



## CBC Makes Universal Health Care Its Main Legislative Priority

**R**esponding to the needs of their constituents and millions of African Americans, the Congressional Black Caucus has made guaranteeing universal health care for all Americans its number one health care legislative priority for the 108th Congress.

The campaign for support of universal health care was launched at a rally on April 29, 2003, spearheaded by the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Congressional Native American Caucus, and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. The rally culminated the observance of Minority Health Month, which featured a series of roundtable discussions and special programs focusing on health problems of African Americans and other minority citizens.

Rep. Donna M. Christensen, Chair of the CBC Health Braintrust, said, "The rally was an important step for our Caucuses, whose constituents are so disproportionately impacted by the crisis of the uninsured."

According to a report from the Kaiser Family Foundation, 44 million Americans are uninsured. The



Speakers from a diverse group of health advocacy organizations participated in the rally for universal insurance coverage.



Speaking at the rally for universal health care, Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, CBC Chair, said the issue was a top legislative priority for the Congressional Black Caucus.

U.S. Census Bureau reports that of those uninsured, 12.4 million are Hispanic, 6.8 million are African American, and 2.3 million are of Asian Pacific Islander descent.

Rep. Christensen pointed out that the United States is the only industrialized country that does not have a health insurance program for everyone. According to the World Health Organization, the United

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## Mobilizing Black Vote—Major Theme Of CBCF Annual Legislative Conference

By Rep. Juanita Millender-McDonald

As a proud member of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and the Chairwoman of this year's Annual Legislative Conference (ALC) of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, I am looking forward to continuing the



dynamic and successful tradition of political leadership and innovative thinking that my CBC colleagues and past ALC Chairs have established. This year's theme is *Collective Leadership—Challenging a Bold New World.*

Part of my responsibility as the Chairwoman is to develop and host a town hall meeting, and I have chosen an incredibly crucial and timely theme for this year—*Voter Mobilization: Preserving Our Legacy—Strengthening Our Base.*

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## CBCF Chairman's Commentary



## Affirmative Action in Education Benefits All Students

By Rep. William J. Jefferson  
Chairman, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.

Forty years after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s historic March on Washington, we as a democratic nation are still struggling to make Dr. King's dream a reality and America's promise of equality an everyday practice.

There still exists two Americas—separate and unequal, one black and one white. The challenge of the erasure of the color line that Dr. W.E.B. DuBois spoke of so forebodingly at the turn of the 20th century has not been fully met.

The upcoming U.S. Supreme Court decision on affirmative action in *Gutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger* presents a modern day test as to whether Dr. King's dream and Dr. DuBois' challenge will remain with us for years to come.

We live in a country that affords us many great liberties. However, for some Americans the pursuit of those freedoms is hindered by tremendous barriers. Opportunities for some are limited because of America's sins of the past. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to make conscious attempts to right those wrongs, hence initiatives like affirmative action.

Without affirmative action programs, disparities will likely widen not only in education, but also in employment, property ownership and income levels. Yet, as Dr. King noted "whenever the issue of compensatory treatment for the Negro is raised, some of our friends recoil in horror because while they agree that the Negro should be granted equality, they believe that he should ask for nothing more."

Affirmative action in education programs, such as the one at University of Michigan, looks beyond students' limitations and sees their potential, potential that may be realized if presented the opportunity.

More importantly, affirmative action programs like the one at the University of Michigan benefits all students. It promotes a diverse student body, which provides an education that equips our future leaders, black and white, with the capabilities to successfully function in a diverse America.

I am very proud of our country's many young men and women who worked tirelessly in participating in efforts to demonstrate support of the University of Michigan's affirmative action program. Students of all races around the

country have worked in some capacity to protest this attack on equal opportunity, realizing that any successful attack would be a major setback for our society as a whole.

I was especially pleased to join the Black Law Students Association from my alma mater, Harvard Law School, as one of several counsels on an amicus brief. This brief was submitted on behalf of Harvard Black Law Students Association as well as those from Yale and Stanford.

It argues that the University of Michigan has a compelling interest in promoting diversity through affirmative action. Affirmative action has played a critical role in helping law schools such as Harvard, Michigan, Stanford, and Yale meet their shared public missions to train and graduate

lawyers who are capable of solving the most complex social problems confronted by our multiracial democracy.

The brief further argues that affirmative action is especially important at the top law schools, that serve as a gateway to the most prestigious and powerful positions in the legal and political

community.

This year, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation along with Members of the Congressional Black Caucus will hold town hall meetings throughout the country to further its mission to connect and inform current African American leaders while preparing the next generation for leadership.

Our first meetings were held in March in Florida and Texas to discuss the state of affirmative action. This was a particularly difficult and emotional topic for many of the Congressional Black Caucus Members, because it was our hope during the civil rights movement many years ago that we were fighting the battle then so that our sons and daughters would not have to fight it now and in the future.

But, no matter the outcome of this Supreme Court case, we know that even if the fight must continue, there is great reason for optimism. Because of the recent actions of young African Americans in support of affirmative action, we are reassured that there is a tremendous number of fresh soldiers for civil rights—eager, active and capable of engaging the battle and winning the struggle. ■

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*Without affirmative action programs, disparities will likely widen not only in education, but also in employment, property ownership and income levels.*

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**CBC Chairman's Corner**



*The Time for Universal Health Care Is Now*

By Rep. Elijah E. Cummings  
Chairman, Congressional Black Caucus

On April 29, the Congressional Black, Hispanic, Native American and Asian Pacific American Caucuses held a major rally on Capitol Hill to call attention to the fact that 42 million Americans have limited or no access to health insurance.

As I heard several stories about individuals without health insurance, I thought about the fact that just a day earlier, I had visited the University of Maryland Medical Center for a grand opening of "the operating room of the future."

This is the name of a new facility at the Center that would allow physicians to perform "telemedicine" surgery on patients at remote locations around the world.

I thought about how many lives this new technology would save. Then, I was reminded that because of health insurance disparities, some people in the very same neighborhood where the hospital is located would not have access to this world-class technology.

My neighbor and friend, Mr. Tyrone Scott was one of these people. He worked hard every day of his life. However, because his job did not provide him with health insurance, he avoided

getting regular check-ups. One morning, he suddenly felt ill and was rushed to the emergency room.

That evening, he died. Although he lived within a few miles of both the University of Maryland Medical Center and the world-famous Johns Hopkins University, he was not able to get the care he needed in time to save his life.

The contrast that exists in my district is not unusual. There is a moral and practical failing revealed by this contrast that demands correction.

My colleagues and I are convinced that now is the time to create a universal, single-payer health care system that is publicly financed but provides private care.

That is why I have joined with 25 of my House colleagues in co-sponsoring Congressman John Conyers' bill to provide health insurance to every resident of the United States. Our bill, the proposed United States National Health Insurance Act (H.R. 676), would do the following:

- Expand and improve the existing Medicare program to guarantee medical care for Americans of all ages.



While maintaining a busy legislative schedule, Rep. Elijah E. Cummings joined his colleagues (from left) Rep. Xavier Beccera, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle in discussing legislative issues pending before the Congress.

- Allow patients to choose their own doctors; all medically necessary services would be covered (including prescription drugs, long term care, mental health services, dentistry, eye care, and substance abuse treatment); and there would be no co-pays or deductibles.
  - Convert all health care insurance coverage in the United States to a single non-profit system over a 15-year period.
- ally reduce overall health care costs by \$109 billion per year. The savings would come from sharply reducing the administrative costs and profits that now dominate some private health insurance plans.
- The United States is the only industrialized country that does not have a health insurance program for everyone.

