kristopher Fields, Upward Bound counselors, to serve as Sisters Obtaining Sisterhood program advisors. Together, they are committed to providing a wholesome think tank setting that engages intelligent dialogue, constructive criticism and inner conflict solutions. "The

"Several young ladies came to me and said they wanted an outlet to express themselves."

atmosphere is centered on learning about consequences, choices and responsibilities," Fields said.

In addition, the program puts emphasis on addressing symptoms of peer and societal pressures. "Everything around them focuses on dating," Woods said. "Everyone at school is dating; the kids on TV are dating, and their parent is dating. They are surrounded by pressures to have a boyfriend." After identifying these concerns, the staff addresses the pressures and consequences, and places importance on sexual responsibilities.

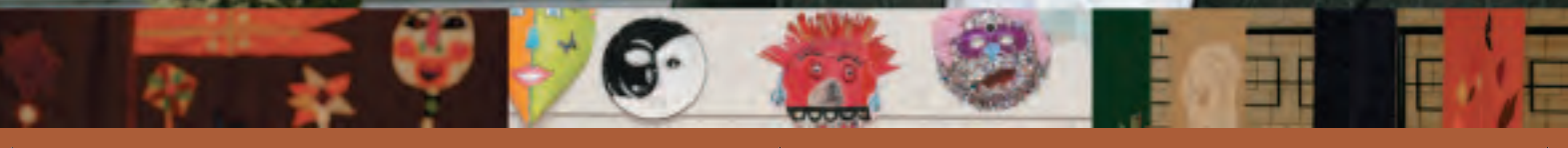
"Overall," Fields concluded, "the desired outcome is to help young women become strong women."



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EVE JOSEPH, Graduate – Class of 2007



Bethune-Cookman University

A Rich Legacy for Strong Women

By Dr. Trudie Kibbe Reed, President

Founded in 1904 by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, Bethune-Cookman University is not only an outstanding liberal arts institution, but an institution with a rich legacy in the formative leadership of women.

Through her pursuit of lifelong learning and social equity for all people, Dr. Bethune demonstrated that education was capable of democratizing society through civic engagement and academic excellence. Today, this legacy lives on in our students as they engage in volunteerism, public service, and civics projects to become effective citizens of the world.

As the president of Bethune-Cookman University, spending quality time with students is extremely important to me. To spend time with students as they engage in reflective, critical thinking, as they delight in applying knowledge through practical experience, internship placements, and study programs around the world...this is inspiring.

Students here quickly catch the WILDCAT FEVER through attendance at football games, intramural sports, performances by the Concert Chorale, Gospel Choir, and by moving to the rhythm of our award winning Wildcats Marching Band that served as the Cameo for the Spring 2002 movie, Drumline. The band has made cameo appearances on several national television shows. The Marching Wildcats will be filmed for Walt Disney World's annual Christmas Parade in Orlando, Florida.

It is also exciting to observe student leadership in action at the regular meetings of the Student Government Association (SCA), our off-campus Community Meetings and as well, to observe them engaged in meaningful dialogue during my "Beachside Chats". Though these sessions are not actually held at the beach, our college is

located just a few short miles from the Atlantic Ocean.

Our beautiful campus sits on 70 acres in the heart of Daytona Beach. Our student body is composed of a record high of 3,100 students who credit Bethune-Cookman University with building esteem, fostering self awareness, and forming a valued-centered nurturing setting for learning and residential living.

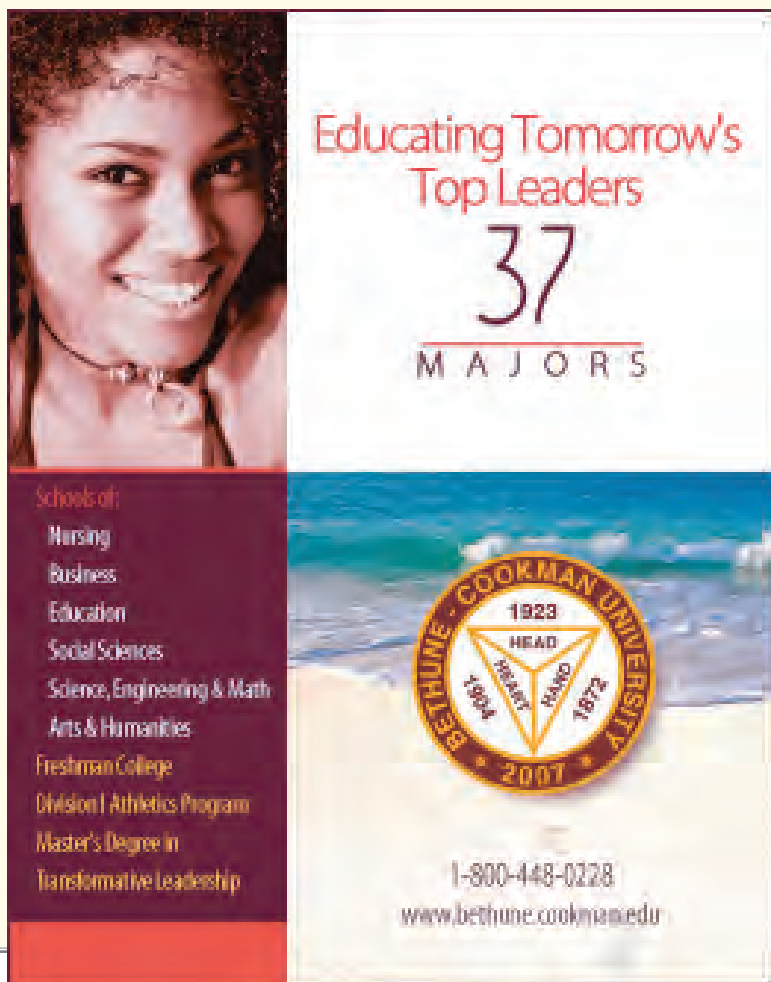
Bethune-Cookman University is a place where dreams become reality and where education leads to hope for a better tomorrow. Join me in sustaining our founder's legacy of faith, service, and scholarship. I hope you will visit our website www.bethune.cookman.edu to keep abreast of all the wonderful news coming from the Great Bethune-Cookman University!

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

The University of Trinidad and Tobago has several campus locations in Trinidad, West Indies.

Mission "To be an entrepreneurial university designed to discover and develop entrepreneurs, commercialise research and development, and spawn companies for wealth generation and sustainable job creation towards the equitable enhancement of the quality of life of all individuals, families and communities of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean."

The Role of UTT The role of The University of Trinidad and Tobago is to meet the needs of Trinidad and Tobago for a highly trained and qualified technological manpower base. UTT will also establish a non-teaching Academy for Arts, Culture and Public Affairs in the near future as an integral and important part of the new university.

As technology changed over the years to suit the evolving global environment, so too have the human resource needs of the country. In reviewing these needs, several distinct engineering functions are identified with each function requiring its own set of specialized competencies and by extension, education, training and qualification.

Facilities The University of Trinidad and Tobago is a multi-campus facility with major campuses located as follows:

- O'Meara; (Post Graduate and BSc. Programmes);
- Point Lisas, John Donaldson Technical Institute and San Fernando Technical institute (Process & Utilities Engineering Technology Certificates, Diplomas and Bachelor of Engineering programmes);
- Chaguaramas (Maritime Studies)
- Valsayn Teachers Training College and Corinth Teachers Training College (Learning , Cognition and Education) and;
- The Eastern Caribbean Institute of Agriculture and Forestry (Food Production).

BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL

THESE ACTRESSES
PROVE IT:

BLACK
IS
BEAUTIFUL
AND
SMART
TOO!

THANDIE NEWTON

Thandie Newton was born Thandiewe meaning "beloved" in Zulu. Thandie's mother was a nurse and a Zimbabwean princess of the Shona Tribe. Her father was a British artist. She lived in Zambia until she was four. Political instability in Zambia forced her parents and brother James to move to England. At age 11, she enrolled in London's Art Educational School to study modern dance. Injuries caused her to turn to college and eventually, to acting. She graduated from Cambridge University with a degree in anthropology.

Thadie is a
graduate of
Cambridge
University.





Kathy Hutchins / Hutchins Photo

ANGELA BASSETT

Born in the Bronx, and raised in St. Dinsney World, Florida, St. Petersburg, Florida, Angela Bassett and her sister D'nette were raised by their social worker mother. Bassett spent most of her childhood in housing projects, but even at a young age she was an entertainer. She and her younger sister often put on shows, reading poems or performing popular music, for their mother and aunts. At Boca Ciega High School, Bassett was a member of the debate team, student government, drama club, choir, and was a cheerleader. Bassett attended Yale University and received her B.A. in African American studies in 1980. In 1983, she earned a Master of Fine Arts Degree from the Yale School of Drama. At Yale Bassett met her future husband Courtney B. Vance, a 1986 graduate of the drama school.

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Angela has a Masters Degree from the Yale School of Drama.

Aisha is a graduate of Dartmouth College.

AISHA TYLER

Aisha Tyler was born in San Francisco, California. Her parents divorced when she was 10 and she was raised by her father. She pursued an early interest in comedy during high school, when she would skip her regular courses to attend local comedy improv classes. She also attended theater classes at San Francisco's School of the Arts High School. She attended Dartmouth College where she earned a degree in government with a minor in environmental policy. At Dartmouth, she co-founded and sang in the all-female a cappella group, The Dartmouth Rockapellas, a group devoted to spreading social awareness through song.



Andreas Branch/PatrickMcMullan.com/Sipa Press



SANAA LATHAN

Sanaa means “work of art” and “beauty” in Swahili. Sanaa was nurtured in athletics and the arts through training in gymnastics and dance. When her parents divorced, she lived with them in New York and Los Angeles. Academically competitive and prepared to become a successful professional, Sanaa attended the University of California at Berkeley studying English, where she also expressed herself by performing with the Black Theatre Workshop. Instead of going to law school after college, she attended the Masters program at the Yale School of Drama.

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Sanaa is
a graduate
of the
University
of California
at Berkeley.

Lil' Mama

Born and raised in Harlem and Brooklyn, New York, Lil' Mama (aka Niatia Kirkland) is not your average 17 year-old. With the help of her father, she started recording her rhymes at the age of 10. The teenaged rap phenomenon's first commercial hit "Lip Gloss" has a contagious beat that is liked by girls of all ages. There are no limits to what Lil' Mama can do-she sings, raps, dances and writes her own material. Her debut album, *Voice of the Young People*, features a wide range of talent and addresses issues not commonly addressed in hip hop. Somber songs like "Life" explore a foster child's journey and the hardships of a pregnant teenager.

Mama's personal experiences, along with her mother's battle with cancer, have affected her and, inevitably, her musical expression. "Everybody's talking about the same things on the radio-murder, sex and drugs," says Mama. "They have people behind them telling them it's cool and I disagree. There are so many more people struggling and going through so much and to hear somebody brag about the jewelry and stuff like that, it's overrated."

Lil' Mama is a 5'2" talent heading toward gigantic success.



