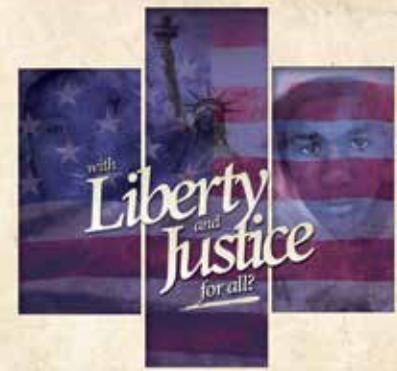


ALC Daily

HIGHLIGHTS

Official Daily Newspaper of the CBCF Annual Legislative Conference



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Obama Praises Black Women, Past and Present

President Obama thanks black women for their unheralded civil rights contributions, says issues of economic equality, criminal justice reform disproportionately affect black women and children.

By SHRITA STERLIN-HERNANDEZ

Capping a heartfelt evening of honoring the contributions of several black women to the Civil Rights Movement, President Barack Obama's keynote address at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Incorporated (CBCF) Annual Phoenix Awards Dinner, September 19, highlighted the often unheralded contributions black women have made in the past, and discussed

remedies for the inequalities they still face today.



President Barack Obama speaks at the CBCF Annual Phoenix Awards Dinner.

The president began his speech by citing his administration's achievements, and the support of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) in reaching them. "With your help, our businesses have created over 13 million new jobs. With your help, we've covered more than 16 million Americans with health insurance — many for the first time. ... Whatever I've accomplished, the

CBC has been there."

He then talked about the work left to do, with black unemployment being more than double than whites and millions of families still waiting to feel the recovery in their own lives.

"The great project of America is that perfecting our union is never finished. We've always got more work to do," he said. "The heroes of the Civil Rights Movement whom we lost last month remind us of the work that remains to be done. American heroes like Louis Stokes, and Julian Bond, and Amelia Boynton Robinson."

The president had joined Robinson in Selma, Alabama for the 50th anniversary of the historic march on that city.

Please see "PRES. OBAMA" on page 15

CBCF Honors Phoenix Awards Recipients

By ANNE WILLIAMS

The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation 45th Annual Legislative Conference closed on Saturday evening, September 19, with a gala dinner and fund raising event at the Washington Convention Center. The event was hosted by actors Nia Long and Larenz Tate. After introductory remarks by CBCF chair R. Donahue Peebles, CBC President G.K. Butterfield, CBCF president and CEO A. Shuanise Washington, and other dignitaries, Rep. John Lewis offered a moving eulogy for the late Julian Bond, his friend and colleague in the struggle for African-American rights for many years.

Prior to an address by President Barack Obama came the presentation of the 2015 Phoenix Awards. The CBC Body Award was presented to civil rights activist Amelia Boynton Robinson (posthumously; Dr. Robinson passed away in August, shortly after her 110th birthday). Dr. Robinson, who fought against disenfranchisement by holding black voter registration drives from the 1930s into the 1960s, became the first black woman from Alabama to seek a seat in Congress, in 1964. She joined forces with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to plan demonstrations



Juanita Abernathy left, receives her award from Rep. Joyce Beatty.

Please see "PHOENIX AWARDS" on page 12



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October 1, 2015



A. Shuanise Washington, President and CEO

Thank you for participating in the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Incorporated (CBCF) 45th Annual Legislative Conference (ALC). I hope you walked away from this conference inspired to lead positive change and armed with the resources needed to advance social and economic recovery in your local communities.

The conference attracted thousands of everyday Americans, diplomatic heads of state, international media, grassroots supporters, legislative bodies, entrepreneurs, educators, emerging leaders and, yes, even the president and first lady of the United States. We connected people from across the nation and around the world, inspiring thousands to take action and become civically engaged.

Our many issue forums, panels and braintrusts offered solutions to improve our economy, create jobs, increase educational opportunities, eliminate health disparities and sustain our environment with green technology.

Thanks to your support and involvement, the CBCF also increased opportunities for networking through our social media platforms and one-on-one conversations with ALC attendees. As we moved throughout the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, we heard deep hallway discussions about the sessions, saw engaging, informal gatherings and encountered an abundance of talent and motivation from African Americans of all ages.

Next year, we endeavor to reach an even higher pinnacle for the 46th ALC, and it is my hope that we extend our relationship beyond the annual September conference.

We have a number of upcoming events and projects underway. One initiative in particular is called [Policy Now](#), which is a virtual community of policy makers, thought leaders and civically engaged people. Policy Now will offer resources and real-time updates on public policy issues. We encourage you to explore the site and learn how this new endeavor might be beneficial to you.

For regular updates, connect with us through our social media platforms, digital newsletter and our brand new website, www.cbcfinc.org. You can also call us at 202-263-2800 or visit our historic offices when you are in the neighborhood.

I am looking forward to future opportunities to work together to elevate the influence of African Americans in the political, legislative and public policy arenas.

Sincerely,

A. Shuanise Washington
President and Chief Executive Officer, CBCF

Gospel Extravaganza Brings the South to the Nation's Capital

By KERLINE JULES

A long time staple of the Annual Legislative Conference (ALC), the Gospel Extravaganza took place at the United House of Prayer For All People the evening of Thursday, September 17.

An evening of music for the soul



Members of the United Community Choir of Orange Grove Missionary Baptist Church perform at the Gospel Extravaganza.

where politics meets the faith community, the Gospel Extravaganza showcased the best of southern gospel.

The worship and praise experience was co-hosted by congressional representatives from the south, Rep. James E. Clyburn (South Carolina), Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (Mississippi), Rep. Sanford D. Bishop Jr. (Georgia) and Rep. G.K. Butterfield (North Carolina).

Standing room only, the spiritually ignited evening presented the resounding sounds of North Carolina's United Choir of Orange Grove Missionary Baptist Church, Georgia's Patrick Lundy and the Ministers of Music - Georgia Connection, South Carolina's Denmark Technical College Choir, and South Carolina's Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church Choir.

Singing some of the gospel community's favorite songs such as Hezekiah Walker's "Every Praise" and "Let Everything That Has Breath" by Kurt Carr & the Kurt Carr Singers, concert attendees rose to their feet as the power of anointed praise was on full display.

The extravaganza was made possible by the generous support of Liberty Media Corporation, Liberty Interactive Corporation, Exxon Mobil Corporation, American Gaming Association, American Peanut Shellers Association, Association of Bermuda Insurers & Re-insurers, Bank of America Corporation,



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A strong element of the black religious experience, gospel music is the sound of reflection, the sound of hope, the sound of faith, the sound of strength and the sound of praise.