The estimated annual cost of the program: \$1.809 trillion. As large as that projected price tag appears, experts confirm that the proposed program would actu-

We all have a stake in correcting that failing once and for all. We believe that Americans such as Mr. Scott should not have to die before their time because they could not access the 21st Century technology located in their own neighborhoods. ■

## CBC Makes Universal Health Care Priority *Cont'd. from pg. 1*

States spends more on health care than any other country in the world but ranks 37th among the 191 member countries in health care performance. Cuba ranks 39th and France is number one.

In addressing the rally, attended by hundreds, Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, CBC Chairman, said, "It is time to make health care a civil right for all Americans. Unless human rights are transformed into civil rights protected by law, they are not guaranteed 'rights' at all. That is the hard lesson that Americans of color have learned from our experience with this nation's health care system. And that is the same hard lesson that many, many other Americans are learning today."

A main objective of the rally was launching a national campaign to mobilize grassroots support for the *United States National Health Insurance Act*, sponsored by Rep. John Conyers, the dean of the CBC based on tenure. Senator

Edward Kennedy has also introduced a companion bill in the U.S. Senate.

Rep. Christensen said that building broad coalitions, such as were part of the activities during Minority Health Month and the rally, is "urgently essential to expanding health care coverage for millions of Americans, of all racial and ethnic backgrounds." ■



*Speakers at the universal health care rally included (from left) former Congressman Louis Stokes, Rep. Jan Schakowsky and Rep. Donna M. Christensen, Chair of the CBC Health Braintrust.*

## Annual Legislative Conference *Cont'd. from pg. 1*

This theme recognizes that the right to vote is a Constitutional and fundamental exercise of our democracy of which the potential strength of millions of Americans could be compromised through voter irregularities.

In the 2000 presidential election year, voter turnout was barely 51 percent. In mid-term election years voter turnout has been abysmal, hovering in the mid-30 percent range for

the past two decades, and voter turnout is steadily declining.

Unfortunately, in recent elections, the right to vote has been marred by allegations of irregularities such as election fraud, understaffed polls, language barriers, and outdated voting methods that arouse skepticism and cynicism rather than pride in our democracy.

Whether we stimulate involvement from an early age or encourage a commu-

nity that is apathetic, a concerted effort is necessary. Several expert panelists have committed to participate in the town hall meeting, and we are exploring simulcast opportunities in cities around the country.

With media coverage already blossoming in regard to the 2004 presidential elections, *Voter Mobilization: Preserving Our Legacy—Strengthening Our Base* will put us ahead of the curve. As we gear up for the presi-

dential primaries, please join me in getting an early start on mobilizing the African American vote.

With your continued support and involvement, the political pundits and others will not have to ask where African American voters are because we will be in the front of the line at the polls, exercising our constitutional right in record numbers and making a difference. ■

## CBCF Celebrates Opening of New Facility

Under overcast skies that miraculously held back their thundershowers, the leadership of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc. inaugurated its new facility located among think-tanks and academic institutions in downtown Washington, DC.

More than two hundred guests attended the afternoon event that started with speeches and a ceremonial ribbon cutting. Members of the CBCF, Inc. Board of Directors, lead by Chairman William J. Jefferson, and President Weldon J. Rougeau, were joined by CBC Chair and Board Member Elijah E. Cummings, MC, and D.C. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton.

Rep. Jefferson said, "Whenever a nonprofit takes on a project of this magnitude, the strength of its leadership is surely tested. I



CBCF officials and CBC members cut the ribbon in front of their new headquarters. Participating in this historic event were (from left) CBCF board member Dr. Andrea Jefferson and CBCF Attorney Amy Goldson; Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton, CBC Chair Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, CBCF President Weldon J. Rougeau, CBCF Chairman Rep. William J. Jefferson, and Horace Webb, Chair of the CBCF Corporate Advisory Council (CAC).

want to thank the Members of the CBCF Board who supported us when we sought to move our operation to this location. It is a major step in the reshaping of this organization as a world-class resource for information on the economic and social well-

being of citizens who make up the African Diaspora."

Representing the 39-Member Congressional Black Caucus, Chairman Elijah E. Cummings noted that "this accomplishment would place the CBCF in its rightful place in history."

Rougeau added, "This building allows the CBCF to fulfill its mandate of working as a catalyst for change in four major areas, education, economic development, public health, and African Globalism." ■

## Rep. Rangel Launches Fight To Protect Earned Income Tax Credit Filers

Veteran U.S. Rep. Charles B. Rangel, the Ranking Member on the Ways and Means Committee, says he will fight a new Internal Revenue Service (IRS) audit program aimed at many working poor taxpayers who plan to file for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

According to *The New York Times*, the program set to begin in July would make four million low-income working taxpayers show "the most exhaustive proof of eligibility ever demanded of any class of taxpayers."

Rep. Rangel criticized the plan in a letter to Treasury Secretary John Snow, which read, in part: "This is a crude form of profiling that I am sure that the Administration would oppose in other circumstances not involving a program for the poor. I am not aware of any precedent for denying or delaying a tax benefit that may be properly claimed on a tax return merely because the person falls into a broad class of taxpayers."



Rep. Rangel introduced legislation that would stop the new program, which would involve "pre-audits" of certain kinds of EITC filers such as single fathers, grandmothers, or adoptive parents. While the IRS claims the program is designed to reduce false EITC claims, the program would apply to filers whether or not they ever made an improper claim in the past.

"We need a campaign to educate people. The EITC is not welfare," Rep. Rangel said. "Like other tax refunds, the EITC is a refund of money earned by the taxpayer and collected by the government."

"Families that receive the EITC pay a disproportionately high burden in payroll and other taxes. It is unfair for the IRS to create arbitrary hoops for them to jump through in order to get their money back," Rep. Rangel added. The congressman pointed out that 4.3 million families entitled to EITC tax relief do not file for the benefit, and that number could grow if the IRS imposes additional filing requirements. ■

## Rep. Barbara Lee Says Pressure Needed for Full Funding of \$15 Billion HIV/AIDS Bill



The passage by both houses of Congress and the signing of the \$15 billion U.S. Leadership Against Global HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act of 2003 has special meaning for Rep. Barbara Lee.

During her tenure as the congressional representative from Oakland, California, Rep. Lee has worked on both international and domestic HIV/AIDS funding. She said, "We have worked for years to provide help for the millions of people who are in dire need. This (new legislation) is another step in the right direction."

Although she said she was "pleased that the President signed this truly historic piece of legislation," Rep. Lee expressed frustration that social conservatives added an amendment to earmark 33 percent of all HIV/AIDS prevention spending for abstinence-only programs.

"This targeted funding is extremely disappointing," Rep. Lee said. "As the Ugandan model has shown, we need to be flexible in creating a response to AIDS in every country, and we should leave those decisions to experts in the field."

Rep. Lee warned that even with the signing of the bill, pressure should continue to be put on the President to provide appropriate funding. "We must urge the President and our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee to fully fund the \$3 billion authorization, beginning this year. AIDS will not wait, and neither can we."