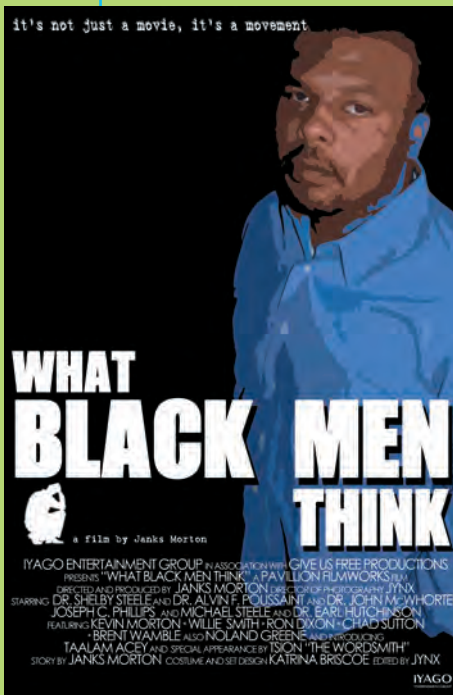
What Black Men Think

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR JANKS MORTON EXPLORES HOW BLACK men feel about themselves and their portrayal in society. iYAGO Entertainment Group premiered the thought-provoking documentary, *WHAT BLACK MEN THINK* at Washington, DC's historic Avalon Theater. This 83 minute "Docu-logue" style film brings you candid conversations about the many myths, stereotypes and misperceptions of being Black and male in America. Dr. Alvin F. Poussaint, Dr. Shelby Steele, Dr. John McWhorter, Michael Steele, Juan Williams, Armstrong Williams, Joseph C. Phillips and many others give definitive opinions as they share their intimate feelings on a variety of issues important to Black men.

In an interview with Sisterhood Agenda, Morton says that the need for the film is "overwhelming." The biggest misconception? That Black men do not want to be there for their families. "In their hearts, they do want to be there," he explains, "but global society has led to our division."

WHAT BLACK MEN THINK challenges many of the negative myths, assumptions and ideas that have been linked to Black males. It explores the devolution of the Black community, Black families, and Black men. Media, he says, now influences us to make poor choices. For example, "Are there more black males in jail than in college?" or "Are black women contracting HIV at an increasing rate because of down-low brothers?" *WHAT BLACK MEN THINK* gets to the bottom of many of these myths and dispels them. Additional controversial topics discussed include; "Educational Attainment", "Interracial relationships", "Black Male Identity", "Hostile Male Environments", "The symbiosis of Media, Government and Black Leadership", "Black male homosexuality" and a variety of tough topics.

If you are a sister worried about finding "a good Black man," Morton says that you should not worry: "There are good Black men out here. They have bought into the honor and dignity of the 1960's, not MTV." He also encourages parents and others not to believe everything you see, read and hear and "disconnect from that dream state that is Hollywood, soap opera, television and even news. It is a snapshot used for dramatic effect."



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BIO
NAS

Nas is called one of hip hop's most profound lyricists. His birth name, Nasir Jones, means "helper and protector" in Arabic. His debut album, *Illmatic*, is considered to be one of the greatest hip-hop albums of all time. With a poetic rap artist style, Nas can also add musician, songwriter, record producer, executive producer and actor to his list of credentials.

Albums

- 1994: *Illmatic*
- 1996: *It Was Written*
- 1999: *I Am...*
- 1999: *Nastradamus*
- 2001: *Stillmatic*
- 2002: *Cod's Son*
- 2004: *Street's Disciple*
- 2006: *Hip Hop Is Dead*



Chance Yeh/PatrickMcMullan.com/Sipa PressADMEDIA/SIPA

BIO
MOS DEF

Rapper and actor Mos Def made a big impact on the work of hip hop in the 1990's as a member of the Native Tongue Posse and collaborating with Da Bush Babees and De La Soul. Rapping since the age of 9, he may be most known for his work with Talib Kweli as Black Star. At age 14, Mos Def, aka Dante Terrell Smith, began acting. He has received critical acclaim for both his rapping and acting talents. Mos Def became a Muslim at age 19.

Albums

- 1998: *Black Star* / 1999: *Black on Both Sides (Cold)* / 2004: *The New Danger (Cold)* / 2006: *True Magic* / 2007: *True Magic* re-release / 2007: *Mos Definite (Unreleased Songs spanning Mos Def's Career)*



Byron Purvis/AdMedia/Spa Press

Angelique Kidjo

ANGELIQUE KIDJO WAS BORN IN THE SMALL PORT VILLAGE OF COTONOU, Benin where she grew up with eight brothers and sisters. Political turmoil in her country led her to relocate to Paris, and then New York City, where she lives now. Music is in her family, as her mother was a renowned choreographer and theater director. With her exceptional voice and stage presence, Kidjo was a child sensation as a performer. An international sensation who has stayed true to her roots, she has traveled far and mesmerized audiences on countless stages, speaking out on behalf of children as a UNICEF goodwill ambassador dedicated to global charity work.

Is there a "typical" Angelique Kidjo style or sound?

EVERY TIME I RECORD AN ALBUM, I AM ALWAYS TRY TO MAKE SOMETHING DIFFERENT BY MIXING DIFFERENT STYLES OF MUSIC TOGETHER AND COLLABORATING WITH DIFFERENT ARTISTS. THROUGH THE YEARS, MY MAIN INFLUENCE IS THE TRADITIONAL MUSIC FROM MY COUNTRY WITH ITS COMPLEX RHYTHMS AND ITS GREAT CHANTS. I WOULD SAY MY STYLE IS THE WAY I SING!

Who are your fans?

IF YOU COME TO MY CONCERTS, YOU WILL SEE PEOPLE FROM ALL OTHER THE WORLD! MUSIC IS A LANGUAGE WE ALL UNDERSTAND. THE AUDIENCE FEELS EMOTION THROUGH THE SOUNDS AND MELODIES. I DON'T THINK THERE IS A TYPICAL FAN!

What do you hope to achieve with your current album, DJIN DJIN?

IN THE 3 ALBUMS BEFORE DJIN DJIN, I MADE A TRILOGY TRACING BACK THE AFRICAN ROOTS OF THE MUSIC OF THE DIASPORA. I WENT TO BRAZIL, THE U.S. AND THE CARIBBEAN AND SANG WITH INCREDIBLE MUSICIANS FROM THE AMERICAS.

Why is your work with UNICEF important to you?

I AM SO LUCKY TO BE ABLE TO DO WHAT I WANT AND TO EXPRESS MY SELF THROUGH MUSIC. I WANT TO GIVE BACK TO MY CONTINENT AND ITS PEOPLE WHO GAVE ME SO MUCH. I THINK THE CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE OF AFRICA. UNICEF ALLOWS ME TO ADVOCATE FOR THEM AND TO TRAVEL TO SO MANY COUNTRIES IN AFRICA TO TRY TO MAKE A CHANGE!

What advice do you have for young females of African descent?

TO LOVE THEMSELVES! THIS IS WHAT MY MOTHER TOLD ME WHEN I WAS YOUNG. IF YOU WANT TO LOVE AND HELP THE PEOPLE YOU HAVE TO LOVE YOURSELF ALSO AND BE CONFIDENT. WE ARE SO BLESSED WITH A RICH CULTURE AND INCREDIBLE ARTISTS. THEIR TALENT MUST SHOW US THE WAY!



Kidjo is a three-time Grammy nominee.



KeKe Wyatt

KEKE WYATT IS GEARING UP FOR THE OCTOBER RELEASE OF her sophomore album, *Ghetto Rose*.

The Indianapolis born R&B vocalist made her impact in 2001 with her rousing debut MCA Records album, "Soul Sista." A critical and commercial success that sold more than 600,000 units, her debut touted the dynamic duet, "My First Love" with recording star Avant. That Rene & Angela

remake went on to become a number one Urban Mainstream Record in 2001. She collaborated with Avant again for "Nothing In This World," which peaked at number four on the Billboard R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart.

Wyatt now lives in Kentucky but was born in Indianapolis, IN, where she grew up listening to a variety of R&B and gospel and came from a very musical family. Click the link for her website: <http://www.kekewyattmusic.com>.

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121: one to one ADN: any day now AFAIK: as far as I know AFK: away from keyboard A/S/L: age, sex, location B4: before B4N: bye for now BAK: back at the keyboard BBIAB: be back in a bit BBL: be back later BBN: bye bye now BBS: be back soon BEG: big evil grin **BF: boyfriend** BFN: bye for now BG: big grin BL: belly laughing BMTIPG: brilliant minds think in parallel gutters BRB: be right back BTA: but then again BTW: by the way BWL: bursting with laughter BWTHDIK: but what the heck do I know C&G: chuckle & grin CID: crying in disgrace CNP: continued (in my) next post CP: chat post CRBT: crying real big tears CSG: chuckle, snicker, grin CU: see you CUL: see you later CYO: see you online DBAU: doing business as usual DIKU: do I know you? DL: dead link DLTBBB: don't let the bed bugs bite DQMOT: don't quote me on this EG: evil grin EMFBI: excuse me for butting in EMSG: email message EOT: end of thread F2F: face to face FC: fingers crossed FISH: first in, still here FMTYEWTK: far more than you ever wanted to know FOMCL: falling off my chair laughing FTBOMH: from the bottom of my heart FUD: fear, uncertainty, and doubt FWIW: for what it's worth G2G: got to go G: grin GA: go ahead GAL: get a life GD&R: grinning, ducking, and running GF: girlfriend GFN: gone for now GIWIST: gee, I wish I'd said that GMB0: giggling my butt off GMTA: great minds think alike GOL: giggling out loud GTRM: going to read mail GTSY: glad to see you H&K: hug and kiss HAGN: have a good night **HDOP: help delete online predators** HHIS: hanging head in shame HTH: hope this helps HUB: head up butt IAC: in any case IANAL: I am not a lawyer (but) IC: I see IDK: I don't know IHA: I hate acronyms IIRC: if I remember correctly ILU: I love you IM: instant message IMHO: in my humble opinion IMNSHO: in my not so humble opinion IMO: in my opinion IOW: in other words IPN: I'm posting naked IRL: in real life IWALU: I will always love you IYSWIM: if you see what I mean JIC: just in case JK: just kidding JMO: just my opinion JTLYK: just to let you know K: okay KIT: keep in touch KOC: kiss on cheek KOL: kiss on lips KOTC: kiss on the cheek KWIM: know what I mean? L8R: later LD: later, dude LDR: long distance relationship LLTA: lots and lots of thunderous applause **LMIRL: let's meet in real life** LMSO: laughing my socks off LOL: laughing out loud LSHMBB: laughing so hard my belly is bouncing LTM: laugh to myself LTNS: long time, no see LTR: long-term relationship LULAB: love you like a brother **LULAS: love you like a sister** LUWAMH: love you with all my heart LY: love you M/F: male or female MOSS: member of same sex MOTOS: member of the opposite sex MSG: message MTF: more to follow MUSM: miss you so much NADT: not a darn thing NIFOC: naked in front of computer NP: no problem NRN: no reply necessary OIC: oh I see **OLL: online love** OM: old man OTF: off the floor OTOH: on the other hand OTTOMH: off the top of my head P2P: peer to peer PDA: public display of affection PEBCAK: problem exists between chair and keyboard PLZ: please PM: private message PMFJIB: pardon me for jumping in but POAHF: put on a happy face **POS: parent over shoulder** PU: that stinks QT: cutie RL: real life ROTFL: rolling on the floor laughing RPG: role playing games RSN: real soon now S4L: spam for life SETE: smiling ear to ear SHCOON: shoot hot coffee out of nose SHID: slaps head in disgust SF: surfer friendly SNERT: snot nosed egotistical rude teenager SO: significant other SOMY: sick of me yet? SOT: short of time STW: search the web SWAK: sealed with a kiss SWL: screaming with laughter SYS: see you soon TA: thanks again TCOB: taking care of business TCOY: take care of yourself TIA: thanks in advance TILII: tell it like it is TMI: too much information TOY: thinking of you TTYL: talk to you later UW: you're welcome WB: welcome back WFM: works for me WIBNI: wouldn't it be nice if **WTGP: want to go private?** WTG: way to go WU: what's up WUF: where are you from? YBS: you'll be sorry YL: young lady YM: young man

1 in 5 children is sexually solicited online.