Above - Patrick Lundy and the Ministers of Music inspire the audience during the Gospel Extravaganza. Right - Audience members clap along as they enjoy the performances on Thursday, September 17.



25 to Life: Attendees View Documentary, Meet Film's Producer

By TIM PULLIAM

On Saturday, September 19, there was a screening of the award-winning documentary “25 to Life,” followed by a discussion of the film with journalist Ed Gordon, executive producer Ron Simons, and William Brawner, the subject of the film.

Will Brawner is an African-American man now in his late 30s. He was born and raised in Philadelphia by a single mother who, in order to work and attend school, regularly left him with caretakers. When he was three or four, one of these people abused him by submerging his feet and legs in scalding water, which resulted in weeks of hospitalization, multiple skin grafts, and at least one blood transfusion.

“I’ve lived with this for 25 years. I’m still strong, and I take my medications every day to stay that way. Being HIV positive isn’t a wonderful thing, but it does not have to be a death sentence.”

– William Brawner

This was just at the time that health authorities all over the world were becoming aware of a new disease, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, better known as AIDS, which results from infection by the human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV. By the time Brawner was about seven, it was becoming clear that HIV was in some cases being transmitted through blood

transfusions from donors who were not aware that they were infected—or, in the early days, that the disease even existed. Brawner’s mother was contacted by Pennsylvania Hospital, where the transfusion had taken place, and told she should bring him in to be tested. She did, and got bad news.

Public hysteria about AIDS was intense at the time. A slightly older boy from Indiana named Ryan White, who had contracted the virus the same way Brawner did, was being followed around by television cameramen and treated like a pariah. Brawner’s mother had no intention of seeing that happen to her child, and made a decision: they would tell no one that he was HIV positive. Except for one of her sisters and one of her brothers, she didn’t, and she instructed Brawner not to tell either.

So he didn’t. When he got to Howard University, as a bright, charismatic, attractive, and enthusiastically heterosexual young man, he still hadn’t told anybody. And, through four years of college and twenty or so sex partners, he continued not to tell anybody.

The film tells this story unflinchingly, through on-camera interviews with Brawner, his mother, his aunts, his close friends from Howard, and several of his girlfriends, some of whom have forgiven him and some of whom haven’t.

The film also tells the story of his decision to disclose his condition, his career as an AIDS/HIV activist and counselor, and his redemption, both through religion and the love of his wife (who knew the truth before they married and before they ever had sex; she was the first one he told). And it has a happy ending—to date, all of Brawner’s former lovers have tested negative for the virus.

In the post-screening discussion,



William Brawner, center, takes questions from the audience after the screening of a documentary based on his HIV diagnosis.

Brawner, who has come out of all this an articulate and impressive man, talked about the grim effects HIV and AIDS are having on the black community. The statistics aren’t good. Center for Disease Control estimates show that blacks account for almost half of all new infections in the United States each year (44 percent); approximately one in 16 black men will be diagnosed with HIV during their lifetimes, as will one in 32 black women. The rate of new HIV infections for black men is more than six times as high as the rate for white men, and more than twice that of Hispanic men.

Black women account for 13 percent of all new HIV infections and 64 percent of all new infections among women overall. The HIV incidence rate for black women is 20 times as high as

that of white women, and almost five times that of Hispanic women.

One of the causes of the disproportion, Brawner and Gordon agreed, is the level of denial around this entire issue. People don’t get tested because they don’t want to know—or even think about it—with the result that many find out they’re HIV positive when they develop AIDS and get so sick they have to see a doctor.

By which time it’s too late to do much for them. Brawner fiercely advocates for black people to have themselves tested, immediately. “I’ve lived with this for 25 years,” he said. “I’m still strong, and I take my medications every day to stay that way. Being HIV positive isn’t a wonderful thing, but it does not have to be a death sentence.”

Rep. Meeks Holds Workshop on Wealth Building in the African-American Community

By ERNIE JOLLY

On September 18, at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Incorporated (CBCF) 45th Annual Legislative Conference (ALC), Rep. Gregory W. Meeks (D-NY) convened a workshop on wealth building in the African-American community that drew a full house of business leaders and policymakers. The workshop included special remarks from Rep. Meeks, Carolyn Colvin, the acting commissioner of the Social Security Administration, and Scott M. Stringer, New York City’s comptroller.

In his opening remarks, Rep. Meeks discussed his legislative work on trade agreements and employment policy. The congressman stressed that lawmakers should push for an increase in the minimum wage, while also expanding opportunities for African Americans in high-wage sec-

tors including the technology and financial services industries. He also touched on his efforts to encourage federal pension funds, including the Thrift Savings Plan, to open doors for African-American asset management firms looking to invest on behalf of an increasingly diverse federal workforce.

Commissioner Colvin of the Social Security Administration focused her remarks on America’s retirement crisis and its implications for underserved and minority communities. She stressed the importance of saving early, and diversifying one’s retirement investments beyond the social security system.

Comptroller Stringer, who is the custodian for New York City’s five pension funds totaling \$160 billion in assets, talked about his office’s efforts to increase opportunities for African Americans in the financial services industry. New York City’s public pen-

sion system regularly allocates assets to minority- and women-owned money management firms who often outperform their larger counterparts. Furthermore, Comptroller Stringer has encouraged companies he invests the City’s funds in, including Apple, to increase diversity in their boardrooms.

The workshop concluded with a panel discussion moderated by Javier Saade of the Small Business Administration, where panelists discussed business opportunities for minority firms looking to work with international development institutions. Representatives from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Overseas Private Investments Corporation (OPIC), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and the United States Trade and Development all highlighted the work that their organizations are engaged in internationally and detailed their various procurement

processes.

Ultimately, participants left with a host of resources and information they could take back to their respective companies.

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A Fellowship in Faith: Thousands Break Bread During ALC Prayer Breakfast

By KERLINE JULES

With the spirit of worship, sounds of praise and an inspirational word to make a way, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Incorporated (CBCF) hosted the highly anticipated Annual Legislative Conference (ALC) Prayer Breakfast the morning of September 19, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.

From Fairfield, Alabama, guests were welcomed in with the praise and worship sounds of Miles College Choir, the Featured Choir for the 50th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Movement Celebration. For nearly three decades the CBCF has hosted the stirring signature event. A high note of the ALC, the Prayer Breakfast draws nearly 3,000 attendees each year. This year was no different, drawing lawmakers, business and civic leaders, celebrities, and concerned citizens. Also in attendance and receiving a standing ovation during the program was Vice President Joe Biden, who earlier was seen chatting with guests while also affably posing

for selfies. Special guests included civil rights advocates and the children of the late Dr. King Jr., Bernice King and Martin Luther III.