Even with the shortcomings, Rep. Lee said the AIDS bill represents a substantial victory in fighting the AIDS pandemic. "Now we have to move forward to address the AIDS epidemic that exists here in the United States in the same bold manner," she said. ■

## Rep. James Clyburn Hosts Conference on HBCUs

The Congressional Black Caucus Political Education and Leadership Institute joined the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO) and the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) in sponsoring a highly successful, issue-oriented conference focusing on "The State of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in America."

Hosted by Rep. James E. Clyburn, the one-day conference was held on June 6 in Charleston, South Carolina and focused on the critical issues and urgent challenges facing HBCUs, including financial stability, student recruitment and retention, student housing, faculty recruitment and development, physical facilities, and fundraising.

HBCU presidents and other participants also explored greater cooperative and collaborative relationships among HBCUs, as well as HBCUs and majority institutions. Over 200 individuals attended the conference, representing approximately 50 schools, 12 federal agencies and numerous corporate and private organizations.

Describing the conference as "significantly productive," Rep. Clyburn said, "Our nation's historically black colleges and universities have played an indispensable and historic role in the progress of African Americans in this country and their continuing contributions are more important than ever. Education at all levels is the number one concern of African Americans, and the Congressional Black Caucus is determined to insure that immediate attention and action are directed at averting a crisis on HBCU campuses nationwide."

Other CBC members participating in the conference were CBC Chairman Elijah E. Cummings, CBCF Chair Rep. William J. Jefferson, CBC Institute Chair Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, Reps. Stanford Bishop, Alcee Hastings, Ed Towns and Mel Watt. ■

## New CBCF Staff

### New CBCF Staff Member



Bayardo Gonzalez

Bayardo Gonzalez has joined the CBCF staff as Senior Research Analyst in the Resource Development Department.

A native of Matagalpa, Nicaragua, Gonzalez attended Columbia College where he majored in Political Science with a minor in Economics.

At Columbia College, Gonzalez was head of the Latin American Department at WKCR-89.9, where he managed six radio shows. After college, Gonzalez worked for over two

years as Business Manager at the North American Congress on Latin America, an academic journal on economic and political issues in Latin America.

In 1997, Gonzalez attended the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, where he majored in International Trade and Finance and received a Masters in Public Policy. After his Masters' studies, Gonzalez worked as a Research Analyst at Pyramid Research, where he covered the telecommunications Internet markets of Argentina, Venezuela, Colombia, Honduras, Bolivia and Nicaragua. He moved to Washington, DC in 2000 to join the staff of the Strategist Consulting Group. ■

## Exploring CBCF's Impact on Business Partnerships in Brazil

By Weldon J. Rougeau

President, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.

Recently, I traveled to Brazil along with Members of Congress and representatives from the Washington, DC Chamber of Commerce to assist with the development of key relationships that will solidify our partnership with a Brazilian organization called INTEGRARE.



The Brazilian organization has a structure that is similar to that of our Minority Economic Development Council, and is spearheading a movement to hold a CBCF/INTEGRARE business summit in Sao Paulo later this year.

I also went to advance the project of an African American business man who is attempting to establish a venture in Brazil that will serve as an example of the endless possibilities that exist for collaboration between the African American and Afro-Brazilian communities.

An excellent example of such a collaborative effort is that of Clarence Smith, cofounder of Essence magazine. Mr. Smith is working to establish an airline between Miami, Florida and Salvador, Bahia in the northeast region of Brazil.

Bahia is the center of African culture in Brazil, and a frequent tourist destination for African Americans. Currently, there are no direct flights between the U.S. and this region of Brazil. In theory, a direct route to the area will exponentially increase the number of African Americans traveling to the area, a result that would be very profitable for local businesses in Bahia.

While in Brazil, we also visited the home of the former President of INTEGRARE, Maria de Lima, with whom we signed an agreement at the US Chamber offices last December. During the meal we shared in her home, she reiterated the tremendous impact CBCF can have on the inclusion movement currently underway in Brazil.

Later, we met with Silas de Silva, current President of INTEGRARE, and Cesar Nascimento, board member of INTEGRARE to discuss the objectives of the trip and to coordinate our future activity on this project. Mr. de Silva was on his way to the U.S. for training with the National Minority Supplier Development Council, Inc.

I also met with Carlos Silva, an Afro-Brazilian businessman, and listened to his perspective on the plight of Afro-Brazilians. I found that the African American experience during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s was quite relevant to the current situation in Brazil.

I was also informed of a Brazilian academic internship program involving students from America. The program is focused on international business, and trains students at universities in both countries through an academic exchange program. I learned that no Afro-Brazilian students were being trained to engage in international business, and suggested that this type of training was critical to the development of future leaders of Brazil.

Finally, we toured Sao Paulo, an adventure that culminated at the home of Adalberto Camargo, a legend in the Afro-Brazilian community and Brazil at large. Mr. Camargo, a figure similar to our Charlie Diggs, related the history of the Black struggle in Brazil and re-emphasized the fact that CBCF was very important to his country.

This trip to Brazil followed a December 2002 visit by officials from that country during which they expressed an interest in developing closer ties to African American businesses. During that visit, a Memorandum of Understanding between the CBCF and the Brazilian organization INTEGRARE was signed, paving the way for this follow-up visit, and for collaboration on future projects of mutual interest. ■

*A delegation of CBC members attended the inauguration of Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo. Joining in celebration (from left) CBCF Chairman Rep. William J. Jefferson, Rep. Donald Payne, CBC Chairman Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, President Obasanjo, Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, Rep. Corrine Brown, and Rep. Gregory Meeks.*



## CBC Budget is A Roadmap for Action in the 108th Congress

By Rep. Major R. Owens,  
Senior Member, Education &  
Workforce Committee

In concert with the Congressional Progressive Caucus, the Congressional Black Caucus sponsored a *Leave No Family Behind Alternative Budget* for budget year 2004 which received 85 votes on the floor of the House.

Although the overall support was shallow, the yes votes were the greatest number received in the last two decades. However, the power of the document was not in its popularity but in its consistency with the ongoing CBC priorities.

The Caucus resolution amplifies and enhances positions already taken by the CBC. On the vital matter of tax policy the CBC was guided by Rep. Charles Rangel's freeze on tax cuts which allowed the Caucus budget to capture more revenue for education and health care.

Beyond the freeze the majority of the Caucus members are committed to a revamping of the tax structure to give larger tax cuts to working and middle class families, while capturing new revenues from corporations to finance prescription drug benefits and school construction.

Since corporation income taxes are presently responsible for only about ten per cent of the overall tax burden, an overhaul of our tax structure to achieve greater fairness is long overdue. What is good for the African American community would be good for the nation as a whole.

The CBC Budget targeted funding for the special economic needs of the African American community caused by the lingering recession. Revenue sharing to avoid massive city and state employee cuts is highlighted, along with greater funding for extended health care and unemployment insurance.

Public works projects to create jobs are also encouraged. Strong advocacy for aid to the nations of the African diaspora is included, as well as reminders that funds are still inadequate for Black farmers, and not enough resources are dedicated to achieving diversity in government employment.

The CBC also offers a lone voice in its call for more dollars for needy families (TANF) and public housing. In the *Leave No Family Behind* budget, education remains the number one priority with a call for a twenty billion-dollar increase over the amount requested by the President.

The introduction highlights the fact that a recent Federal Reserve report indicated that the median net worth of minority families

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*The CBC Budget targeted funding for the special economic needs of the African American community caused by the lingering recession. Revenue sharing to avoid massive city and state employee cuts is highlighted...*

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had declined slightly while the median net worth for white families has increased by 17 per cent.