You don't know what your kids are saying online. Or who they are saying it to. A lot of times neither do they. So get involved. To protect your kid's online life or report an incident, call 1-800-THE LOST or visit cybertipline.com. **HDOP: help delete online predators**



The Schomburg Center Presents:

The African American Migration Experience

NEW SOCIETIES, NEW PEOPLES, NEW COMMUNITIES usually originate in acts of migration. Most societies in human history have a migration narrative in their stories of origin. All communities in American society trace their origins in the United States to one or more migration experiences. America, after all, is “a nation of immigrants.”

But until recently, people of African descent have not been counted as part of America’s migratory tradition. The transatlantic slave trade has created an enduring image of Black men and women as transported commodities, and is usually considered the most defining element in the construction of the African Diaspora, but it is centuries of additional movements that have given shape to the nation we know today. This is the story that has not been told.

Through the Center’s website, the international general public can access more than 16,500 pages of essays, books, articles, and manuscripts, 8,300 illustrations, 100 lesson plans, and 60 maps, previously held in brick and mortar libraries, that will help users understand the peoples, the places, and the events that have shaped African America’s migration traditions over the past four hundred years.

The African American migration experience revolves around three dominant migration patterns that span four centuries. The first concerns migration to the United States launched by the Atlantic slave trade that deported an estimated 12 million men, women and children—about 450,000 arrived in North America—and continued through the centuries with the voluntary migration of people from the Caribbean, South America, and Africa. The second pattern that profoundly shaped the cultural, social, and political life of this country is the migration of people of African descent within its own borders. The third trend is the out-migration of African Americans in search of freedom, or opportunities they thought they could not find in their own country. They were fugitives escaping to Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean; and free people settling in Haiti, Mexico, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. These movements, which transformed the Black community and the nation, always overlapped. Then and now, the interaction between peoples of varied origins, cultures, languages, religions, and migratory experience has produced a unique population whose faces, music, food, institutions, styles, clothes, literature, crafts,

and sense of identity all reflect the fertile diversity brought about by centuries of African American migrations.

The *In Motion* project breaks down the major movements of peoples of African descent into, out of and within the United States into the following migrations: The Transatlantic Slave Trade, Runaway Journeys, The Domestic Slave Trade, Colonization/Emigration, Haitian Immigration—18th and 19th Centuries, Western Migration, Northern Migration, The Great Migration, The Second Great Migration, Caribbean Immigration, Return South, Haitian Immigration—20th Century and African Immigration.

“The wide body of information underscores and explains the extraordinary diversity of the 35 million African Americans living in the US today,” said Schomburg researcher Sylviane Diouf. “This is an invitation to every person of African descent in the US to revisit their and their families’ migration histories to determine their roles in the making of African-American and American history.”

About the Schomburg Center

The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture of The New York Public Library is generally recognized as the world’s leading research library devoted exclusively to documenting the history and cultural development of peoples of African descent worldwide. From its founding in 1925 during the Harlem Renaissance, the Center has amassed vast collections of over 10 million items including over 3.5 million manuscript items, 170,000 books and 750,000 photographs. The Schomburg Center also sponsors a wide array of interpretive programs, including exhibitions, scholarly and public forums and cultural performances.

Upcoming exhibits include *Ghana at 50: Celebrating 50 Years of Independence*. Visit the Schomburg Center online at www.schomburgcenter.org or call (212) 491-2200.

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Harriet Tubman

**I have freed many slaves, and could
have freed thousands more if they
only knew they were slaves."**

Born 1820, Dorchester County, Maryland
Died March 10, 1913, Auburn, New York

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The Underground Railroad was a vast network of people who helped fugitive slaves escape to the North and to Canada. It was not run by any single organization or person. Rather, it consisted of many individuals — many Whites but predominantly Blacks — who knew only of the local efforts to aid fugitives and not of the overall operation. Still, it effectively moved hundreds of slaves northward each year — according to one estimate, the South lost 100,000 slaves between 1810 and 1850.

Source: pbs.org



Harriet Tubman: Imagining a Life by Beverly Lowry c.2007, Doubleday
\$26.00 / \$32.00 Canada, 418 pages

IF YOU'RE LIKE MOST PEOPLE, you walk for exercise, but you grab the closest parking spot at the mall. You go to the gym, but you'll drive five blocks to the store for milk. If you're like most people, the elevator is far preferable to a flight of stairs.

So imagine walking from Washington, D.C. to Philadelphia, through swamps and at night. Imagine taking the trip further, to New York and into Canada. Now imagine doing it again and again and again.

In the new book "*Harriet Tubman: Imagining a Life*" by Beverly Lowry, you'll read about the woman they called Moses, her life, and the reason she journeyed over land so many times.

BOOK REVIEW

by Terri Schlichenmeyer

Araminta Ross was born early in 1822, the middle child of slaves owned by separate men. When Minty was about two years old, the Ross family was even more fragmented when her sister Linah, the eldest daughter, was the first Ross child to be illegally sold out of state. The sale—and her mother's subsequent mourning—shaped Minty into the person she became.

Documents say, and her own recollections confirm, that little Minty

was a strong-willed, quick-witted child. When she was a teenager, however, Araminta Ross suffered a severe head injury that changed her personality and her life. After she recovered, Lowry says Minty was never the same. She fell asleep for minutes at a time, often in mid-sentence. She began to have "visions" and she claimed that God spoke directly to her.

In her young adulthood, after her first marriage and after she took the name Harriet Tubman, she listened to the voice and fled north to freedom.

But Harriet Tubman's story didn't end there. In a time when a ten-mile trip took better than half a day, Tubman journeyed countless times from New York and Canada to Maryland and back. Guided by the voices she heeded and the North Star,

walked into history by leading over 300 people—including many of her own family members—to freedom

I liked *Harriet Tubman: Imagining a Life*, but perhaps the key to enjoying it is to focus on one word in the title: imagining. Because Tubman herself never learned to read or write, biographers have had to piece together bits of oral stories and decades-old books and newspaper articles to tell her life story.

Author Beverly Lowry does a fairly decent job at that, although she's given to fits of flowery prose and dramatic flair that sometimes overshadows the impact of the story she's telling. I enjoyed the sleuthing she did to find hard facts, but I had to keep reminding myself that much of this "biography" was—and Lowry even admits this in her foreword—pure conjecture.

Harriet Tubman: Imagining a Life starts out slow and, with so many names to keep track of, can be a little confusing. But if you can stick with it, you'll be rewarded with a finely-imagined life of an original American hero. Don't just imagine yourself reading it. Walk out and get it.

The bookworm is Terri Schlichenmeyer. Terri has been reading since she was 3 years old and she never goes anywhere without a book. She lives on a hill in Wisconsin with two dogs and 11,000 books.

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BOOKS AND JOURNALS

Beautiful.

Sister Journal for Girls

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T-SHIRTS

KEY CHAINS



What's New with ERYKAH BADU

WE ALL LOOK FORWARD TO seeing Erykah Badu because she always delivers something fresh and exciting. She has fans from all walks of life, different nationalities, spanning the globe. Sisterhood Agenda staff had the opportunity to meet Erykah in 1998 to give her a Sisterhood Agenda t-shirt after one of her concerts. She was peaceful, calm young lady who graciously accepted our gift. Today, she is still calm and peaceful, but with a fuller range of artistic expression and the wisdom that comes with personal growth, music industry survival and motherhood.

On a "TIGHT" recording schedule to finish her new album, *The Kabah*, Erykah was very busy and focused on her music. She is aware of her image, but believes, "As Erykah Badu, it has nothing to do with me, the way I look, my hair wrap, my style, it's about you and what you feel for my music. If I can make you feel like the way that people who influenced me made me feel, that's completion."

Well, Erykah Badu has never really been like everybody else. Even when she was growing in Dallas, Texas, Erykah (born Erica Wright) was bright, busy and different in her own way. Nicknamed "Apples," Erykah was always creative and her process of gutting things together fused with her dream of making music and art, in general. Performing since





age 4, she acknowledges, “I believed in myself, and I’ve always worked very, very hard as an artist, and I am an artist in every sense of the word.”

Of course, Erykah’s artistic expression does not begin and end with her unique voice and singing style, nor does it end with her bold fashion choices, trend-setting headpieces and never-seen-before hairstyles. Using her songwriting and voice as her instrument, her face and body as her ornamental declaration to the world, Erykah Badu is the epitome of possessed self-definition: she makes us accept her because she so fully and completely accepts herself, which gives us no other choice.

Erykah, whose name appropriately symbolizes inner self (“kah”) and freestyling scatting style (“badu”), has collaborated with countless musicians: the Roots, A Tribe Called Quest and Common, just to name a few. Not only different in her musical style and delivery, her distribution is also more independent and unconventional. Each album is a work that shows us a different side of Erykah, a progressive evolution. Rather than use the same formula that many female artists use to sell records (think beat + chorus + hair + dance in the video), Erykah definitely marches to the beat of her own drum.

Erykah is like a chameleon because



she is always changing, but unlike a chameleon she does not always blend into her environment. More often, she makes herself distinct and more noticeable.

Did you know that she is also a critically acclaimed actress? Consistent with her natural ability to transform, she played many parts in movies such as *Blues Brothers 2000*, *The Cider House Rules*, and *House of D*.

It all seems to come so naturally to Erykah: “Anything that had to do with art I been doing all my life. It was a gift. It’s nothing I work real hard at doing. However, this unique and talented singer, songwriter and actress is also quick to count her blessings: “I don’t take it for granted... I appreciate it.”

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ERYKAH BADU FACT SHEET

- Her debut album, *Baduizm*, went triple platinum.
- Erykah won two Grammy Awards in 1998.
- Featured on “You Got Me” with the Roots, she won another Grammy.
- Collaborating with Common on “Love of My Life (An Ode to Hip-Hop)” from the *Brown Sugar* soundtrack, Erykah won a fourth Grammy in 2003.
- Erykah received four Grammy nominations for *Worldwide Underground*, released September 2003.
- Erykah has two children, a son, Seven and a daughter, Puma.