Co-hosted by Reps. Hakeem Jeffries and Terri A. Sewell, appearances were made by R. Donahue Peebles, chairman of the CBCF board of directors, A. Shuanise Washington, president & CEO of the CBCF, Rep. G.K. Butterfield, chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus and Lori George Billinsley, vice president of Community Relations, The Coca-Cola Company to name a few.

"The Prayer Breakfast is unique in that it brings our conference guests together in the spirit of worship," said A. Shuanise Washington, president and chief executive officer of the CBCF. "The breakfast provides an opportunity for thoughtful reflection and is welcomed respite from the very important work that occurs during the ALC. We are especially thankful for our title sponsor, The Coca-Cola Company, and the Radio One Family for their continued support of this uplifting event."



An attendee is moved by the music during the ALC Prayer Breakfast.

Stellar award-winning gospel singer VaShawn Mitchell, one of gospel music's shining stars, performed a couple of his chart topping hits, including "No Body Greater" the most played gospel song of 2011 and gospel hymn including "I Need Thee Every Hour" and "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior".

Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, III, senior pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, IL, and an accomplished author, speaker, and activist, delivered a charging keynote address entitled "Called to Make A Way". Moss' rousing address called for us to remember those that labored and sacrificed before us and to remember to make a way for those who are coming behind us. Moss highlighted some of the great pioneers in the black community making the point that they too sat on the shoulders of giants. "Keep your ego in check," preached Moss. Moss went on to share "You have to be comfortable to where God calls you." The keynote address was met with thunderous applause, loud cheers and a standing ovation.

Connecting faith and philanthropy, proceeds from the Prayer Breakfast will benefit the CBCF's many programs and initiatives.

Follow Kerline Jules on Twitter, @KerlineKJules.



VaShawn Mitchell performs during the ALC Prayer Breakfast.

Brother to Brother: Helping Young Black Men

By MICHAEL DUNCAN

The General Session Luncheon on Thursday, September 17, was devoted to a panel discussion on young black men, the pitfalls they encounter, and how to help them. Moderated by Judge Greg Mathis, the panel included Wesley Lowery of the Washington Post, who reported on and was briefly arrested during the recent unrest in Ferguson, Missouri, following the fatal police shooting of Michael Brown; New York Assemblyman Michael Blake of the Bronx; the Rev. Michael Watley, executive minister, Reid Temple A.M.E. Church; Damian "Chip" Dizard, a teacher at Baltimore's Digital Harbor High School; and ESPN announcer and former Baltimore Raven Ray Lewis.

Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (NY), co-chair of the 45th Annual Legislative Conference (ALC), gave brief introductory remarks during which he laid out the scope of the issue facing the panel. He told the story of a conversation he'd had with one

of his constituents, a young man who had done something wrong and been sentenced to a stretch in a prison in upstate New York. During the time he was incarcerated, he had made friends with one of the guards, a young white man from the area. On his last day in prison, as he was saying goodbye to his friend, the guard said, "I want to thank you."

"Thank me?" said the soon-to-be-freed prisoner. "For what?"

"For helping me buy my boat. And I'm sure someday my son will be thanking your son for helping him buy his boat."

Noting that black men are six times as likely to be incarcerated as white men, said Jeffries, "That's the expectation."

The question before the panel, of course, was how to confound that expectation. "I want to start with some good news," said Mathis. "Going all the way back to emancipation, every effort we've undertaken and struggled with, we've won. Emancipation? We won. The Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act? We won. We'll win this, too. The question is,

'How do we win?'"

Turning to specifics, Mathis asked members of the panel for their views on the ways the K-12 system affects young black men. One problem for the community, said Lewis, is getting young black men to stay in the educational system long enough for it to have an effect on them. "If you want to defeat the system," he said, "you have to educate your mind. Kids drop out of school before they understand what school is." Preventing that, he said, is the role of the family.

This was echoed by Watley, who said, "It starts with the church. The church is the foundation of the family, and the family is the foundation of the school system."

One thing that's sorely needed, the panel seemed to agree, is mutual accountability. If young men do wrong, fine, punish them. If policemen do wrong, they, too, should be punished. "There need to be consequences on both sides," said Watley.

ALC Daily

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**Let's
Go
Places**



Black Lives Matter: A Movement Finds its Voice

BY SHRITA STERLIN-HERNANDEZ

The title of Thursday's standing-room-only National Town Hall was "Black Lives Matter: Ending Racial Profiling, Police Brutality and Mass Incarceration." The panel discussion, which was both impassioned and thoughtful, was moderated by Roland Martin, host of NewsOne Now; panelists were Rep. Elijah Cummings (MD); Rep. G.K. Butterfield (NC), chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC); Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (TX); Judge Greg Mathis; Val Demings, former Orlando police chief; Alicia Garza, co-founder of the #BlackLivesMatter movement; and Alphonso Mayfield, a member of the International Executive Board of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), a co-host of the event.

After a brief opening ceremony, introductory remarks were given by the CBCF board chair R. Donahue Peebles; Butterfield; the co-chairs of the 45th Annual Legislative Conference (ALC), Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (NY) and Rep. Terri Sewell (AL); and Dr. Menna Demessie of the CBCF, standing in for chief executive officer A. Shuanise Washington.

Jeffries set the tone of the morning: "We are in a battle for the well-being of our community. At this National Town Hall meeting, and as we move forward,



Alicia Garza discusses the #BlackLivesMatter movement during the National Town Hall.

we are here to devise, perfect and amplify a plan of action." His comment was echoed by Sewell: "The question we have to ask ourselves is, 'Are we ready for a program that really will give us substantive change?'"

With that, the panelists came on and, under Martin's firm and candid guidance, set itself the task of articulating what exactly the #BlackLivesMatter movement is.

"It's not just a hashtag," Garza said. The organization, she said, was founded in 2013 in response to the Trayvon Martin case in Florida. It now has 26 local chapters, which are working in their communities around issues of education, employment, police brutality and violence. "We are advancing policy at the local and state level," she said, "and we are also trying to change the conditions and the culture in our communities."



National Town Hall panelists, from left, Alphonso Mayfield, Alicia Garza, Val Demings, Judge Greg Mathis, Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, and Rep. G. K. Butterfield.

Cummings commented, "They took a moment in our history and turned it into a movement. And the thing that I am so grateful for is that they have taken our pain and turned it into a passion." With, he noted, some help from 21st century technology. "If it weren't for the iPhone," he said, "we'd still only be having one side of a conversation."