Education is pinpointed as the only avenue available for most of the families seeking to close this growing gap in wealth. Only those who complete a post-secondary degree will have the ability to close the wealth gap.

The successful trek to higher education begins in pre-school classes and Head Start for which the CBC demands large increases. Homeland Security and military preparedness would also be beneficiaries of an increased number of minority college graduates, and thus these functions are pushed to spread their contracting to include Black Colleges and Universities.

By making tough priority decisions early, the CBC can offer the other components of Black leadership a blueprint for strategy and tactics in the ongoing federal appropriations process.

At every level emergency needs should be identified, and ways to constructively spend the additional twenty billion dollars de-

manded for education must be set forth. Avoiding paraprofessional layoffs and class size increases are obvious goals many districts must consider.

The CBC budget provides a voice for the 49 per cent of Americans who do not go out to vote even for President.

These absentees need to be loudly told that the CBC has provided a banner for them to march behind. All our friends should unite with the CBC to give the missing 49 percent a reason to turnout and vote. The brand of African American genius that crafted and implemented the Civil Rights Struggle has never been applied to the intense process of fighting to shape American Budget and Tax Policies.

It is time to replicate the Civil Rights historic approach with many levels of innovative actions in motions at once. It is time to fully embrace the economic survival, prosperity and wealth accumulation challenge. We must *Leave No Family Behind*. ■



## Rep. Danny K. Davis Leads Effort to Increase Diversity Among Senior Executives in Federal Service

As a result of the advocacy of Rep. Danny K. Davis, Ranking Member of the House Civil Service and Agency Organization, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has announced the creation of its Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program to help increase diversity in the Senior Executive Service (SES).



Rep. Davis joined Office of Personnel Management Director Kay Coles James in unveiling the new program, which will focus on training qualified women, minorities and people with disabilities to take on senior executive roles at agencies. After they complete the program, participants will be placed in SES positions. Part of the impetus for the program came from reports by the General Accounting Office, which found that the SES was not representative of the workforce or the population, Mrs. James said.

Rep. Davis said, "Senior Executive members lead change in the federal government, and they should be as diverse as the people they serve. We will be monitoring agencies that have work to do in increasing minorities in the SES, and expect that they will participate in the candidate development program." Several other members of Congress joined Davis in calling for the Office of Personnel Management to create more opportunities for diversity in the SES.

According to Ramsey Alexander, Jr., a member of the Washington chapter of Blacks in Government (BIG), the new program is long overdue. "It may be a big help with getting minorities into the pipeline and into the SES," Ramsey said. "If they stick with two basic things, merit and qualifications, this will be great." ■

## "Keep Social Security Secure"

By Rep. Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick

For most Americans, Social Security is their primary source of retirement. For more than 60 years, Social Security has



never missed a payment and can pay promised benefits in full for several more decades, even without any changes. Why in the world would anyone want to gamble with Social Security? Yet there are some who want to privatize Social Security. Their plans will drastically reduce guaranteed benefits.

The Social Security personal investment accounts currently recommended would require tax increases, raising the retirement age and benefit cuts, according to a report by the General Accounting Office.

GAO authorities describe Social Security as a pay-as-you-go system that is expected to begin paying out more in benefits than it collects in taxes by 2017. That is because the large "Baby Boom" generation starts retiring and the work force that keeps the system afloat through payroll taxes declines.

Putting part or all of Social Security trust funds in the

stock market is playing roulette with American citizens' retirement. Over the last few years, the stock market has fallen dramatically. Do you want your guaranteed benefits to be determined by the fluctuation of the market?

In the current proposal, a worker age 35 today who retires at age 65 will have his or her Social Security benefits reduced by 17 percent, compared to the benefits the worker would receive under current law.

Privatizing Social Security may force workers to work longer in order to receive the same benefits under the current system. Already, those Americans who were born in 1938 will reach the retirement age of 65 this year, but they will have to wait an extra two months to receive Social Security payments. This is the first year of the graduated retirement age for Social Security.

For the record, I oppose privatizing Social Security and insist the program remains "as is" so that future retirees will have a financial security net. ■

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## This Year in Congress: A CBCF Congressional Fellow's Perspective

By Terah Venzant

CBCF Fellow (Office of Rep. Diane Watson)

The 2002/2003 CBCF Congressional Fellows Program came to its official end on May 9, 2003. The six individuals who served as CBCF Congressional Fellows were Kanya Bennett (Office of Rep. John Conyers); Earnie Ferreira (Office of Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson); Richard Giles (Office of Rep. Barbara Lee); Jason Ingram (Office of Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee); Erica Woods-Warrior (Office of Rep. Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick) and I.

This year's cohort of CBCF Congressional Fellows came from diverse educational, professional and ideological backgrounds, from programs such as Educational Policy, Public Administration, Law, Engineering, and International Relations and Diplomacy.

From the most adamantly liberal to the most staunchly conservative, each of us brought a unique perspective from which to frame our time on the Hill. While we each represent a diverse perspective, we held in common this new experience of learning about the legislative process from the inside.

As we embarked together on this process of learning about politics on this national stage, our unique backgrounds allowed us to interpret the experience in different ways. In the words of CBCF Fellow Erica Woods-Warrior, "The fellowship allowed me the opportunity to gain a wealth of knowledge about the nuts and bolts of the policy-making process. I was especially pleased with the amount of exposure to the diverse areas of the field of public administration, particularly as it relates to ethnic and racial minorities."

None of us could have expected to be immersed in the pivotal legislative events that occurred this year. When the Democrats lost the Senate in the midterm election of November 2002, an historic occasion was created where, for the first time since the Eisenhower Administration, both the legislative and executive branches fell under Republican control.

This event framed the remaining months of our fellowship as we learned the valuable lesson of striving to make heard the voices of our Member's constituents in such an environment. In many ways this taught us a les-



son in the importance of our democratic process in ensuring that all people are represented fairly, even when their ideology is not in the majority.

Jason Ingram, Fellow in Representative Jackson-Lee's office, relates his experience in his office. "The fellows program has taught me much about the many dynamics of a congressional office in a way that has allowed both for my professional development and for my understanding of how policies are advanced through a clear legislative agenda."

We also experienced working for Congress in a time of war. In October, Congress passed House Joint Resolution 114, which authorized President Bush to use force in Iraq. By March we were fighting a much-contested war in Iraq.

This lesson in foreign relations provided an interesting dichotomy with domestic issues, as our Representatives also battled a downward spiraling economy and the plight of many constituents who were struggling with daily life issues in the midst of a serious economic depression.

A strong lesson in making hard choices, this certainly taught us all about the delicate balance between international events and diplomacy and ensuring we meet the needs of our citizens on our own soil.

Perhaps one of the most instructive lessons of this year was related to the importance of our freedom as American citizens and how fragile that freedom can feel sometimes.

One of our fellows, Richard Giles, assigned to the Office of Congresswoman Barbara Lee and also a Captain in the United States Army, had to end his fellowship early when he was called to duty.

Living in our nation's capital in a time of war, experiencing a friend leaving for war, confronting terrorist alerts almost constantly, and facing fall sniper attacks across the city taught us one of the most fundamental lessons of all.