RECORDINGS THAT YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT:

- “Your Precious Love” collaboration on soundtrack album (1996)
- “A Child With The Blues” and “A Child With The Blues (Izm Mix)” on *Eve’s Bayou - The Collection* soundtrack album (1997)
- “One” on album (1997) UK #23
- “All Night Long” collaboration on album (1997)
- “The ‘Notic” collaboration (vocals) with and on soundtrack album (1997)
- “Ye Yo” on soundtrack album (1998)
- “Funky Nassau” collaboration with various artists on soundtrack album (1998)
- “Liberation” collaboration on album (1998)
- “Understand The Game” collaboration on album (1999) UK #5
- “You Got Me” (1999) UK #31
- “Be Thankful” on Omar’s *Best By Far* album (original UK version) (1999)
- “No More Trouble” virtual collaboration (1999)
- “Plenty” on album (2000)
- “Hollywood” on *Bamboozled* soundtrack album (2000)
- “The Light” Remix (for U)” collaboration with on soundtrack album (2000)
- “The Blast Remix” single collaboration (2000)
- “Humble Mumble” (2000)
- “Southern Girl” *Make The Music 2000* album (2001)
- “Sweet Baby” album (2001) UK #23
- “Today (Earth Song)” on *Red Star Sounds Vol. 1: Soul Searching* album (2001)
- “Love Of My Life (An Ode To Hip Hop)” collaboration. Version of song on soundtrack album (2002)
- “Aquarius”, “Jimi Was A Rock Star” and “Heaven Somewhere” collaborations album (2002)
- “Come Close Remix (Closer)” collaboration. Remix of *Come Close* on CD single (2003)
- “Poetry” collaboration *The RH Factor: Hard Groove* album (2003)
- “I C U (Doin’ It)” single collaboration with Violator and (2003)
- “Akai Inochi” collaboration (2003)
- “Bandy Bandy” collaboration (2004)
- “Searching” and “Searching (Extended Version)” collaboration with on *Mahogany Vibe* album (2004)
- “Everybody Loves the Sunshine” collaboration, *Mahogany Vibe* album (2004)
- “Blast” live recording collaboration with Talib Kweli on the original soundtrack album (2006)
- “The Light” live recording collaboration with Common and on the original soundtrack album (2006)
- “Back In The Day” live recording on the original soundtrack album (2006)
- “You Got Me” live recording collaboration with The Roots and on the original soundtrack album (2006)
- “That Heat” collaboration (2006)
- “Get Live” collaboration (2006)
- “Ain’t no mistaken (Danger part II)” collaboration on *The Absolute Truth* album (2006)
- “Fly Away” collaboration on *The Hollywood Recordings* album (2007)
- “Hold On” collaboration on *Desire* album (2007)



Meet Your Soul Sister

By Georgette Johnson-Whaley



Soul Sister Georgette Johnson-Whaley: a natural, Bohemian entrepreneur.

On May 4, 1994, I walked into a barbershop holding a picture of a sister with a short, cropped 'do and told the barber to chop it all off! I had a head full of relaxed hair and he looked at me in awe. I sat in his chair and it was in those moments I was transformed and I was never the same. After everything was said and done, I looked in the mirror and rubbed my shaved head. I felt emancipated. No longer a slave to chemically processed hair, I didn't have to worry if I got caught in the rain and riding with the windows down would no longer be such a big deal. No blow-dryers, no curling irons, and no more breakage.

I gained a sense of awareness when I attended Texas Southern University. A whole new world opened for me and I was intrigued by several young ladies who wore their hair in locks, Afros, and head wraps. I was also a fan of Cree Summer ("Freddie" from *A Different World*) and with her hair in curls and ringlets, I wanted that "freedom hair." Needless to say after the "big chop," my family and friends didn't quite understand at first but I marveled at my transformation and I had a goal in mind. Little did I know that God had even bigger aspirations for me.

Over the course of the next few years, I read any and everything I could that pertained to natural hair. It was then I began to realize I had a gift of performing chemical-free hairstyles. I decided to go to cosmetology school and get my license so I could become a natural hairstylist. Fast forward and it's 10 years later and I am still in this profession. I feel like this is more than a career—I feel as if I am performing a community service. When my clients come to my salon, they are enveloped in love, pride, and empowerment. In my salon, Soul Sister Natural Haircare, there are positive images all around. I don't listen to the radio because I don't like the way women are represented so as a result, you will hear the latest independent artists like Eric Roberson, Tim Dillinger, and Kelli Sae. Music plays a major part in my life as much as natural hair and about a year ago, my husband and I created our own magazine, *SOBO* (Soulful Bohemian), which is catered to musicians who would otherwise go unnoticed by mainstream media. I feel like this is a perfect marriage of the two things that I am the most passionate about.

Many of my clients have considered me a role model and that is something that I take to heart. I feel very blessed because being a natural hairstylist has afforded me the luxury to be more than just someone a person comes to get loc maintenance or two-strand twists. I like to think of myself as someone who had a sincere passion for something that I loved to do and that I am able to share my talents with many people. I never had any idea that a pivotal moment like me walking into a barber shop and demanding that my hair get cut would not only change my life, but have an impact on the lives of many others through the gift of natural hairstyling.

LOCS JEWELRY



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BOOK REVIEW

NATURAL... THE BEAUTIFUL 'N' WORD – *Breaking the Psychological Bondage of the American Standard of Beauty* by Richard O. Jones – \$19.95 - paperback - pages 262 – publisher – Iuniverse – ISBN 0-595-42895-9 - purchase on: amazon.com and www.BN.com

by Anna Christian

WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG AND MY hair was thick and nappy, the only way Mama could comb it was by pressing it with a hot comb over my father's objections. Throughout my teen and early adult years, the pressing comb was the way I tamed my unruly locks. Then came the 60's and the Afro. Out went the comb and in came the Afro pick as I raked it through my huge Afro and rolled my eyes at anyone who gave me the wrong look. Over the years my hair has gone through a series of changes. It has been permed, briefly covered up with a wig, braided with beads and long extensions, dyed, weaved, Jheri curled, and finally, finally dreadlocked. I've run the gamut of hairstyles with the exception of cutting it all off.

Why? Was I trying to achieve the American standard of beauty as epitomized by my blond, blue-eyed, slender Caucasian sisters I'd seen in magazines, on TV, and in the movies? Not consciously. However, I had to find a look that would allow me to blend in with my co-workers, that would be acceptable to the bosses; a look that I could be comfortable with. I was also very much influenced by the changes in society and the growing pride in the African American community.

Few women have gone untouched by society's obsession with achieving "the American standard of beauty." Some have even gone to great lengths to change their appearance. These makeovers include plastic surgery, face lifts, breast implants, tummy tucks and liposuction. We have suffered mental damage from centuries of bombardment with the Euro-American standards of beauty and it has had a devastating impact on our view of ourselves.

In his new book, *Natural...the Beautiful 'N' Word*, Richard O. Jones examines this phenomenon from an historical perspective. He includes recent developments particularly as it relates to African American women. According to Jones, "this is a book intended to enlighten readers of the historical journey from ingrained racial inferiority centuries ago to modern day racial inferiority, and how to profitably overcome it." His underlying message: natural beauty lies in self-confidence, good character, integrity, honesty and love of self rather than physical beauty found in cosmetic products and plastic surgery.

While *Natural... The Beautiful 'N' Word* focuses mainly on the evolution of African American women's image and attitudes of ourselves and our hair, it goes beyond that to expose the racist marketing campaigns by the cosmetic industry against African Americans. In one chapter titled "Beauty Obsessions and the Vanity Merchants," Jones cites the changing face of the American standard of beauty when pale skin and ample body size was prized. Today it's tan and slender.

In another chapter "Black Hair-Care Pioneers and How Black Women Became Involved" he enlightens his readers with a look at early Black millionaires. Most of us have heard of Sarah Breedlove aka Madame C.J. Walker. Few of us know about her mentor, Annie Turnbo Malone. The book includes personal biographies, in particular, a brief biography of Dr. JoAnne Cornwell who invented the Sisterlock technique that is sweeping the country and the world. The writer highlights examples how to turn natural African hair into profit and/or turn negative character traits into positive emotions and/or financial profit. Also included are the legal struggles Dr. Cornwell and others underwent against the

California Department of Consumer Affairs and the California Board of Barbering and Cosmetology for licensing braiding hair salons. Jones includes several testimonials from former press and curl wearers and chemical hair product users as well as Sisterlock consultants and those who proudly wear sisterlocks. "This is a self-improvement book that teaches adults and youth to be proud of their hair, skin and heritage," says the author.

The reader applauds Jones' efforts. *Natural...the Beautiful 'N' Word* is informative, easy to read, and at times overwhelming. One wishes Jones had been more judicious in his selection of material. By presenting so much information the chances of losing ones audience increases. Nonetheless, his message is an important one and it is delivered with honesty and conviction.

Anna Christian is the author of *Meet it, Greet it, and Defeat it! The Biography of Frances E. Williams Actress/Activist*, <http://geocities.com/francesplace2001>, *Mrs. Griffin is Missing and Other Stories*, *A Bobby and Sonny Mystery*, a freelance writer and book reviewer, adjunct Professor of English at Riverside Community College in Riverside, CA.

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Moving & Grooving

Golf Champion Zakiya Randall

MORE BLACK GIRLS ARE GETTING INTO GOLF. IT IS estimated that female participation has been slowly increasing. The increase in girls' participation may be largely due to efforts by associations such as the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) and their Girls Golf initiative. As a result of this program, more than 5,700 girls ages 7-17 participate in golf activities at more than 180 sites nationwide. The increase may also be due to role models like Tiger Woods who inspire many to greatness. Sisterhood Agenda had a chance to talk to Zakiya Randall, a national and international role model for Black girls and golf.

Zakiya first played tennis but began winning the first year she started playing golf. Today, she is inspired by Anna Sorenstam and Tiger Woods, to name a few. When asked about her goals and aspirations, she immediately replied, "To go into the LPGA and be number one. But college is first. It's a priority." Despite her many accomplishments (see below), Zakiya insists that she is a "normal kid who likes to hand out and go to the movies." She states, "People think that because I play golf, I don't do other things. But I have a lot of friends."

We have no doubt that you will be hearing more about Zakiya Randall and other Black girls playing golf.

About Her Came

Zakiya has won Player of the Year and the Championship in several junior leagues (Plantations Junior Golf Tour, Atlanta Junior Golf Association, US Kids CA Tour). She continued her dominance in the 2002-2003 Season on the *Plantations Junior Golf Tour* by winning majors nationally (Duke University, Harbour Town in Hilton Head, S.C., University of North Carolina and Chateau Elan). She went on to win the Plantations Junior Golf Tour championship at Disney Resorts in Orlando, Florida. Zakiya recently joined the PCA Hole-In-One Club after dropping a shot on a PAR 3, 180 Yards! In addition, Zakiya had the Lowest Score(74) and was a Medalist Winner in the U.S. Women's Open Qualifier on May 15, 2006 at the Horseshoe Bend Country Club in Roswell, GA., which included LPGA Professionals and some of the best amateur players across the nation. After just turning 15 years old a few days before the event, Zakiya won the 51st Mid-West 2006 National Championship. Zakiya won her division and was Overall Junior Girls Champion in the Championship held in Lima, Ohio 2006.

Zakiya is a consecutive two-time TOP Georgian Junior Girl scoring 74-69-72 in the National Event at Burgett H. Mooney, Rome Classic at the Coosa Country Club. This past June, Zakiya Randall qualified to earn a spot in the U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links Championship. Randall fired a 74 in the sectional qualifier held at the Oaks Course in Covington, Georgia. She was the youngest participant to earn a spot at the Oaks Golf Course to qualify for the event and earn a spot in the USGA's championship event played in Lexington, KY.

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Do's & Don'ts

By Techelet Jean

DO YOU EXERCISE? IF SO, THEN HOW WELL DO YOU WORK OUT, LADIES? ARE YOU REALLY seeing the results you have been seeking for? Many times women who go to the gym have a hard time getting that quick body change they dream for. However, it is usually because they are not training and eating the right way.

There are many helpful tips for anyone who is trying to lose those extra pounds or just trying to stay fit. Some of these exercising do's and don'ts:

DO EAT

Some may think that it is vital to starve the body to gain the best there is to acquire. However, it is ok to eat because it is all about eating right – eating non-greasy food and making sure food is boiled or steamed are highly recommended.