Garza was equally clear about what #BlackLivesMatter is not. "We are not—as Fox News says—a hate group or a band of terrorists. We do not advocate, nor do we call for, the murder of law enforcement personnel. We want to be clear that the conversation that Fox News and other conservative pundits are trying to advance is intentional. It's designed to distract and to remove credibility from a movement that is having an impact not just nationally but internationally."

One of the biggest problems, Butterfield said, both at the state and the federal level, is that when young offenders are arrested and charged with a crime, there's a tendency to pile on charges. "A 16-year-old may have been arrested for simple possession of marijuana," he said. "But by the time it gets to court it's possession of marijuana, felony possession of marijuana, possession with intent to sell and deliver marijuana, conspiracy to sell marijuana, and on and on. This poor kid stays in jail for a year with a court-appointed lawyer who walks in and says, 'I've got a plea bargain for you. You plead to eight charges, and the other ten charges will be dismissed.' The young fellow says, 'Yes, I'll take it,' and signs on the dotted line and does his time. Then he goes out into the world of work and is doomed for life."

In black community relations with the police, Martin turned to former po-

lice chief Demings. Isn't it imperative, he asked her, for good cops to open their mouths and not stay silent when bad cops do bad things?

"I've been in law enforcement for 27 years," she said. "I took two oaths: one as a police officer and one as chief of police. In both cases I took an oath that I would serve and protect my community and preserve life. I spent every day on the job trying to do that. I believe that evil only happens in the world when good people sit back and are silent. Every good police officer—this isn't just something I'm saying today; it's something I've said many times before—every good police officer should speak out against those who are doing wrong, because they are making it bad for everybody. And let me just say this: the police are just as much a part of your community as your neighbors are. This isn't just a police problem. It's

a community problem."

Which brought the conversation around to solutions. Yes, it's a problem—or more accurately, a set of problems. What do you do? Butterfield commented that the problems the National Town Hall addressed are not entirely susceptible to the kind of solutions that were found by the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. "There is," he said, "a principle called federalism. We here in Congress cannot tell the states how to construct their criminal justice systems. The #BlackLivesMatter movement must put pressure on state legislatures and state government."

Nonetheless, as Garza pointed out, the U.S. Department of Justice has said that there is room for the federal government to assume greater oversight of state and local law enforcement. And, said Cummings, there actually is bipartisan support for criminal



Rep. Elijah Cummings comments on the role of 21st century technology in the #BlackLivesMatter movement.

justice reform. There's a lot of work to do, but there's hope.

"If we do the policy," said Lee, "I believe that #BlackLivesMatter can be the same provocateurs that schooled a president named Lyndon Baines Johnson on the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. And I want to encourage them. As Rep. John Lewis said, never give up, never give in and never give out."





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Celebration of Leadership Connects Arts, Civic Engagement

By KERLINE JULES

With the sole purpose of recognizing African-American accomplishments in the arts, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Incorporated (CBCF) hosted the 19th Annual Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Spouses Celebration of Leadership in the Fine Arts on Wednesday, September 16. Held at Sidney Harman Hall in Washington, D.C., this year's esteemed honorees included poet Haki Madhubuti, artist Clarence Major, activist Peggy Cooper Cafritz and musician Frédéric Yonnet.

"The cultural achievements and contributions of African-American artists are an inextricable part of the American story," said A. Shuanise Washington, CBCF president and chief executive officer, in a prepared statement. "Through the Celebration of Leadership in the Fine Arts, the CBCF and the CBC Spouses recognize artists whose creativity and ingenuity reflect the African-American experience while contributing to our nation's wider culture."

Staying true to the arts, attendees were treated to heartfelt performances by cellist Lindsey Sharpe, vocalist Olusola Fadiran and—by audience request—a spur-of-the-moment harmonica presentation by Yonnet.

Hosted by WUSA anchor Andrea Roane, the evening also included a passionate panel discussion with the



Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Incorporated (CBCF) board members, CBC Spouses, honorees, and scholarship recipients gather at the 19th Annual CBC Spouses Celebration of Leadership in the Fine Arts.

honorees on the importance of art in our culture, the art community's connection to civic engagement, and current affairs such as #BlackLivesMatter.

During the discussion, Madhubuti expressed that the conditions of the African diaspora are no different from where they were 40 to 50 years ago. Madhubuti continued to expound that the biggest challenges to the black community are wealth, access to wealth and how we lack the institutions to sup-

port wealth creation in our community.

Cooper Cafritz connected the arts to advocacy.

"As artists, it is important for us to engage our people to vote," she said. "We as a people must vote. We must get people to run for office who are sensitive to our people's issues." She went on to speak about the #BlackLivesMatter movement, expounding on how the movement's aggression keeps it visible and in the news.

"We each have an obligation to be and remain angry," Cooper Cafritz said. "Anger, more than hope, drives us to action... purposeful anger."

The panel discussion culminated with a dialogue on the importance of advocating for arts in our schools. The honorees expressed how the push for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education is important, but we cannot move forward without our humanities subjects. Culture is the sum total of what and who we are. We cannot depend on the schools as it relates to the arts.

Following the panel discussion, attendees enjoyed a vibrant band performance while enjoying refreshments and networking with lawmakers, business and civic leaders, and concerned citizens.

Celebrating with a purpose, the proceeds from this ALC signature event will go towards providing scholarships to students pursuing visual and performing arts.

"The CBC Spouses are proud that the proceeds from this event will go toward providing scholarships for young, emerging talent," said event chair Dr. Maya Rockey Moore Cummings. "They need our support to move the legacy of African-American art forward for generations to come."

The evening was sponsored by The Walt Disney Company, in addition to BET Networks, Viacom and Heineken.

ALC Daily welcomes submissions from a number of guest bloggers during ALC '15.

Emerging Leaders - Power to the People: Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders

By JAY JACKSON

@MrJay_Jackson
www.mrjayjackson.com/the-transformation-hour/

As we hit the midway point of this year's conference, I felt that ALC '15 has been discussing the real issues facing real people in the African-American community. During the Emerging Leaders - Power to the People: Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders session on Thursday, September 17, one panelist remarked, "some black people do what they want while others beg for what they need."

This statement provoked a few questions I'd like to pose to you the reader. Why do some of us approach what we want, differently than we approach what we need? Is this why there's a huge disparity between the haves and the have nots amongst the African-American community? I'd also like to know, "Why do so few of us take the re-

sponsibility of leadership when we all have the obligation to lead in some capacity?"

Whether in our homes, churches, political offices or thousands of business organizations across the globe, we are all charged to seek leadership opportunities. Furthermore, we must prepare the next generation of leaders by affording them the opportunity to learn from us as their mentors and coaches. When we educate those that follow us on how to be effective leaders, we truly give power to the people.