We certainly learned much about the legislative process and the necessity of black empowerment. However, learning about these issues in the context of these larger foreign and domestic events provided for a unique experience that we will each bring with us into our next endeavors. ■

## Rep. Corrine Brown, CBCF WOW Sponsor Housing Summit in Orlando, Florida Area

Hundreds of prospective new Black homebuyers in Orlando and surrounding areas acquired a vast amount of knowledge about how to buy their first home during a late March housing summit, "Raising the Roof: Home Buying Strategies for the 21st Century," co-sponsored by Rep. Corrine Brown of the Orlando area and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's "With Ownership Wealth" initiative.



The Foundation's WOW initiative has a goal to turn one million African Americans into homeowners.

Joining Rep. Brown for the summit were Reps. William L. Clay, Jr., James Clyburn and Stephanie Tubbs-Jones. Miami Mayor Alex Pinellas was also on hand for the conference, along with Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer as well as housing experts from Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and the National Urban League.

The housing summit coincided with another important housing accomplishment by Rep. Brown. Just weeks prior to

the housing summit, Rep. Brown's district had received millions of dollars in Hope VI housing grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Rep. Brown, who had been working closely for years with the various housing authorities in Jacksonville, Orlando, and Daytona, worked to procure all three housing grants simultaneously: Jacksonville received \$20 million in HOPE VI funds, Orlando, \$18 million, and Daytona, \$17 million.

Hope VI funds are designed to demolish and rebuild public housing facilities, a positive step in the redevelopment of entire neighborhoods.

Rep. Brown is a strong supporter of public housing, and was thrilled to see funding directed to poor communities in Florida's third district to improve the lives of public housing residents. ■

## CBCF Praises WOW Partner, and Announces Student Homeownership Program

CBCF President Weldon J. Rougeau recently participated in a JP Morgan Chase press conference announcing an unprecedented \$500 billion-dollar commitment to provide increased home financing for minority borrowers across the full economic spectrum. Rougeau is an active participant on the Chase Home Finance Advisory Council.

"The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation embraces homeownership as a key way to implement one of its major strategic goals, Economic Development. While almost 73-percent of white Americans own their homes, fewer than 48-percent of African Americans do. Every major indicator that measures the wealth of

a people goes up when homeownership is factored into the equation. That's why the CBCF supports JP Morgan Chase in this effort, Rougeau said."

Two years ago, the CBCF noted that, despite all the gains African Americans have made socially and economically, there are still major barriers to homeownership. The numbers told a story that could not be ignored.

"Today I am announcing the CBCF's Student Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP), that will be conducted at the 116 HBCU's in America. With the commitment we have to the SHOP program and the WOW initiative, we know we will reach our goal of a



Supporting J.P. Morgan Chase and its \$500 billion commitment to increase minority home ownership were CBCF President Weldon J. Rougeau (right) and HUD Secretary Mel Martinez.

million new African American homeowners, said Rep. William J. Jefferson, Chairman of the CBCF. "We have acknowledged the difficulty of this task, and have embarked upon a road that we hope will move us along more quickly."

The CBCF recently adopted its Strategic Plan

that touts Economic Development as one of its primary goals. SHOP and WOW are viewed as useful tools for building a sound economic future. SHOP is supported by grants from the Fannie Mae Foundation, CitiGroup Foundation, and State Farm Insurance Companies. ■

## Intermodalism: Connecting Our Country

By Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson

I recently introduced H.R. 1394, the Intermodal Transportation Act of 2003 (ITA). This bill will create a new competitive grant program for intermodal transportation centers, which will provide incentives for states and communities to develop intermodal facilities.

These centers will tie together all public transportation modes in convenient locations, giving public transportation users the ability to make seamless intercity and local trips from origin to destination. Across the country, very little has been invested in intermodal facilities linking the modes of affordable public transportation that

the American people rely on everyday. ITA provides benefits to all public transportation riders through dedicated funding for these vital intermodal transportation terminals.



In cities like Dallas, millions of dollars have been spent on light rail and intercity rail terminal facilities, but relatively little on bus facilities (and nothing on intercity bus facilities). Those that rely on affordable public transportation generally take the bus, either local or intercity.

ITA provides dedicated funding to build transportation terminals that include both rail and bus services and thus provide benefits to all public transportation riders. For Example, an intercity bus passenger at the downtown Dallas bus terminal has to drag his or her bags 2 or 3 blocks to or from Union Station to access the Dart light rail or Amtrak.

This obviously makes using public transportation less attractive. Dallas has had various plans since the mid-70s for a downtown intermodal terminal that would tie together the bus/rail/transit modes in one convenient location, but nothing has ever been built. ITA would provide a dedicated source of federal funding for projects like a downtown Dallas intermodal center. It would provide the seed money and incentives that would make plans like those in Dallas a reality for cities all over the country.

Another example is the new Greyhound terminal that recently opened in south Dallas. Although it is linked to Dart bus service, the terminal is not tied into the light rail system. If this fund were available, Greyhound could have worked with the city to build a full intermodal terminal at one of the south Dallas light rail stops.

ITA would also help major airports like DFW by

supporting the development of public transportation services from rural communities to urban transportation hubs.

In addition to creating a seamless intermodal transportation system, the cost-effective programs in ITA will produce new employment opportunities. These will include not only the construction and operating jobs directly related to the projects, but also new jobs created by the economic development produced by new intermodal transportation hubs in urban areas and through the connections we develop between rural communities and the national airway system.

With little fiscal cost, the Intermodal Transportation Act will create a fully integrated public transportation network throughout the country while also linking hundreds, if not thousands, of rural communities to airports and creating economic development opportunities and new jobs across the country. ■

## The Business of War: Rebuilding Iraq

By Rep. Maxine Waters

There is much concern among Americans about who will rebuild post-war Iraq and how contracts will be awarded. To alleviate that concern, I offered two amendments to the Defense Production Act to deal with post-war contracts and possible conflicts of interest.

Concerns about conflicts of interest arose after a subsidiary of the Halliburton Company was awarded a multi-million dollar contract to help rebuild Iraq. Vice President Cheney is the former Halliburton CEO and there was concern that his former company may have gotten favorable treatment from the Bush Administration in winning the first post-war contract. Although Cheney is no longer employed by Halliburton, he still receives \$180,000 a year in deferred payments from the company.



There is also skepticism because the contract was awarded almost two weeks before the war started—when President Bush was reportedly seeking a peaceful solution to the crisis in Iraq. For many who opposed the war, the timing of that contract confirmed the theory that President Bush was obligated to war to “liberate” oil fields and other Iraqi resources for corporate America.

Certainly, there is no evidence upon which to base such a conclusion, but it is understandable that many Americans harbor suspicions about the motives involved in waging war against Iraq. My amendments to the Defense Production Act were offered to eliminate the perception there were conflicts of interest in awarding post-war contracts.

*Cont'd. on pg. 13*

## Rep. Payne Selected for National Endowment for Democracy Medal

The National Endowment for Democracy, a nonprofit foundation whose mission is to strengthen democracies around the world, recently awarded its prestigious Democracy Service Medal to Representative Donald M. Payne of New Jersey. A senior member of the House International Relations Committee, he serves as the Ranking Member of its Subcommittee on Africa.

Payne was chosen for his championship of human rights and democracy on the African continent and world-wide throughout his years of Congressional Service. Past recipients of the award include Lech Walesa, the former Polish President and founder of the Solidarity trade union movement; former AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland; Alexander Vondra and Martin Butora, key activists in the Velvet Revolution of what was then Czechoslovakia; Polish patriot Jan Nowak; U.S. Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN); Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky; Chen Wu, Sue-jen, the first lady of the Republic of China; Enrique Bolanos, President of the Republic of Nicaragua.