DO NOT EAT FRIED FOOD

Which means eating no fast food (such as hamburgers and Chinese food cooked in oils).

DO AVOID SUGAR

Stay away from too much sugar. Sugar will prevent growth and strength.

DO CONSIDER NUTRITION AND PROTEIN

You can drink nutrient or protein drinks before or after work out. They boost energy and help with the evolution of the body.

DO MOVE YOUR BODY

Try running or jogging. Hop on the treadmill for 30 to 45 minutes for a maximum of five days out of the week. Running before working out will help loosening up the veins and the muscles, which is always a good way to start a workout. It is also beneficial to let the body rest.

DO TRY LIFTING WEIGHTS

Lift according to your potential. Lightweights will tighten up your muscles as well as heavy weights, but heavy weights will result into being more muscular than most would prefer.

DO SIT-UPS AND PUSH-UPS

Do as many as possible. Sit-ups will help cutting down that lower stomach and push-ups are for triceps, shoulder and chest.

DO NOT OVERDO IT

Some think that having a whole body workout during every session will get them the best and quickest results. However, the body will take longer to evolve. Focus on one or two body parts during each workout.

DO CONCENTRATE

Always stay focused during workout sessions. Do not let anything get in the way. Look at going to the gym as therapy sessions (woo-sah).

DO CONSIDER HOW YOU FEEL

Use emotions and motivations to get through workouts. Anything that can be used to motivate will provide a much more vibrant and exciting moment at the gym.

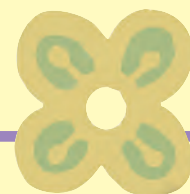
DO BE CONSISTENT

Last but not least, always stay consistent. Consistency is the key to achieving anything worthy in life.

TOOLS



FOR SURVIVAL



STREET-LEVEL YOUTH MEDIA EDUCATES Chicago's urban youth in media arts and emerging technologies for use in self-expression, communication, and social change. Street-Level's programs build critical thinking skills for young people who have been historically neglected by public policy makers and mass media. Using video and audio production, computer art and the Internet, Street-Level's youth address community issues, access advanced communication technology and gain inclusion in our information-based society.

In order to train the next generation of influential media makers and community leaders, Street-Level offers a range of multifaceted programs for youth between the ages of 8-22. Our core programs develop young people's media production and artistic skills, increase their technology and media literacy, and support their personal development and civic engagement. We carry out programs through classroom-based media arts projects in Chicago Public Schools, off-site after-school programs, and on-site workshops held at Street-Level's Neutral Ground Multimedia Lab in Chicago's West Town neighborhood.

In Street-Level's Female Action Voice Change (FAVC) workshop, young women between the ages of 13-20 learn video production to create media from their perspectives and tell their own stories. The program addresses gender and social issues affecting urban young women while building their overall digital competencies-critical to their future. Youth participants in FAVC receive training in the proper usage of computers, cameras, sound equipment, and editing software (Final Cut Pro), which in turn, allow them to enhance their knowledge in storyboarding, shooting, and editing.

This summer FAVC's curriculum is centered on the theme of beauty. After attending the Broadway in Chicago performance of the *Color Purple*, the young women were inspired to redefine their concept of beauty. In addition, these young women have challenged popular media distortions on beauty by acknowledging that beauty is in all women no matter what shape, size, or color.

We interviewed several youth participants and staff from FAVC to gather their thoughts about the program. They

described Street-Level as a place that "shows youth originality." FAVC's Media Instructor, Heather Jurewicz, describes her program as a place that, "makes young girls feel comfortable using technology." Rebecca Rios, a Street-Level youth participant for more than seven years, describes Street-Level as a safe place where youth can express themselves. Street-Level not only brings together youth, but also allow youth and adults to work with one another as a team to make a difference within themselves and the community. When asked to state one word that describes what they have discovered about themselves as a young media artist, they used words such as "capable", "powerful", "versatile", and "informed." These words prove that young women are empowered to challenge themselves when given the opportunity to be a contributor to the media arts and not just a consumer.

Contributed by the staff of Street-Level Media/Conscious Youth Media Crew.

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Street-Level teaches video and audio production.



Street-Level encourages sisterhood.



Street-Level provides computers for media training.

Protecting Yourself on The Internet



THE INTERNET IS A FUN AND AMAZING PLACE TO communicate with others and learn new things. Like all communities, there are also areas that are dangerous for young people. Did you ever go to play a game or send an email to a friend when suddenly an ad for a porn site pops up? Well, you are not alone. Everyday, adults and children are sexually solicited online.

Know the facts:

- Approximately one in seven youth online (between the ages of 10 and 17) received a sexual solicitation or approach over the Internet.
- Sixty-one percent (61%) of 13-17 year olds have a personal profile on a social networking site and half have also posted pictures of themselves.
- Teen girls are particularly at risk—of 1 in 7 youth who received a sexual solicitation or approach over the Internet, 70 percent were girls.
- Four percent (4%) receive an aggressive sexual solicitation where someone asked to meet them somewhere, called them on the telephone sent them offline mail, money or gifts.
- Thirty-four percent (34%) had an unwanted exposure to sexual materials, such as pictures of naked people or people having sex.
- Twenty-seven percent (27%) of youth who encountered unwanted sexual materials told a parent or guardian. If the encounter was distressing (made them feel very or extremely upset or afraid, 42% told a parent or guardian).

Besides being highly inappropriate and illegal, online victimization can lead to real life victimization: 1 in 5 girls and 1 in 10 boys will be sexually victimized before adulthood. No one should be making sexual invitations to you online and it's a serious crime for adults to do it. This means you must be careful and know the dangers.

Source: David Finkelhor, Kimberly J. Mitchell, and Janis Wolak. *Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later*. Alexandria, Virginia: Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 2006, pages 7-8, 333



SAFETY TIPS



- Never post your personal information, such as your cell number, address, the name of your school or school team.
- Be careful about posting identity-revealing photos and do not use sexually provocative photos.
- Report anyone you don't know asking for personal information, photos or videos. Just because a website seems OK doesn't mean that it is what it seems to be. Anyone—including creeps and criminals—can set up their own website.
- Don't download anything unless it is from a trusted source.
- Stay away from chatrooms that discuss sex, cults and dangerous activities.
- You may want to get together with someone you met in a chatroom, but remember—people are not always who they seem to be. Never give out personal information and never arrange face-to-face meetings with someone you first meet in a chatroom unless your parents check it out first.
- Avoid private chatroom areas
- Avoid harassment in chatrooms by using a name that doesn't let people know that you are female.
- Be careful about replying to email from people you don't know. Remember, the sender may not be who he or she seems to be.
- Posting information about friends could put them at risk, so do not do it.
- Remember what you post online is not private and anyone can see it.
- Use the CyberTipline to report concerns, especially those that are sexual in nature. Since being established in March 1998, more than 475,000 reports have been made involving the possession, manufacture, and distribution of child pornography, the online enticement of children for sex acts, child prostitution, child sex-tourism, child molestation outside of the family, unsolicited obscene material sent to a child, and misleading domain names (see below).

The Congressionally mandated CyberTipline is a reporting mechanism for cases of child sexual exploitation including child pornography, online enticement of children for sex acts, molestation of children outside the family, sex tourism of children, child victims of prostitution, and unsolicited obscene material sent to a child. Reports may be made 24-hours per day, 7 days per week online at www.cybertipline.com or by calling 1-800-843-5678. SOURCE: *National Center for Exploited and Missing Children*.

GLOBAL PARTNERS



Camp Butterfly & Project Butterfly: Interview with Founder Niambi Jaha-Echols

Using the metamorphosis of a butterfly as an analogy for a girl's development from childhood to womanhood, Camp Butterfly and Project Butterfly introduces the importance of defining a mission in the lives of girls and women.

Over the years, have your views changed regarding strategy?

Absolutely. When we first started, our focus was on direct services to adolescent and teen girls. Over time, we now find ourselves focusing just as much energy on parent and adult personal development strategies, and facilitator training. In our desire to support our girls, the response from parents (foster and biological), social service workers and women working with our girls, was overwhelming. Many wanted training for themselves so that they could be better equipped to respond to the needs of our girls. In today's cultural

climate, our girls require us to be authentic in our responses to them, and many women/parents find that when working with our girls, the girls' issues, struggles and challenges trigger our issues and bring them to the forefront. So, rather than just providing services to girls, we have strategically shifted to broadening our services to include parents and women who work specifically with our girls.



July 2007 Camp Butterfly Group.

important messages that we promote with our girls is to give them a more holistic life perspective, and hopefully they gain the knowledge that they are much more than the sum of their body parts. And with that, comes the knowledge that you (girls) carry the seeds for all the generations to come. That is why their health and well being is so important.

What would you like to share with our readers?

Both of our organizations, Project Butterfly and Camp Butterfly, are designed to support the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual development of our girls and women. We don't profess to be "the" solution to everything that ails us, but we are offering "a" viable solution and a positive resource within our community. We provide a safe haven for girls and women to transform and empower their lives. Thus positively impacting the future of our families, communities and the world as we strive to "transform the world, one girl at a time."

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Sister Angela's Note

Good Day!

This issue is dedicated to Education and International Study. Of course, education does not just mean formal schooling. Education is defined as the knowledge or skill obtained or developed by a learning process. Therefore, we are being educated everyday and everywhere. By reading, whether it is your daily newspaper or magazines like *Sisterhood Agenda*, you also expand your boundaries and learn.



Nick P

International Study is something that I believe in very strongly. Even though I was born and raised in Newark, New Jersey, I managed to gain significant cultural experiences in the African Diaspora. Every chance I had to travel, I did. International travel is a great opportunity to immerse yourself in the culture and traditions of someone different. You can see issues from a different perspective and gain a better understanding of who you are, in a global sense. Imagine growing up in Benin like Angelique Kidjo. Or imagine yourself as a student at the University of Trinidad and Tobago.

Some of your best learning experiences can take place in colleges and universities. I was able to study my passion, the effects of race and gender, as a student at Princeton University. Receiving my MBA and certification in nonprofit management and African Holistic Medicine & Science empowered me to do my work better. I am still looking to learn more. And what I learn, I share with our readers. It has been a positive experience: affirming, uplifting and, of course, educational.

In the Spirit of Sisterhood,

Angela D. Coleman
President, Sisterhood Agenda, Inc.



FALL 2007

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Sisterhood Agenda, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) charitable nonprofit organization created in 1994 to uplift and aid in the self-development of women and girls of African descent, a unique population with special needs.

Sisterhood Agenda would like to thank everyone who has ever supported and participated in sisterhood activities, including, but not limited to, this magazine.



PAYMENT CARD

☐ **YES,**
I want to help
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girls of
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descent!

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This Issue is Dedicated to

**Education
&
International
Study**



*By Ladi Mallam
Founder & National President*

Mocha Sisters Organization

Mocha Sisters Organization was created and designed to:

- Articulate and promote community awareness (community service)
- Bring unity among women
- Teach networking skills with other influential and innovative women of color
- Provide scholarships
- Provide a mentoring program

THE MAJORITY OF MEMBERS' TIME IS SPENT in community service, providing a mentoring program and scholarships for college/university for African American females. At Mocha Sisters Organization we instill in our sisters a greater awareness of the need for commitment to our community to become more responsive to the needs and concerns of our communities.