It starts by giving them opportunities to experience leadership roles at an early age. We have to enforce the belief that anything is possible. We must encourage the discovery and utilization of their gifts and talents to bring increase to the world we live in. That we are no longer limited to mechanical and carpentry job opportunities.

One of the major ways we can all support this effort is through the encouragement of science technology



Panelists share a laugh during the Emerging Leaders Town Hall.

engineering math (STEM) education for both our emerging and seasoned leaders. We must reach our emerging leaders where they are, by making a concerted effort to bridge the gap of knowledge, skills and abilities between our emerging and seasoned leaders. To do so, I believe both parties must understand how each group delivers tremendous value to

the other.

We must understand that we can no longer combat issues with the mindset of our parents and grandparents as we move forward. We must exercise a, "transformational approach to leadership" and break the status quo to reach the future generation where they are and support them in building their future.



Ava Duvernay
Arts & Entertainment
(not shown)

Jeff Johnson
Trailblazer

Marvin Sapp
Living Legend

Marc Morial
Humanitarian

Carolyn Hunter
Owner-Operator

Tori Turner
Community Choice
Youth Award Winner

Aaron Johnson
Community Choice
Youth Award Winner

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All-Important Question Mark of ALC '15 Theme Impassions Speakers

By SHRITA STERLIN-HERNANDEZ

Though most media events focus on statements, the opening press conference of the CBCF 45th Annual Legislative Conference (ALC), held on Wednesday, September 16, honed in on a question instead.

Several of the distinguished speakers at the event noted that the theme for this year's ALC, "With Liberty and Justice for All?" ends with an all-important question mark—highlighting the work still to be done.

Each year, said R. Donahue Peebles, chair of the CBCF Board of Directors, the chosen theme helps inform "the focus, form and framework of the ALC."

This year, "It pays homage to the Pledge of Allegiance, a national symbol of indivisibility and a promise of equal rights and freedom for all Americans," he said. "Ending the phrase with a question makes us ask a timely and valid question about the civil, economic and social inequities and challenges that African Americans continue to face today. The fact that we can ask the question highlights the irony that, in 2015, we actually have to ask it. No one can deny progress has been made, but more than 50 years after the passage of the Civil Rights Act, we still have a long way to go."

Further, the challenges are interwoven.

"We cannot address education unless we attend to poverty and how it affects our access to education," he said. "We cannot address poverty and the lack of quality health care in our

community unless we address economic disparity and the lack of access to capital that many black businesses experience every day. We cannot address the issue of police brutality without a thorough discussion around the criminal justice system as a whole. And we cannot talk about environmental sustainability in black communities unless we address the poverty that often prevents it from being a high priority."

If we truly believe that black lives matter, Peebles continued, the issues must be tackled simultaneously—and that's what makes the ALC so critical.

What the ALC does best, added Co-Chair Rep. Terri Sewell (AL), is educate, inform and hopefully motivate the community to look for forward-facing solutions.

"I can't say enough about liberty and justice for all and the question mark," she said. "This conference will unravel that. There are lots of pervasive issues on justice: environmental justice, criminal justice, economic justice. It's really important that we talk and start a national dialogue about it all."

Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (NY), meanwhile, co-chair of ALC '15 with Sewell, spoke briefly about black America at a crossroads in 2015. He ran through the names of recent victims such as Trayvon Martin and Tamir Rice, who have painfully reminded the community of needed change in recent years. He also talked about inequities in the criminal justice system overall.

"The CBC, under the leadership of Rep. G.K. Butterfield, is working diligently to fix our broken criminal justice system, to deal with mass incarceration and man-



datory minimums that handcuff justice so often in our communities," Jeffries said. "And we're pleased that so many others beyond the Congressional Black Caucus are prepared to come together out of recognition that we, as a country, are better than the criminal justice system that we have right now. There's an economic cost to it in terms of the loss of human capital. And at end of day, unless we fix our broken criminal justice system, we know that the answer to the question of liberty and justice for all is not one that we as Americans can embrace."

CBC Chair Rep. Butterfield (NC), for his part, noted that CBC members are

"fighting every day to address the issues that all of you are concerned about."

"The CBC, ladies and gentleman, is more focused than ever on issues impacting the African-American community," he said. "And we are always very careful to stress 'African-American' community. We are not the Congressional Minority Caucus. Even though we support every ethnic minority that exists and we support their empowerment and their success, our mission is the Congressional Black Caucus.... We know firsthand that America's promise for equality has not been realized by all."

Phoenix Awards

Continued from page 1

against the prevailing conditions in the South; at one of these demonstrations, the famous march from Selma to Montgomery known as Bloody Sunday, she was beaten unconscious by Alabama state troopers. This event led Lyndon Johnson to push the 1965 Voting Rights



Rev. Dr. William Barber, II, left, receives the CBC Chair Award from Rep. G. K. Butterfield, Jr., chair, the Congressional Black Caucus.

Act through Congress; Dr. Robinson was a guest of honor at the signing of the bill.

The ALC Co-Chairs Award was presented to Fred Gray, who represented Rosa Parks after her arrest for refusing to surrender her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama to a white passenger. He played a key role in defending the rights of the victims in the Tuskegee Institute case in which black men were infected with syphilis without their knowledge, and has had a long career in litigating to end segregation and discrimination. "I am grateful and humbled to receive this award," said Gray. "I am appreciative, because this comes after 60 years of practicing law to destroy everything that is segregation. I accept this award in the name of the students who can now receive a non-segregated education. I accept on behalf of those whose names never appear in print or on television, but who made the sacrifices that made it possible for

us to be here tonight."

The recipient of the CBC Chair Award was Rev. Dr. William Barber, II. Barber was instrumental in the release of the Wilmington Ten and has been a mainstay in the national grassroots movement for educational, economic, and equal justice for some 20 years. "I receive this award not for myself," said Dr. Gray, "but on behalf of the host of youth and adult volunteers that allow me to serve with them. I accept on behalf of the Christian clergy, and rabbis and imams and more than a thousand people, white and black and young and old and brown and gay and straight and wealthy and poor who engage in civil disobedience, dissenting against the extremist attacks of our legislators against the poor, the sick, the unemployed, the LGBTQ community, women, and those to whom they would deny public education and voting rights."

The George Thomas "Mickey" Leland Award was presented to Juanita Abernathy. The widow of civil rights activist Rev. Ralph Abernathy, she helped organize and lead the historic Montgomery Buy Boycott in her home state of Alabama from 1955 to 1956.