Before the medal presentation, Payne participated in a panel discussion entitled "Africa's Democracy Agenda," which was chaired by Congressman Ed Royce (R-CA) and featured presentations by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Walter Kansteiner, and Dr. Richard Joseph, Director of African Studies at Northwestern University.

Thomas J. Donahue, the Vice Chairman of the National Endowment for Democracy, presented the Medal to Payne at a Capitol Hill reception. Mr. Donahue praised the Congressman for his work to achieve democracy in South Africa, to restore human rights in Nigeria, and to promote peace and justice in Congo, Liberia and Sudan.

Several members of Congress paid tribute to Payne at the reception in his honor. Among those who made remarks were Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN); Rep. Chris Cox (R-CA);



*Carl Gershman, (left), President of the National Endowment for Democracy, and Thomas R. Donahue, Vice Chairman and former President of the AFL-CIO, present Congressman Donald Payne with the prestigious Democracy Service Medal for his efforts to strengthen democracies around the world.*

Rep. Charlie Rangel (D-NY); Congressional Black Caucus Chairman Elijah Cummings (D-MD); Steve Rothman (D-NJ), and Gregory Meeks (D-NY).

Payne has championed a number of legislative initiatives in Congress, including funding for African Development Bank, the African Development Fund, and the Development Fund for Africa; the Sudan Peace Act, the Microenterprise Act, which provides small business loans to people in developing nations. He has been at the forefront of efforts to promote democracy and human rights in South Africa, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Central African Republic, Liberia, Rwanda, Sudan, Benin and Angola.

In this session of Congress, Payne has introduced legislation to assist in the transition to democracy in the Republic of Burundi and to eliminate polio worldwide. ■

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### **The Business of War** *Cont'd. from pg. 12*

My initial amendment would have banned companies where senior administration officials previously served as executives from bidding on federal contracts for four years. That amendment was defeated 14-41.

I offered a compromise amendment, requiring only that high-ranking administration officials not be present if companies with which they could conceivably have a conflict of interest are negotiating for contracts. The compromise version missed passage by only three votes and the perception of conflict of interest persists. Questions about the process of awarding post-war contracts remain unanswered.

The Halliburton contract is one of eight being awarded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to rebuild and run key institutions in post-war Iraq. USAID,

operating under a streamlined process for urgent work involving national security, secretly sent the contracts to a select group of companies in February and March.

What was the issue of national security that required urgent work in Iraq before the bombs began to fall? Why were the contracts sent secretly to select companies? Why are they being awarded without any competitive bidding or notice to Congress?

As long as these questions go unanswered Americans will continue to harbor suspicions about the process of awarding post-war contracts. The Congress and the Bush Administration should do everything possible to dispel all suspicions and misconceptions. ■

## Rep. Tubbs Jones Fights to Increase Federal Funding For Uterine Fibroid Research

Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones recently introduced H.R. 2157, the Uterine Fibroids Research and Education Act of 2003, to double federal funding for uterine fibroid research. The bill would also fund a public education campaign on the condition. Senator Barbara Mikulski is introducing identical legislation in the U.S. Senate.



“While three quarters of all reproductive age women have uterine fibroids, little is known about them and few good treatment options are available,” said Rep. Tubbs Jones. “Right now, hysterectomy is the most common treatment for uterine fibroids, accounting for 200,000 (or 30%) of all hysterectomies in the United States. Women deserve better. That’s why I am introducing the Uterine Fibroid Research and Education Act—to find new and better ways to treat or even cure uterine fibroids. Since my first days in Congress, I have been fighting to make sure women don’t get left out or left behind when it comes to their health. This legislation will address this silent epidemic among American women.”

It is estimated that three in every four American women have uterine fibroids, with one in four women seeking medical care for the condition. African American women are two to three times more likely to develop uterine fibroids. Uterine fibroids are the most common cause of hysterectomies in the

United States. According to a study by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, there is “a remarkable lack of high quality evidence supporting the effectiveness of most interventions for symptomatic fibroids.”

More specifically, this legislation will authorize \$10 million in federal funding for uterine fibroid research each year for five years. Despite a budget of over \$27 billion, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) spent only \$5 million on uterine fibroids research last year. This legislation would double the funding, providing the investment needed to jumpstart basic research and lay the groundwork to find a cure. Research is needed to find out what causes uterine fibroids and why African American women are disproportionately affected.

In addition, this bill creates a program to educate health care providers about uterine fibroids. According to a 1999 survey conducted by the Society for Women’s Health Research, as many as one-third of women who have hysterectomies do so without discussing potential alternatives with their doctors. This bill will help make sure women get the information they need from their doctors on the best treatment for uterine fibroids. The legislation will also provide information to the public on uterine fibroids and ways the condition can be treated. ■

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## CBCF Launches New Multilingual Website

Citing the need to connect worldwide with people who have similar interests and goals, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc. (CBCF) has launched its new, multilingual Web site, featuring three of the world’s most prevalent languages among people of color.

The CBCF Web site boasts more than a million and a half hits from 87 countries each month, making the site a significant tool for communicating with the international community.

CBCF President Weldon J. Rougeau made the Web site a major priority when he joined the organization in May of 2002. He said, “It has been our goal for more than a year to transform the CBCF into a global organization that reaches people with whom we share a common bond, despite the fact that geography separates us. This is a tool that allows us to raise the profile of the CBCF, to transmit our messages of economic empowerment, educational excellence, and improved healthcare access to people who have mutual interests and concerns.”

The CBCF reached out to scholars in the local community to take on the task of translating the site. In an effort headed by CBCF Webmaster Tshepo Edwin Makhubela, the or-

ganization was able to assemble its team, and make the transformation in a matter of months. The Foundation retained the services of Solange Viana Smith of Howard University who holds a Bachelors degree in Translation and English/Portuguese Literature from Catholic University of São Paulo - PUC, and a Masters degree in Education and Human Development from The George Washington University in Washington, DC.

The French translator, Mr. Mamadi Keita, teaches French in the Department of Modern Languages at Howard University. He received a Ph.D. degree in Economics from the University of Nancy (France), and is currently a candidate for another Ph. D. in French and francophone literatures at the University of Maryland at College Park.

The Spanish translator is Susana I. Martin, a consultant who provides free-lance English-Spanish translation and interpretation services in the Washington, DC area. She is an ATA accredited translator, who is a Certified Federal Court interpreter and works as a State Department Seminar Interpreter. From 1988 to 1990 she provided services to the Embassy of the Republic of Argentina, here in Washington, DC. ■

## Pass the Immigrant Children Protection Act of 2003: Children Should Not Be Treated Like Criminals, Or Even Adults

By Rep. Kendrick B. Meek

I have introduced the Immigrant Children Protection Act of 2003, which will require that immigrant children be released into the care of family members or qualified caregivers within days of their arrival in this country, instead of being detained for months as they are now.

I drafted this bill because of a problem I observed firsthand with the treatment of young Haitian children by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Nearly six months ago, more than 200 Haitians arrived by boat at the city of Miami, seeking asylum in the United States. Many of those who traveled across the dangerous Straits of Florida were relatives of my constituents who live in the South Florida area.

Live television captured their dramatic scramble as they jumped from their overloaded boat into Biscayne Bay and ran through traffic across the Rickenbacker Causeway. Many of them were smiling,

for they felt the relief of frightened people who had finally found sanctuary in the greatest nation on earth.