Mocha Sisters Organization was founded October 9, 2004 by Ladi Mallam. It started with a phone conversation discussion with Deirdre Kelly, a native of Jackson, Mississippi giving the concept of the name of the organization. Ms. Mallam saw a specific vision for an organization with a mission to promote all its' current six core values.

Mocha Sisters Organization was incorporated October 20, 2004 and has received its non-profit

status recognized under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Mocha Sisters Organization partners with organizations to promote the awareness of women of color including health, wellness, business etiquette, and much more. Our mission is to further promote the interests of our organization and our members to the community. We strive to make a difference by educating the public and expanding our reach.

There are many active organizations available to women, each with a specific purpose or goal. Each has its own resources why you consider becoming part of that organization. We have designed mochasisters.org to introduce you to our organization and what we are about. We invite you to look around and find out more about Mocha Sisters Organization.

South Africa Fisherwomen Association

Sahra, a fisherwoman, has launched an initiative that is allowing women from previously disadvantaged poor communities access into the largely white, male-dominated South African fishing industry. She has created an association—the South African Fisherwomen Association (SAFWA) that is employing a complementary series of strategies that include collective marketing of fish and fish products; lobbying the government to create a more enabling environment for small-scale fishers; forming contractual relationships with boat owners who provide practical training on all aspects of fishing to the association's members; development of ancillary industries to supplement income during the off-season; inculcation of an environmental ethic among members; and conducting sea-safety training courses and life-skills modules that empower the women beyond the fishing industry.



sisterhood
EXCLUSIVE

CHAKA KHAN

Cets Funky

IN THIS SISTERHOOD AGENDA EXCLUSIVE, LEGENDARY SONGSTRESS AND EIGHT-TIME GRAMMY AWARD WINNER, CHAKA KHAN, SHARES SOME INSIGHT INTO HER NEW ALBUM, *FUNK THIS*, AND HER WORK AS AN ARTIST.

TIMELESS, CLASSIC AND always funky, Chaka Khan has remained a viable force in an industry where new players come and go. When we listen to *FUNK THIS*, listeners should expect, “a revisit to my roots. It’s very funky. There are some great collaborations with Mary J., Michael McDonald and Tony Maiden from Rufus.”

So much has changed since Chaka Khan first entered the music business. What does she think of music today? “With the Internet, so much is accessible. There’s a lot of good music out there.” However, she cautions against competing against each other at the expense of creativity, stating, “I don’t like the competitiveness that the industry has created between artists. Creativity is a unique expression of each artist individually.”

As a revered icon in the music industry, Chaka Khan has these important words of wisdom to share with aspiring artists: “Learn the business of music. Know how to read a contract.”

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Wyclef Jean started his foundation, **Yele Haiti**, “to restore pride and a reason to hope, and for the whole country to regain the deep spirit and strength that is part of our heritage...Haiti is my native country, one I know as the first Black nation to gain independence in 1804.”

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TRIBES My Space TOP 24

Indie Artist Tracks on TRIBES My Space



Jessica Alford

Model Dreams and Self-Esteem

Seventeen year-old model, Jessica Alford is on a mission to become an important part of the fashion industry. Healthy self-esteem and self-respect are important aspects of her personal and professional life. She spoke to Sisterhood Agenda about her goals and has many words of inspiration and motivation for aspiring models:

“Educate yourself about the business of modeling. Research agencies and different companies you like to work with.”

“Have a plan. Work really, really hard because there are a

lot of girls who want to be models, too.”

“You get rejected more than you get accepted, especially at first. Stay focused. You must have a passion for it to keep going.”

“Follow your dreams and not your competition. Learn not to compete with other models.”

“As a model, you are a business. Incorporate yourself and market yourself as a business.”

“Keep God first. Trust His plan for you.”

www.myspace.com/alwaysjha



“You get rejected more than you get accepted, especially at first. Stay focused. You must have a passion for it to keep going.”

A Poem

By Tia Scott

*He charmed me with his ways so I made a date for him,
He said my hair was too nappy so I made it straight for him,
One-hundred and fifty pounds was too much weight for him,
So I worked out to become the perfect mate for him,
Committment was too scary so he made me wait for him,
Protection was too tight so I became late for him.
Becoming a dad was too much of a task to take for him,
So three-hundred dollars was paid and I formed hate for him,
Put my dreams on hold and scraped the plate for him,
Lowered my self-worth to compensate for him,
Being my true self was not innate for him,
So I succumbed to a life of being fake for him,
And at the end, I looked at the mistakes I made for him,
And realized that all along, I was too great for him,
So nowadays, I get on my knees and pray for him,
And hope another woman doesn't change a day for him!*

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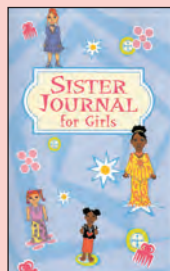
Beautiful. by Jamaica Gilmer & Angela D. Coleman
in partnership with Sisterhood Agenda



NOW
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every Black girl is Beautiful.



Sister Journal for Girls

Each Sister Journal is a colorful, spiral notebook that contains lined paper, cultural Adinkra symbols and affirmations created to uplift and guide our girls and young women. Adinkra symbols include those that represent illumination, challenging oneself, avoiding conflicts, sanctity and good fortune, unity and strength.

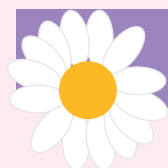
Affirmations are positive thoughts directed at the self, phrased in the present and include:

"I am worthy of love and respect."

"My skin is a wonderful shade of brown."

"I am a beautiful Black Sister, who only grows more beautiful with time."

Available at the Sister Store: www.sisterhoodagenda.com



INNER HEALTH FOR OUTER BEAUTY



STRESS QUESTIONNAIRE

Do You Frequently:

	YES	NO
Neglect your diet?		
Try to do everything yourself?		
Blow up easily?		
Seek unrealistic goals?		
Fail to see the humor in situations that others find funny?		
Act rude?		
Make a "big deal" of everything?		
Look to other people to make things happen?		
Complain that you are disorganized?		
Avoid people whose ideas are different from yours?		
Keep your emotions inside?		
Neglect exercise?		
Have a few supportive relationships?		
Use sleeping pills and tranquilizers without a doctor's approval?		
Get too little rest?		
Get angry when you are kept waiting?		
Ignore stress symptoms?		
Put things off until later?		
Think there is only one right way to do something?		
Fail to build relaxation time into your day?		
Cossip?		
Race through the day?		
Spend a lot of time complaining about the past?		
Fail to get a break from noise and crowds?		

What Your Score Means:

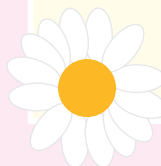
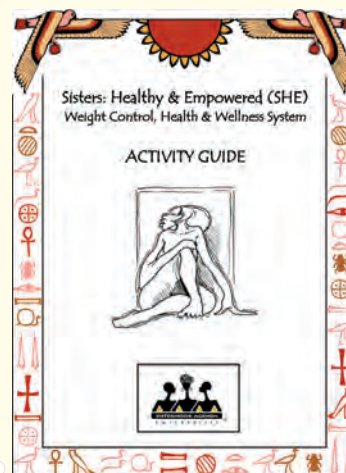
1-6: There are few hassles in your life. Make sure, though, that you are not trying so hard to avoid problems that you are also shying away from challenges.

7-13: You've got your life under fairly good control. Work on the choices and habits that may still be causing some unnecessary stress in your life.

14-20: You're approaching the danger zone. You may well be suffering stress-related symptoms and your relationships could be strained. Think carefully about choices you've made and take relaxation breaks every day.

Above 20: Emergency! You must stop now, rethink how you are living, change your attitude, and pay careful attention to diet, exercise, and relaxation.

Activity from *Sisters: Healthy & Empowered (SHE) Weight Control, Health & Wellness System*. The *SHE* Activity Guide includes over 30 weeks of activities and a meditation supplement and is available only at the Sister Store: www.sisterhoodagenda.com.



Total your score:

Count 1 for "yes" answer and 0 for each "no" answer.

Your Score: _____



HEALTHY EATING

By Andrea M. Thompson

EVER HEARD THE SAYING "TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING IS NEVER REALLY A good thing?" Well, here is an example: cheeseburgers, french fries, pizza and ice cream (yeah, I know, my mouth is watering too!).

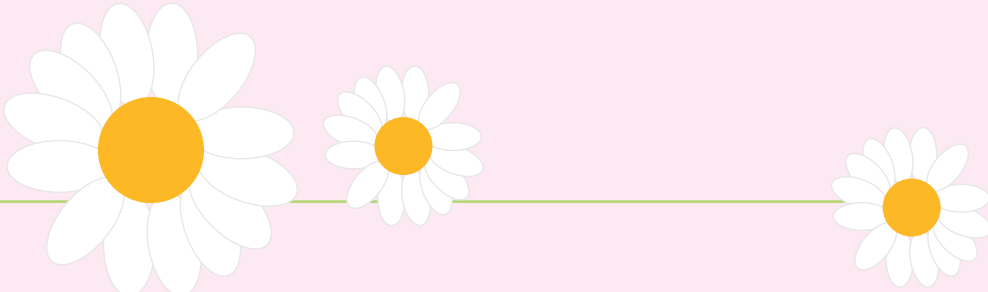
There is no denying that most of us enjoy at least one of the aforementioned foods, however, there is also no denying that over-eating any of these tasty treats can cause health problems in the long run. While it is not necessary that we completely give up such goodies, we as Black females should bare a couple of facts in mind. The first is that Black women have the highest death rate where breast cancer is concerned. The second fact is that heart disease claims the lives of more Blacks than any other race.

One reason for such astounding facts is our diet. We are a people rich and beautiful in our cultural heritage. Part of our heritage is our food which is often high in fat in cholesterol. In addition to this, many of us were born in the U.S and are equally exposed to an American diet, which also has a tendency to be not so healthy.

The earlier that we are mindful of our health the better. It is important to make smart eating decisions, even in the school environment. Years ago, we were not given much choice in terms of the foods being offered to us in the cafeteria. Today, however, schools are opting for a healthier variety. While you may be offered cheeseburgers and hot dogs, you may also access to a vegetable-enriched salad bar with carrots, lettuce and cucumbers. Yes, there are cookies but there is also fruit, which serves as a healthier dessert.

You don't have to jump on the vegetarian bandwagon to be healthy, but you should consider a healthier eating lifestyle. Nothing drastic, unless you so choose. For example, if you know you are having fried pork chops and potato salad for dinner, why not focus on green veggies during lunch? If you had a slice of pizza and french fries for lunch why not focus on more vegetables during dinner?

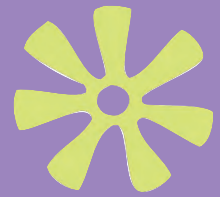
Just keep in mind: everything in moderation. This is how we can strive for a healthy and long life. After all, there is another saying: A minute on the lips, a lifetime on the hips! The decisions we make today can have a huge impact on our tomorrow.



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Finesse, Dignity Pride &

BRITTNEY:

15 Year-Old Genius Makes History by Erin Fuller



15 Year-Old Brittney Exline

BRITTNEY EXLINE ISN'T YOUR ordinary teenager. By the time Brittney turned 3, she knew how to identify different shapes and colors, how to count, and was even able to read a whole sentence.

At the tender age of 11, Brittney began attending Palmer High School in Southern Colorado where she was the youngest in her entire freshman class. In a 2003 interview in *The Gazette*, a newspaper of Colorado Springs, a classmate was quoted as saying "Sometimes we feel kind of stupid having to ask an 11-year-old for help on math homework." "On a subconscious level, we are a little jealous."