In retaliation for the boycott, the Abernathy's home was bombed in January of 1957; Rev. Abernathy's church was bombed the same night. "We've come a long way over the years, but let's not be lulled to sleep. Civil rights matter. Black lives matter. Voting rights matter. We walked 50 miles from Selma to Montgomery, and there are people who will not drive 15 minutes to the polling place. That is a blood ballot. People suffered and died for us to have it. I challenge you tonight to keep on pressing forward, because we've got a long, long way to go."

The CBCF Chair Award was presented to Alpha Phi Alpha for its diligence in cementing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy with a memorial on the National Mall in Washington. Work on fundraising and obtaining a site began in 1983 and culminated nearly 30 years later, on August 28, 2011, when the memorial was dedicated. Mark Tillman, general president of the national board of Alpha Phi Alpha, accepted the award on behalf of the organization.

"The honorees this year," said Washington, "truly embody the spirit of sacrifice, service, and leadership to our country and underserved communities."



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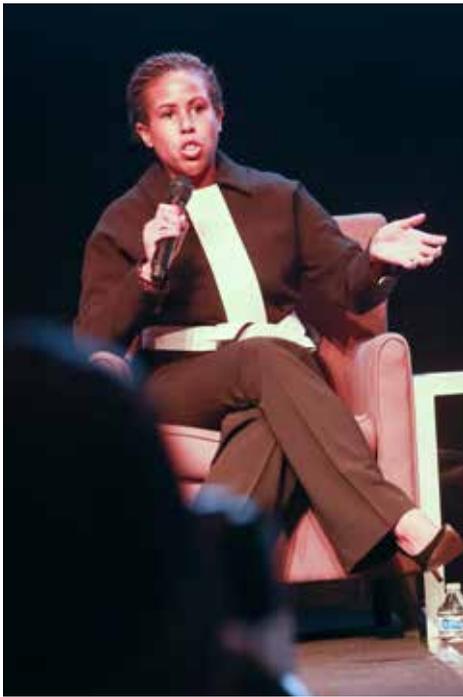
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The Missing Link: African-American Inclusion in Tech

By LATASHA H. LEE

Rep. G.K. Butterfield (NC) and Rep. Barbara Lee (CA) hosted a Tech Talk on Thursday, September 17, entitled "A Blueprint for African American Inclusion." This well-attended TED Talk-styled presentation and subsequent panel discussion was focused on diversity in the technology industry and featured Van Jones,



Angel Rich answers a question during the panel discussion.

president and co-founder of Dream Corps; Andrea Hoffman, founder of Culture Shift Labs; the Rev. Jesse Jackson, founder and president, Rainbow PUSH Coalition; Angel Rich, founder of Wealth Factory Inc.; Jamal Simmons, co-founder of CRVIII Inc. (create); Harrison Harvey, a student at Head-Royce School; and Olivia Zama, a student at Eleanor Roosevelt High School.

Jones opened the session with the assertion that "there is a dirty secret that is rarely discussed in our community when we think about power, change and the future.... It is no longer being addressed in policy decisions. Rather, the future is being written in

computer code in Silicon Valley." By 2020 there will be 1.4 million new jobs in the technology industry, many of which will go unfilled.

More than two years ago, studies highlighting the paucity and near absence of people of color, especially African Americans, in the technology industry were released. While African Americans represent 13.2 percent of the U.S. population, we represent less than 5 percent of people employed in tech. Jackson stated that we are in the fourth stage of the black movement. The first movement was ending legalized slavery, then there was fighting Jim Crow, and third was gaining the right to vote. Now we are fighting to gain access to capital. Technology is a multi-billion-dollar industry which lacks diversity. Thus, technology is not only a means by which we communicate, shop and explore the world around us, but also an opportunity for our community to fulfill Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream of economic equality, opportunity and prosperity for our community.

"We ... African Americans are a missing link in the tech industry,"



Olivia Zama shares her experiences as a student at Eleanor Roosevelt High School.

CBCF Joins Work on Tech Inclusion

By MICHAEL DUNCAN

When the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) introduced its Tech 2020 initiative, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Incorporated (CBCF) saw a natural intersection with its own work and quickly aligned.

The CBCF's Leadership Institute offers a number of programs designed to enhance STEM career opportunities, including fellowships, internships and a China study abroad program. Fellowships place emerging leaders in Capitol Hill offices, working on key issues like energy, health and technology among others.

In addition, the foundation's Center for Policy Analysis and Research (CPAR) has stepped up to research issues that will provide insight into issues affecting African-American participation in STEM jobs.

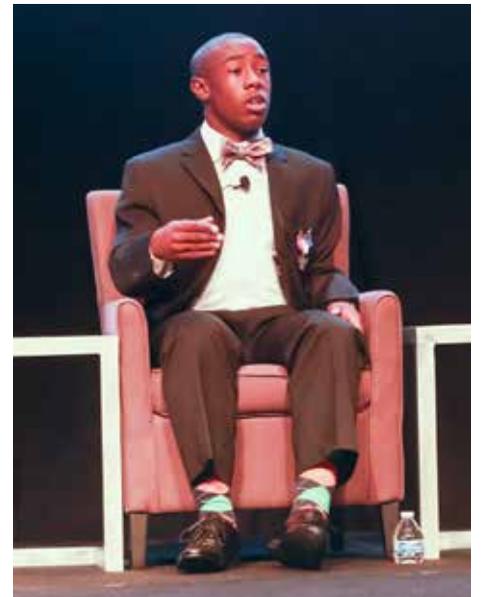
One report will explore the systemic causes and identify strategies to improve African-American representation. Another CPAR report will investigate the readiness of historically black college and university STEM programs, including operations, growth and funding.

Working along with the National Society of Black Engineers, CPAR will look at creating an employment training toolkit to organize and implement community engagement opportunities.

Butterfield said. "It is not until we have inclusion that we will see America unlink its true potential." This issue is a high priority of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and the Tech 2020 Diversity Initiative, which Butterfield and Lee are co-leading. This initiative provides a blueprint for achieving diversity in the tech industry. It calls for change; it is not just about building the pipeline but also about keeping African Americans in the pipeline. Also highlighted was a need for vendor diversity within the contracts that tech companies enter. Butterfield, Lee and Jackson all suggested that more companies need to produce diversity reports, and compliance with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is needed.

The Tech Talk ended with a panel discussion of students and industry leaders sharing initiatives and programs they have either started or participated in that promote workforce diversity in the tech field. These accomplished young people and entrepreneurs are the keys to unlocking

America's innovation. In the next eight years, we can expect a 1 million person deficit in filling tech jobs. Thus, we must continue to encourage our young people to serve as this missing link by pursuing careers in tech.