It was not just adults who crossed those waters, but families with children, and some of these children were quite young. Like the adults, they were immediately detained by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, pending adjudication of their asylum cases. Some of these children have now been detained for months.

Last November, I visited the crowded Krome Detention Center in Miami where many of the adult detainees are held. I also visited with the children living at crowded and makeshift detention facilities at a local women's prison and nearby hotels. Many of these children had been confined to their room, isolated from other children their own ages and not allowed to run or play outside. Some are sent to school or allowed to have daily recreation and outdoor

activities, but still must return to detention.

As a father of two small children, visiting these children was heartbreaking. At Thanksgiving, I delivered to these Haitian children pictures and notes from Miami elementary school students intended to raise their spirits. Children who are forced to live under these conditions are merely warehoused, their spirits broken and their lives without stimulation. In addition, this poor treatment is also very costly.

None of us would want our children treated in this way. If our practices were followed in a foreign nation, most Americans would be appalled. As a country, we should not tolerate the incarceration of innocent children. We must establish a better way of providing for immigrant children who are in our care.

Under my bill, once a minor is placed in custody by border control officials, he or

she must be released within 72 hours into the care of the Office of Refugee Resettlement in the Department of Health and Human Service, and within ten days after that must be released from their custody and placed into the community with a qualified relative or caretaker.

My goal is to remove all immigrant children from detention and place them in a safe and nurturing environment while their asylum claims are considered and their cases finally decided. Children who are accompanied by parents must also be treated the same as unaccompanied minors, but can only be released with the parent's approval.

Of all the nations on earth, I believe that the immigration policy of the United States should be the most child-friendly. We must not treat children or minors who come to this country like they are adults or, even worse, criminals. ■

*Three distinguished Washington, D.C. veterans stood with Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton when she introduced her congressional voting rights bill for the District of Columbia. Pictured are former Army Secretary Clifford Alexander; George Keyes, U.S. Air Force Academy graduate with 10 years military service, and Wesley Brown, first African American graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, with 25 years of service. These outstanding veterans, representing nearly 50,000 military veterans who live in the District of Columbia, joined Rep. Norton in demanding full congressional voting rights for these veterans and other D.C. residents. Senators Joseph Lieberman and Russell Feingold have introduced Norton's bill in the Senate.*



## Student Homeownership Program Pilot Held at Four Black Universities

By Janice R. Crump

The pilot phase of CBCF's Student Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP) has been completed, and by all accounts, it was a resounding success.

This spring, the CBCF, with financial assistance from program sponsors State Farm Insurance, Fannie Mae Foundation, and CitiGroup Foundation, traveled to four Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to conduct the first SHOP events.

At Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi; Xavier University in New Orleans, Louisiana; Howard University in Washington, DC; and Hampton University in Hampton, VA, senior students were encouraged to participate in the American dream of homeownership as soon after graduation as possible.

The seminar, presented by CBCF Consultant Sterling Laylock, provides students with an objective view of the tremendous benefits associated with homeownership. It also provides students with the understanding that they can become homeowners



Participants in making the Hampton University SHOP event a success included (from left) Sterling Laylock, Sterling Financial Advisors; Dr. Bennie McMorris, Hampton University; Bonita Hunter, ReMax Realtors; H.H. Guthmiller, Wachovia Mortgage; Theodore Herring, Wachovia Mortgage; Simone Griffin, CBCF; Bonnie Boards, Bank One, and Cassandra Herring, Hampton University

with an entry-level income and some student loan debt, as long as they have the drive, discipline and commitment needed to reach this achievable goal.

Each HBCU provided a unique venue and process to ensure the success of the project. Jackson State University placed ads in the local newspaper highlighting the workshop, thereby opening it up to city residents. At Xavier University, SHOP participants were joined by Bonnie Boards of Bank One, an institution

that is donating certificates worth up to \$1,000 towards the closing costs associated with the purchase of a home. Ms. Boards attended the program and offered her perspective on the homeownership process from the viewpoint of a lender.

The workshop at Howard University was covered by BET Nightly News, and included valuable input from industry leaders. At the last site, Hampton University, more than seven hundred students attended the SHOP presentation, and

more than 100 were turned away for lack of space.

Local real estate industry leaders such as Wachovia Securities and ReMax Realtors were brought in to share their knowledge with the students. Wachovia also provided attendees with cash prizes.

The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc. will travel to twenty colleges and universities during the 2003-2004 school year to carry the message that seniors should strive to build wealth through homeownership after graduation. ■

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## Rep. Davis Supports Federal Government's Anti-Money Laundering Campaign

Rep. Danny K. Davis has announced his support for the federal government's new regulations and education campaign to combat money laundering.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) has in progress a nationwide campaign to inform money services businesses and the

American public about new anti-money-laundering regulations.

Every year, criminals find ways to move hundreds of millions of dollars through the nation's financial services

industry, including drug trafficking and terrorist financing.

Since 1970, Congress has passed a number of laws aimed at detecting and interrupting the flow of laundered funds. ■

## Congressman Wynn Sponsors 8th Annual Procurement Fair

More than 80 exhibitors from the public and private sector participated in the 8th annual Procurement Fair and Business Expo sponsored by Rep. Albert Wynn.

Held at the University of Maryland's Shady Grove campus, the Expo attracted over 400 small and minority business owners and entrepreneurs, who took advantage of the opportunity to network and exchange in-

formation on contracting and procurement opportunities.

Rep. Wynn was especially pleased that many government agencies were represented by their offices of small and disadvantaged business utilization. Agencies, including the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Pentagon Renovation, were on-hand to offer small busi-

ness owners advice on how to get a piece of the procurement pie.

One of the most popular seminars was "Doing Business with the Federal Government," conducted by Daniel Sturdivant from the Department of Treasury. Sturdivant offered advice on specific events and seminars that are essential for small and minority businesses to find out about

government contracting opportunities.

Stated Rep. Wynn, "This year's Expo was especially productive because we reached out to more small and minority owned businesses than ever. This event gives those who may not normally get their foot in the door the opportunity to one-stop shop for federal and private sector contracts." ■

### Rep. Davis Introduces Sickle Cell Treatment Act



Rep. Danny K. Davis has introduced the Sickle Cell Treatment Act of 2003. The bi-partisan bill is co-sponsored by two Republican colleagues, Reps. Richard Burr, Of North Carolina, and Rep. John Shimkus, of Illinois, and Rep. Bobby Rush.

Stated Rep. Davis, "This legislation is greatly needed because every year in my state of Illinois 130 children are affected, and another 3,800 African Americans live with Sickle Cell Disease everyday. It is my hope that this legislation will help save lives and minimize the pain that people with Sickle Cell Disease have to live with."

Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is an inherited disease that is a major health problem in the United States and primarily affects African Americans. More than two million Americans, mostly African Americans, have the Sickle Cell trait. Approximately, 70,000 Americans have (SCD) and 1,800 babies are born with the disease every year.

The Sickle Cell Treatment Act of 2003 will do the following:

- Provide federal matching funds for Sickle Cell Disease related services;
- Allow states to get a federal 50-50 match for non-medical expenses (e.g. genetic counseling) related to SCD treatment, and
- Create grant programs for 40 health centers nationally for education and treatment of SCD patients for each fiscal year. ■

### Rep. Chaka Fattah Announces Special Honor For the First African American To Serve in Congress

Rep. Chaka Fattah has announced that the Committee on House Administration will honor the first African American to take his seat in Congress by placing his portrait in the U.S. Capitol.