But Brittney's resume doesn't just stop at academics. During a telephone interview with *Sisterhood Agenda*, Brittney stated that in her spare time, she enjoys hanging out with friends, likes to read and loves to dance. She also stated that she's been dancing since the age of 3 and still continues

to compete in numerous competitions. In 2004, she was chosen as Miss Colorado Pre-Teen. At the 2007 National Teenager Nationals she was also crowned State Queen, Academics and Achievements Winner.

Now, at the age of 15, Brittney has such a huge flair of maturity about herself, unlike any other teenager her age. That maturity shined through when asked about being labeled a genius. "I like it in a way because I really do value being smart and I'm glad that people consider me that way but sometimes, I feel like I'm being stereotyped as being anti-social," she said. She also went on to add, "I don't like that part of being a genius and that bothers me to know that some people think of me that way just because I'm smart."

Going off to college this fall won't be that big of a deal for Brittney. Like the independent person she is, she spent a month away from home to attend a summer program at Harvard University,

diversified with many college kids. She studied a course in Anthropology of Education, which she said, "I've never even heard of that course before I came here, but I still ended up getting an A in the class."

Brittney admits that her parents, Cheyrese and Chris Exline, have been the most influential in her life. "My mom is the one who pushes me to do well and my dad is always right there supporting me the whole time," she says. She also goes on to credit her Chemistry teacher in saying "My Chemistry teacher made the class very fun and interesting and that's one of the reasons why I want to take up that major in college."

In the fall, she will be attending the University of Pennsylvania to study Political Science and Chemical Engineering. Brittney will be looked upon as a great influential icon to many young girls today and beyond.

Study Tips 101

By Nancy Sai

Guilty of last minute test-cramming? Instead of reading biology notes, you find yourself watching cartoons? Unless you know the material really well or a natural genius, you probably do terrible on the test. But it is still not too late to learn good studying habits and get an A.

Here are some tips:

Tip #1: Find Out About Exam-This is a crucial step in doing well. Are there multiple choice questions? Will there be open book questions? Knowing what to expect will put you at ease because you know what to expect.

Tip #2: Past Exams-Look at the past exams in the class and look over the work you did. If you made mistakes, learn from them so you wouldn't do them again on this exam. Also, look at the questions on there because similar ones may come up again.

Tip #3: Try Not To Procrastinate-Doing everything else but studying will only result in not having enough time to prepare for the exam. Weeks before exam, set up goals to review for at least fifteen minutes. It will help prevent procrastination. Make a studying schedule where you write down all you need to study for prior to the exam. For instance, take one chapter at a time. Lastly, know your preferred learning style. If you learn better visually, draw diagrams.

Tip #4: Find a Study Buddy-You learn more from another person. When you are studying with someone, he or she can teach you concepts you may not understand. Even better, you can teach them. This way information can be revised; it will keep you motivated and focused.

Tip #5: Use your Resources-Studying ahead of time will benefit you since it allows you to turn to one of your valuable sources: your teacher. As you study, if there are any questions you can turn to him/her and they will be able to help you better. Also, remember to refer to your notes as the starting base.

Tip #6: Study Area-Go to the library or place of quiet and few distractions. Your concentration will be better than if you sat in front of the television, for instance.

Tip #8: Make Notes Cards-Condense the information you have to know into key concepts. Keep them with you and look over them occasionally. Even have a friend quiz you. Constantly looking over test material will keep it fresh in your mind. Also, revise and learn. Do not just re-read.

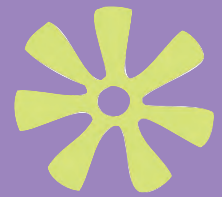
Tip #8: Reward Yourself-After studying for a few, reward yourself. It does not have to be food.

Tip #9: Sleep-Lastly, a good night sleep helps your memory. Try to get at least eight hours of sleep.

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ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY PROMOTES EDUCATION AS THEY APPROACH 100-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

FOUNDED ON THE CAMPUS of Howard University in Washington, DC in 1908, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority is the oldest Greek-letter organization established by African American college-trained women.

The small group of women who organized the Sorority was conscious of a privileged position as college-trained women of color, just one generation removed from slavery. They were resolute that their college experiences should be as meaningful and productive as possible. Alpha Kappa Alpha was founded to apply that determination.

As the Sorority grew, it kept in balance two important themes: the importance of the individual and the strength of an organization of women of ability and courage. As the world became more complex, there was a need for

associations which cut across racial, geographical, political, physical and social barriers.

In her message, International President Barbara A. McKinzie states, "...we must know that only the educated are free. Education is a debt of the present generation to future generations. Economic education is freedom. When every member develops her mind with micro and macro economic principles, she will possess the form of permanent wealth that she can sacrifice in service to all mankind."

Alpha Kappa Alpha's influence extends beyond campus quads and student interest. It has a legacy of service that deepens, rather than ends, with college graduation.

The goals of its program activities center on significant issues in families, communities,

government halls and world assembly chambers. Its efforts constitute a priceless part of the global experience in the 21st century.

The excitement continues to grow as Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority approaches the 100th anniversary of its founding.

The historic milestone will feature a yearlong commemoration, culminating in a gala week of tributes, salutes and praise in Washington, D.C., where the Sorority was founded. The climactic celebration will coincide with the Sorority's biennial international confab, during which more than 20,000 members are expected to make the pilgrimage to Howard University to honor the Alpha Kappa Alpha founders and celebrate the Sorority's 100-year history.

Join the Sisterhood Agenda Street Team

The Sisterhood Agenda Street Team is a group of sisters, friends, fans, and supporters who want to spread the word about Sisterhood Agenda and earn great rewards for your efforts.

**You get to:
Meet people!
Make new friends!
Have fun!**

**Get free Sisterhood merchandise!
Join a global sisterhood!**

Sisterhood Agenda publishes the groundbreaking magazine, Sisterhood Agenda, as a strategy to empower girls and young women of African descent with sisterhood, self-knowledge, self-development, and self-esteem to become powerful voices for positive change. The magazine is distributed to 25 U.S. urban markets and 10 international markets, targeting a circulation of 500,000 plus.

Get Involved!

We have a lot of ways that you can spread sisterhood and get great stuff in return. You can make contacts at your school, church and in your neighborhood. It's easy and fun! More details about how easy it is to participate can be found at www.sisterhoodagenda.com.

JOIN NOW by emailing us at streetteam@sisterhoodagenda.com!

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SISTER PILOTS



MORE!

A Journey Toward Womanhood

A Journey Toward Womanhood is 13-week intensive and comprehensive program with 52 module hours designed for girls of African descent ages 12-17. Rooted in the African "rites of passage" tradition of young women gathering in groups to receive guidance from older women, **A Journey Toward Womanhood** is a program with a modern approach to instilling knowledge of cultural roots and community awareness.

A Journey Toward Womanhood builds and maintains healthy self-esteem, instills cultural pride and self-appreciation, teaches life and social skills or self-sufficiency and discourages teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, school dropout, and drug abuse.

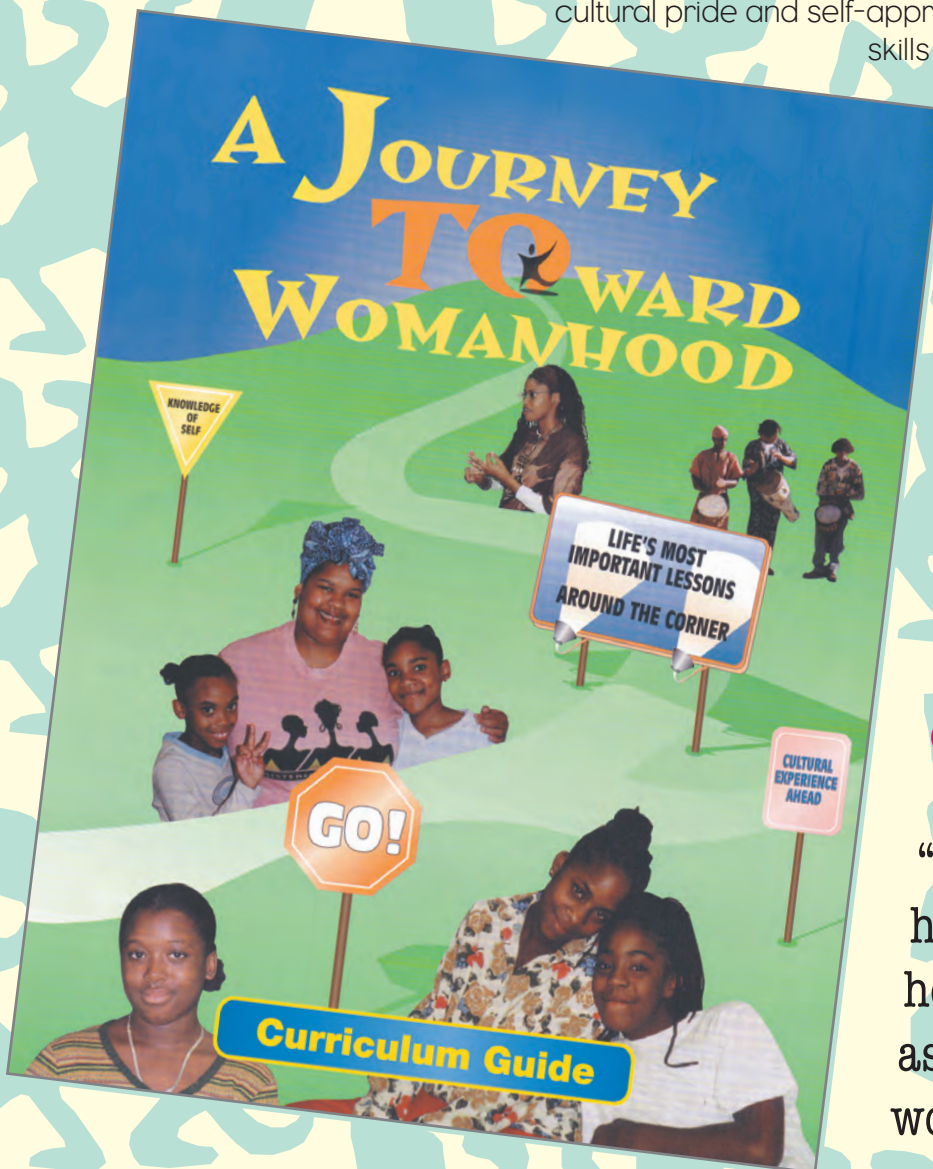
Parents and Participants say:

"A Journey Toward Womanhood is a wonderful program that changed my daughter's life."

"This program has taught me how to carry myself as a young Black woman."

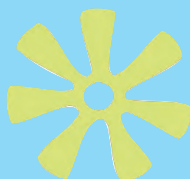
"I have truly witnessed a positive change in my daughter."

To order, visit the Sister Store at www.sisterhoodagenda.com.



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Ladi
Mallam

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To submit a comment for Sister Mail, email sistermail@sisterhoodagenda.com.

Just a quick note to say that Jadeas Trust - is an educational and cultural foundation with a Pan African focus and remit, just signed up as one of your Global Partners - we received our first copies of Sisterhood Agenda last week and I'm impressed! Your magazine is fulfilling an important role in the lives of young gifted Black sisters all over and I will be exploring ways by which we can effectively partner with you in developing linkages and providing relevant content for SA from here in Nigeria. Please feel free to come back to me with suggestions!