Harrison Harvey joins the conversation during the panel discussion that closed out Tech Talk.

Community Breakfast and Health Fair Feeds Body, Spirit, Calls Attention to Homelessness

By TIM PULLIAM

Whether it's a hot cup of coffee, the peace of mind that comes from preventative health care or the soul-stirring sounds of a gospel choir, the Community Breakfast and Health Fair on Thursday, September 17, helped fulfill the work of the Central Union Mission: to serve the hungry, hurting and homeless.

The mission, nestled in the shadow of the U.S. Capitol building, was the site of the annual event, hosted by the Congressional Black Caucus

(CBC) Spouses.

"This is a privilege for us," said David Treadwell, the mission's executive director. "It's a special privilege when you get to do it the second time. It means folks must have had a good time the first time. This room was designed for occasions like this."

And it was a full room as those served by the mission's numerous programs packed in for a breakfast served by the CBC Spouses. On its face, it is something the mission does frequently—in 2014 they provided more than 1.15 million meals—but this event stands out.

"The CBCF and the CBC members know and understand the importance of giving back to the community," said Tonya Veasey, chairperson of the CBC Spouses. "I love to walk in here and see the faces of the people who then see that we care. They see that we haven't forgotten about them."

There were plenty of opportunities to make memories over breakfast, which stretched over multiple courses. In between dishing out eggs, legendary Washington Redskins running back Clinton Portis took photos and talked football with attendees. The Sears Holdings Associate Gospel Choir provided an

inspirational backdrop, with a number of rousing gospel songs.

The music is what has kept Willie Leake coming back to the Community Breakfast and Health Fair for several years. A regular at the Central Union Mission, Leake said the mission has "been helping me for a long time. I enjoy coming to the meals."

She also intended to take advantage of the health fair, which provided flu shots and basic preventative care. She planned to have her blood pressure checked again. Though she has

Please see "BREAKFAST" on page 16

ASPIRE

Two of the most inspiring networks
on television congratulate the

 *Congressional Black Caucus*
FOUNDATION

on 45 years of success and for its
tremendous contributions toward
promoting diversity and inclusion.


uplifting
entertainment

President Obama

Continued from page 1

“As we crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge, I held Ms. Amelia’s hand. And I thought about her and all the extraordinary women like her who were really the life force of the movement.”

Even though women were “doing the work that nobody else wanted to do,” Obama noted their absence from the original 1963 March on Washington program. “When pressed, male organizers added a tribute highlighting six women — none of them who were asked to make a speech. Daisy Bates introduced her fellow honorees in just 142 words, written by a man.” Two separate parades were held — male leaders marching along the main route on Pennsylvania Avenue, and leaders like Dorothy Height and Rosa Parks relegated to Independence Avenue. “America’s most important march against segregation had its own version of separation,” Obama said.

Black women were also central in the fight for women’s rights, from suffrage to the feminist movement, the president reminded. “Their work to expand civil rights opened the doors of opportunity, not just for African Americans but for all women, for all of us — black and white, Latino and Asian, LGBT and straight, for our first Americans and our newest Americans. And their contributions in every field all made us stronger.”

And there’s been progress. Obama said the number of black women-owned businesses has skyrocketed, black women have ascended the ranks of every industry, teen pregnancy rates among girls of color are down, and high school and four-year college graduation rates are up.

Still, real and persistent challenges remain. “The unemployment rate is over 8 percent for black women. And they’re overrepresented in low-paying jobs; underrepresented in management. They often lack access to economic necessities like paid leave and quality, affordable child care.

They often don’t get the same quality health care that they need, and have higher rates of certain chronic diseases — although that’s starting to change with Obamacare,” the president said, chiding critics by adding, “It’s working, by the way, people. Just in case you needed to know.”

Obama also recounted a different type of challenge: social prejudice and stereotypes. Obama said First Lady Michelle Obama was told in her youth that she shouldn’t aspire to go to the very best universities. “We all have to be louder than the voices that are telling our girls they’re not good enough — that they’ve got to look a certain way, or they’ve got to act a certain way, or set their goals at a certain level. We’ve got to affirm their sense of self-worth, and make them feel visible and beautiful, and understood and loved,” the president said.

Obama said his administration’s investment in job training and apprenticeships will help everybody, but will particularly help women earn better-paying jobs, particularly in non-traditional careers. “It’s why we’re investing in getting more girls, and



The festive atmosphere is evident as attendees greet each other prior to the dinner.

particularly girls of color interested in STEM fields — math and science and engineering — and help more of them stay on track in school.”

Closing the economic gaps that black women face is a priority. “It makes



Phoenix Awards Dinner attendees stand for the singing of the Star Spangled Banner.

a mockery of our economy when black women make 30 fewer cents for every dollar a white man earns. That adds up to thousands of dollars in missed income that determines whether a family can pay for a home, or pay for college for their kids, or save for retirement, or give their kids a better life.”

Eliminating the pay gap, raising the minimum wage which disproportionately affects women, expanding tax credits, closing tax loopholes and expanding paid leave to employees of federal contractors are all examples of this progress, he said.

The president then addressed the inequity in our criminal justice system. “This summer ... I visited a prison in Oklahoma. ... I sat down with the inmates, and I listened to their stories. And one of the things that struck me was the crushing burden their incarceration has placed not just on their prospects for the future, but also for their families, the women in their lives, children being raised without a father in the home; the crushing regret these men felt over the children that they left behind,” Obama said.

The impact the criminal justice system has on women is also significant, Obama said. “The incarceration rate for black women is twice as high as the rate for white women. Many women in prison ... have been victims of homelessness and domestic violence, and in some cases human trafficking,” he said. “We don’t often talk about how society treats black women and girls before they end up in prison. They’re suspended at higher rates than white boys and all other girls. And while boys face the school-to-prison pipeline, a lot of girls are facing a more sinister sexual abuse-to-prison pipeline. Victims of early sexual abuse are more likely to fail in school, which can lead to sexual exploitation, which can lead to prison.”

But the president applauds law enforcement officers. “I’ve said it a lot, unwaveringly, all the time: Our law enforcement officers do outstanding work

in an incredibly difficult and dangerous job. They put their lives on the line for our safety. We appreciate them and we love them. That’s why my Task Force on 21st Century Policing made a set of recommendations that I want to see implemented to improve their safety, as well as to make sure that our criminal justice system is being applied fairly. Officers show uncommon bravery in our communities every single day. They deserve our respect.”

In closing, President Obama expressed optimism in the nation’s addressing these issues.