Rep. Joseph H. Rainey, son of a slave, was elected in a special election as a Republican to represent the First District of South Carolina in the House of Representatives in 1870. He was sworn in as a Member of the 41st Congress and soon joined the Committee on Freedmen's Affairs. He used his position to advocate an end to racial discrimination and using the military to protect black voters from violence perpetuated by the Ku Klux Klan. Rainey served until 1878.

Rep. Fattah led the effort for the House Administration Committee to make the decision to include Rep. Rainey's portrait among the more than 300 portraits in the U.S. Capitol. He said, "African American representation in the U.S. Congress is a continuing milestone towards a more perfect union. In recognizing the legacy of the first African American in Congress, we inspire future generations to serve."

Rep. Fattah added, "I want to thank Committee Chairman Bob Ney and former Ranking Member Steny Hoyer for their support in making this happen." ■

## CBCF Emerging Leaders Series Sponsors Hip Hop and Politics Forum At Towson State University



Participants in the Hip Hop and Politics Forum included (from left) Jahi, Rosa Clemente, Davey D, Farai Chideya, Jeff Johnson, Yvonne Bynoe and Omar Tyree.

The CBCF's Leadership Institute for Public Service recently sponsored a forum at Towson State University that brought together students, politicians, authors, entertainers, academicians, ordinary citizens and policy-makers in a rare and frank discussion of rap music's impact on the American public. "Hip Hop and Politics: Understanding the Political Potential of the Hip Hop Generation," was presented before an overflow crowd that engaged in a lively discussion.

"The music art form known as Hip Hop has had a tremendous influence on America's popular culture. So much so that those who grew up listening to this music form have been referred to as the 'hip hop generation.' The Foundation wanted to bring together a diverse group of experts

who would examine the influence the hip hop community has had on the political participation of its audience," said CBCF President Weldon J. Rougeau.

"This special event was an attempt to equip young participants with practical strategies that would be useful to them as they become more aware of, and involved in the political and social landscape around them. It was also designed to assist the members of this group we call "Generation X" with contributing to the policy-making process," said Kelly Owens, Director of CBCF's Leadership Institute for Public Service.

Panelists for the special event included: Rosa Clementé, Grassroots Organizer, scholar-activist and journalist. Farai Chideya, Political Correspondent who is also a multi-media journalist

having worked in print, television, and online. She is currently a Knight Fellow at Stanford University.

Panelist Yvonne Bynoe has been called one of the most important voices of her generation. The Source Magazine named Bynoe, one of its "Top 10 Political Players" in the nation in its 7th annual "Power" Issue (January 2003).

Davey D, a Hip Hop historian, journalist, deejay and community activist was an outspoken panelist. He attended UC Berkeley and began his radio career in the Bay Area. Talib Kweli, a Hip Hop Artist and community activist also served on the panel.

Jeffrey I. Johnson, a panelist who is one of the nations up and coming leaders, is the National Director of the Youth, College and Young Adult Division for the

NAACP, and is responsible for Youth Councils and College Chapters, representing over 60,000 young people nationwide. Omar Tyree is an author, publisher, lecturer and performance poet who completed his undergraduate studies at Howard University in Washington, D.C, with honors

CBCF/Toyota Fellow, Richard D. Giles II, who coordinated the forum, recently received dual Master's degrees from the School of Diplomacy & International Relations and the School of Public & Corporate Communications at Seton Hall University. He has studied abroad in Beijing, China, and served as an International Goodwill Ambassador while serving as a commissioned officer of the United States Army. This forum was sponsored by Toyota, Delta Airlines and Amtrak. ■

## Rep. Millender-McDonald Kicks Off National Bone Marrow Drive

Rep. Juanita Millender-McDonald recently kicked off a national bone marrow drive in conjunction with the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) and the National Conference of Black Mayors (NCBM).

An advocate of bone marrow transplants and also a registered bone marrow donor, Rep. Millender-McDonald has been sponsoring bone marrow drives since 1998 when she helped push legislation (H.R. 202) through the House of Representatives to provide additional funding to register mi-

norities and persons of mixed ancestries as bone marrow donors.

Some characteristics of tissue type are unique to people of specific ancestry. Although it's possible for an African American patient to match a donor from any racial or ethnic group, the most likely match is an African American donor.

"This partnership with the National Marrow Donor Program and the National Conference of Black Mayors is an innovative and timely project with the potential to save thousands of lives," said

Rep. Millender-McDonald. "As minorities, we often find ourselves getting the short end of the stick where health care is concerned. This project is vital especially for those suffering from diseases that disproportionately affect African Americans such as sickle cell anemia."

Bone marrow transplants have been successfully utilized in the treatment of other deadly diseases such as leukemia, lymphomas such as Hodgkin's disease, and immune deficiency disorders. Recent research has also proven that "mini-trans-

plants" can be used to treat sickle cell anemia and reduce the risk of donor tissue being rejected.

The bone marrow drive was announced in April at the NCBM annual convention in Houston, TX. The bone marrow drives that mayors around the country will host in their respective cities will be designed to increase awareness and appreciation for the dire need in our communities for more donors of color. The goal for the yearlong drive is 25,000 new donors. ■

## Haiti: A Continuing Crisis On Our Doorstep

*By Rep. Barbara Lee*

A humanitarian and medical crisis of massive proportions is ravaging one of our neighbors: Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Seventy-five percent of its 8.3 million people live in abject poverty. Its maternal death rates from childbirth are the highest in the world, as are the child malnutrition rates. Of all HIV/AIDS victims in the Caribbean, 90% are Haitian. People are dying from treatable, preventable diseases.

These numbers are so high because too few Haitians have access to medical care or safe water supplies. And when Haitians do seek treatment, their travels are often handicapped by poor roads that in many parts of the country are virtually impassable.

The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) has brought this crisis to the attention of the U.S. Congress, and the CBC's Haiti Task Force has attempted to remedy these problems. Representatives Conyers, Christian-Christensen, Waters, Meeks, and I have held meetings, sponsored legislation, and mounted a public education campaign on issues related to Haitian asylum seekers and immigrants, trade and economic development, and debt relief. We will continue our efforts to heal and strengthen Haiti.

We have also pushed for investments to develop Haiti's infrastructure, roads, and water resources, which would enable us to ease the country's health crisis. There *is* money

available. In fact, the Inter-American Development Bank has approved almost \$146 million in loans to Haiti. But that money has not been released because of politics. While we wait for the humanitarian aid to be released, thousands of Haitians will die.

In March, I introduced a resolution that calls for the \$146 million to be released, a resolution that already has almost 50 sponsors.

We are also continuing to educate our colleagues about the horrors of the situation, and the CBC Haiti Task Force recently held a Congressional forum with Madame Aristide, the First Lady of Haiti, to explain how serious the crisis is. Additionally, the CBC Haiti Task Force has met with key members of the Administration and the international financial institutions to help facilitate the release of these loans.

We must continue to engage and educate our fellow members of Congress and the public about the plight of the Haitian people.

We must also continue to seek opportunities to act to alleviate that suffering. This is a moral imperative.

As we have learned far too well, the seeds of political unrest and social violence are sown in despair. Haiti is our neighbor: those who don't quite believe that the humanitarian aspects of this tragedy warrant our immediate attention should consider the security ramifications. ■

# CBCF News

The Newsletter of the  
Congressional Black Caucus  
Foundation

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