Best wishes and I hope we will get you visiting Lagos one of these days. Congratulations on the Venus win! We are as proud of her over here as you all must be!

Yours in Sisterhood,
Yetunde Aina



"Congratulations on the Venus win!"

Young Women for Life has just registered to become Global partners and I am very excited about this opportunity to support collective visions of working with young women.

If I may be so bold, Canada does not appear as a current site as Global Partners. Is there any specific reason why?

Regardless, we will certainly circulate this groundbreaking magazine to our young women, foster parents, staff and our community partners. A number of the foster families/staff we are associated with are from Caribbean descent.

We look forward to representing the Sisterhood Agenda in Ontario, Canada. Thanking you advance.

Sincerely,
Carm Scott

We responded:

I am glad to hear from you! Based on demographics, geographical size and organization capacity, we choose our target markets for the initial stages of global expansion. South America, Canada-these areas were regarded as expansion areas for the near future. However, we have had several new Global Partners from Canada in the past few weeks, which is GREAT, so we are ahead of schedule due to interest.

Take care and thank you for your thoughts!

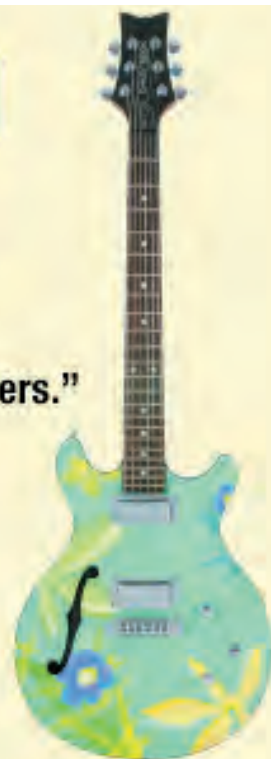
Win this guitar from Daisy Rock Guitars!

Soul Sister Contest

To enter, submit an essay on the topic, "Soul Sisters."

Submit to sistermail@sisterhoodagenda.com or Sisterhood Agenda,
524 Ridge Street, Newark, NJ 07104.

The winner of the contest will win this beautiful guitar and have the winning essay with individual photograph published in an upcoming issue of *Sisterhood Agenda* magazine.



Million Woman March Resurrection Reunion

The historical significance of MWM's introduction into public view (the 1997 gathering in Philadelphia, PA) is indisputable. But that was only the beginning...

Bringing together an estimated 2.5 million participants and generating an estimated \$25 million dollars in Philly over a 3 day period, (without even trying), the Million Woman March demonstrated not only the capability and brilliance of African-centered self-determination and creativity, but MWM's actual and potential power.

The upcoming MWM *Resurrection Reunion*, which is phase two of the MWM *From March to Movement* operations (remember the 1997 MWM theme was *Repentance, Resurrection, and Restoration*), will not only keep its pledge to progressively and proactively address the initial platform issues, but additionally other relevant matters and the overall mission. It is planned for October 26-28, 2007.

The MWM Organization and Universal Movement is committed to the holistic development and upliftment of women of African descent. Because its focus is not to just build an "organization" but rather a "sovereign independent nation," MWM work is broad based in nature and therefore intends to maintain a significant role in the liberation and well being of African people throughout the Diaspora.

For more information, visit www.officialmwm10yearanniversary.com, call 267-299-6424 or email mwmsistahood@aol.com.



Heritage
City

A Nigeria-based
theme park.

African Theme Park

THE AFRICAN HERITAGE THEME PARK PROJECT-HERITAGE City is being developed in Abuja, the capital city of Nigeria, West Africa. Attracting major investment from countries such as China, the African Kingdoms and Empires Theme Park and Holiday Resort is designed to showcase Africa's rich history, enhanced with modern technology to produce a total experience in learning, entertainment and relaxation for tourists and visitors.

The theme park project is a major component of the \$1 billion Heritage City Residences and Resorts project which broke ground in November 2006 at Abuja, Nigeria-reputed to be Africa's fastest growing city.

Heritage City is an initiative of Nigeria-based Heritage City Parks Ltd, a tourism and real estate development company. They plan to transform a 17,000-acre property on the outskirts of Abuja into West Africa's largest tourism and entertainment hub, thereby increasing and diversifying the entertainment and employment offerings available to a growing population eager to take advantage of new opportunities arising from Nigeria's economic reforms.

The project is also being supported by Malaysia's MKP Corporation, Nigeria's Skye Bank and New Earth Urban Systems, Ltd among others. Heritage City will be the first of its kind in the world when the first phase opens in the fall of 2008. For more information, please visit www.africanheritagecity.com.

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A GROUP OF CONCERNED ACTIVISTS, FILMMAKERS, artists and media personalities have created a film and movement addressing Viacom's negative portrayals of African Americans. Their film entitled *Turn Off Channel Zero* takes specific aim at VHI, MTV and BET — all owned by Viacom. This film, released earlier this year, reaches deep into the Black community and onto the front yard (literally) of one of the most powerful media moguls in the world - CBS and Viacom Chairman, Sumner Redstone.

Professor Griff of the legendary Hip Hop group Public Enemy is featured in the film alongside a capable group of activists, artists, filmmakers and everyday people. The group is particularly concerned with the growing popularity of reality shows, such as *Flavor of Love*, which broadcast some of the most negative images on television. Their efforts to combat these images have spawned a movement and the first activist film of its kind.

Turn Off Channel Zero (Opio Media, LLC) is one hour and fourteen minutes of creative activism. It documents the activities of artists and activists in various cities combating negative media images. Such portrayals are believed to increase violence, buffoonery and harmful activities — especially among youth. The film pulls no punches as it uses dramatic actions and creativity to disseminate necessary information, ideas and solutions. "From here on out, we are going to control our own images," says Professor Griff. He is in good company as the movie also highlights respected activists and artists such as Hip Hop journalist Davey D, Last Poet's Abiodun Oyewole and Morgan State University Professor Ray Winbush — just to name a few.

Screenings of *Turn Off Channel Zero* (not rated, appropriate for teens) have been set up around the country and overseas. The goal of which is to motivate communities to take action against media exploitation. Trailers, screenings and other important information about the film can be located at www.myspace.com/turnoffchannelzero.



Romeo Gets Scholarship to Play Basketball in College

Romeo Miller, known as Lil Romeo, is the 17-year old son of music mogul Master P who has established himself as an actor and rap artist at a young age. He recently received a full athletic scholarship to play basketball at the University of Southern California after graduating from Beverly Hill High School.

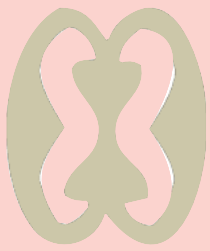
Black Women in the South Suffer

A NEW SURVEY BY THE SOUTHERN Rural Black Women's Initiative (SRBWI) confirm that Black women in some of the most relentlessly impoverished stretches of the Mississippi Delta and Black Belts of Alabama and Georgia are languishing far outside the economic and political mainstream. "Women in my part of the United States still suffer a spectrum of indignities," civil rights pioneer, Delta native and Jackson, Mississippi resident, L.C. Dorsey, Ph.D., writes in the foreword to *The Rain Don't Fall to the Ground Down Here: The Status of Human Rights for Southern Rural Black Women*.

Key findings of a spring 2007 survey of 400 women by SRBWI, which operates across 77 rural counties in the three targeted states, include:

- More than 80 percent of respondents identified unemployment or underemployment as a major problem.
- More than 70 percent say they lack dependable transportation required for getting to and from work, and reside in communities where there is no public transit system.
- Almost 50 percent say their households regularly lack money for food, clothing, shoes and other needed items.
- There is insufficient income to pay monthly utility bills in more than 60 percent of surveyed households.
- Half of survey respondents live in housing requiring major repairs.
- Lack of affordable health care, a majority of women said, aggravates, among other crucial health concerns, teen pregnancy and HIV/AIDS.

Among the women profiled in the newly released SRBWI report are a 62-year-old domestic worker who, after spending more than half her life in the same family's employ, won a legal hourly wage and weekends off just three months ago; a woman injured by the repetitive strain of being on a poultry factory assembly line; a widowed retiree, 73, and a single mom, 21, who both began working in the cotton fields as children; an ex-corporate executive who chose to become a teacher in a Greenville, Mississippi classroom that included teenagers who stripped in local clubs or who got impregnated by old men with pensions, convinced that that was a path toward financial stability. For more information regarding SRBWI and *The Rain Don't Fall...* visit www.srbwi.org.



Sister

CONNECTIONS

DARFUR REHABILITATION PROJECT

History Summary

Sudan is the largest country in Africa and has a population of 39 million people. The largest region in Sudan is Darfur. Darfur is home to 36 ethnic tribes, comprised of two major groups-Arabs and non-Arabs. Non-Arabs are known as "Blacks." Formerly controlled by Britain and Egypt from 1899, Sudan has been politically unstable since its independence in 1956. The lands are quickly becoming deserts and valuable grazing land has been lost. There are battles over oil revenues. While several languages and religions are practiced in southern Sudan, there is an effort by Sudan's Islamist fundamentalist government to make all of Darfur Arabic and practice Islam. Indigenous African farmers (Blacks) who refused to give up land and cultural traditions were punished by the government, mostly Arabic.

It is reported that the government began arming the Janjaweed, a group of diverse Darfurian racial groups. Witnesses describe Janjaweed bombing houses with aerial attacks and charging into villages on horse or camelback to torture and kill the men, rape the women and force survivors, including children, to give up their possessions. Many are enslaved, killed or left to die. Houses are burned to the ground and water supplies (critical in the desert) are destroyed. **Hundreds of thousands of people lost their lives to starvation, thirst, illness, slaughter; countless are raped, kidnapped and tortured. More than 2.5 million people have been displaced and are living in squalid refugee camps!**

The Organization

Darfur Rehabilitation Project, Inc. (DRP) is a non-profit organization established by individuals from the Darfur region of Sudan. It is a US-based NGO, newly established as a result of the recent crisis that cripples the Darfur region. The mission of the Darfur Rehabilitation Project is to inform the American public about the extensive violations of human rights that have been and continue to occur in the Darfur region of western Sudan; unify the voice of Darfurians everywhere in order to bring increased international attention to the ongoing crimes against humanity in the region; advocate justice for the victims; promote conflict resolution; foster the advancement of all people of the region through education, advocacy, direct services and research (in collaboration with other organizations that are internationally recognized); and to further democratization and respect for human rights.

Women and Girls in Darfur

Led by Fatima Haroun, DRP's President, and Blanche Foster, Acting Executive Director, DRP is able to understand the issues in Darfur that are of particular concern to women and girls. Both women are committed, passionate and thoughtful about their work. Blanche Foster explains, "Rape is used as a tool of war and Darfurian women pay a heavy price." Men and women are killed, leaving orphans behind. In the refugee camps, there is not enough food or clothing. On any given day, some women take turns wearing the same article of clothing.



Darfurian Refugees in the Camp of Treguine.

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What is genocide?

Genocide is defined as certain acts undertaken with the intent to destroy, in whole or in substantial part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. In 1948, the United Nations adopted the Genocide Convention and nations promised to "undertake to prevent" genocide.

The Vision

Darfur Rehabilitation Project would like to see a secure Darfur with a revitalized economy, an abundance of basic human services and a rising level of education.