“If our history has taught us anything, it’s taught us that when we come together, when we’re working with a sense of purpose, when we are listening to one another, when we assume the best in each other rather than the worst, then change happens,” he said.

And then he brought it all home.

“Like every parent, I can’t help to see the world increasingly through my daughters’ eyes. And on that day, when we were celebrating that incredible march in Selma, I had Ms. Amelia’s hand in one of my hands, but Michelle had Sasha’s hand, and my mother-in-law had Malia’s hand — and it was a chain across generations,” he said. “And I thought about all those women who came before us, who risked everything for life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness, so often without notice, so often without fanfare. Their names never made the history books. All those women who cleaned somebody else’s house, or looked after somebody else’s children, did somebody else’s laundry, and then got home and did it again, and then went to church and cooked — and then they were marching.”

Obama said that because of them, “Michelle could cross that bridge. And because of them, they brought them along, and Malia and Sasha can cross that bridge. And that tells me that if we follow their example, we’re going to cross more bridges in the future. If we keep moving forward, hand in hand, God willing, my daughters’ children will be able to cross that bridge in an America that’s more free, and more just, and more prosperous than the one that we inherited. Your children will, too.”



Rep. Charles Rangel is honored at the Phoenix Awards Dinner. Click [here](#) to read ALC Daily’s interview with Rep. Rangel about his ALC memories.



Avoice Workshop Questions Students, Encourages Engagement

By ANNE B. WILLIAMS

Slightly more than a dozen high school students, plus a few recent graduates, gathered on Wednesday, September 16, at the National Archives for an interactive learning and discussion session entitled Women of the CBC. Sponsored by the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association and Dell, the session was presented by Avoice, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Incorporated's (CBCF) online archive devoted to the history of the participation and contribution of African Americans in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate.

Attendees were welcomed to the National Archives by Maria Marable-Bunch, director, Education and Public Programs, National Archives and Records Administration. While the agency's primary mission is to preserve, and provide access to, critical federal government documents, Marable-Bunch noted that it has a second important function as well: educating the public on the history of the United States and the responsibilities of its citizens. "Your role as a citizen," she said, "is ensuring the rights of *all* citizens."

This comment was echoed by the morning's keynote speaker, Rep. Alma Adams (NC). "One of the most important things a citizen can do," she said, "is register and vote. Policymakers make policy, but voters make policymakers." Rep. Adams, the newest member of the Congressional Black Caucus—she was elected last November after a bruising seven-way primary in which she beat six men—is the 100th woman to be elected

to the U.S. House of Representatives in its history.

And though she technically is a freshman representative, Rep. Adams is hardly a newcomer to politics. She was the first African-American woman to be elected to the Greensboro City School Board, after which she ran for and was elected to the city council, after which she served 22 years in the North Carolina State Assembly. Speaking to the students, the majority of whom were women, she said, "We do need a voice, and I want to encourage some of you to run for public office. It's like Margaret Thatcher once said: 'If you want something said, ask a man. If you want something done, ask a woman.'"

In a Q&A session after her remarks, Rep. Adams, who has a Ph.D. in art education and multicultural education and is a former professor of art at Bennett College, was asked about her legislative goals for education. "Access is important," she said, "but affordability is just as important. It's not like it was when I was in college; many of my students work full time, or have children, or both." In this connection she raised the much-discussed issue of student debt. "I think there's a role for government in this," she said. "If we can bail out some of these other folks, we can bail out students."

Rep. Adams was followed by Kenyatta Albeny, a contractor for the CBCF and a writer for Avoice. Albeny, who just completed a Ph.D. in comparative literature at the University of Maryland, College Park, began asking the students—and everyone else in the room—to briefly introduce themselves. She invoked a rule she called "do it in two:" say your name



Students complete an online activity during Women of the CBC on Wednesday, September 16, at the National Archives. The session was presented by Avoice.

and two facts about yourself and let it go at that.

That taken care of, the group moved on to the workshop itself. Students were provided with a list of questions about the Congressional Black Caucus. Some samples: What organization—a predecessor to the Congressional Black Caucus—did African-American Congress members form in 1969? Which three states had more than one representative among the founding members of the CBC? How many founders were women? What districts did they represent? How many CBC members are there in the current (114th) Congress? How many of them are women?

Students worked in informal teams to answer these questions. When all were

complete, the session took on a slightly more competitive tone. Students worked individually, racing to produce the most right answers, and were—if they succeeded—rewarded with prizes. This section of the workshop was called Women of the Congressional Black Caucus.

ALC Daily invites our readers to test their own knowledge with a sampling: Name at least two Congresswomen who serve on the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. Name at least five who served in state legislatures before serving in Congress. Name at least three who earned at least one college degree in Ohio. Name at least one with a degree from Yale.

Answers can be checked on the Avoice site, www.avoiceonline.org.

Match Fair Connects Small Businesses with Contracts



Landing government and corporate contracts can be the lifeblood for a small business. Ensuring that the door is opened for minority- and women-owned businesses was the goal of the third annual Meet and Match Procurement Fair on Friday, September 18, which puts businesses in touch with leaders in the public and private sectors. "They are all prepared to not just shake your hand," said Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (TX), honorary co-host of the event. Some 30 contractors—ranging from Shell to the U.S. Postal Service—were on hand for mini-meetings with business owners, pictured above. "The CBCF has accepted that the economic engine of America is all of you," Jackson Lee said. "And you can dig into communities with high unemployment rates when you get business." For those in attendance who weren't quite ready for government contracts, Jackson Lee suggested they spend the next year "getting your financial house in order," through business and financial planning. "And come here next year ready to do business."

Breakfast

Continued from page 14

high blood pressure typically, last year's event showed that it was well managed. She hoped for the same good results again.

Her friend Clara Exum also is a repeat attendee at the mission and the CBCF breakfast. "I see people I haven't seen in a while," she said. Having the CBC Spouses there to serve her makes her feel good. "Some people just want to run in and then run out. They're here to work and they seem happy about it."

The mission is equally happy to receive the efforts of the CBC Spouses. The location on Massachusetts Avenue is relatively new for the 131-year-old organization. Since it moved two years ago, "the dynamics of the population changed considerably," said Wanda Spence, the mission's director of administration. "We're near Union Station and there seems to be a lot of homelessness in this area."

She's seen the Hispanic and senior populations increase as demographics have changed. She points to a young mother cradling her infant and several seasoned citizens. But it is the veteran population that has been the most pronounced—and disappointing—increase. "Many groups that are in the district that are wanting to do more for them," Spence said. "They know veterans shouldn't be homeless, not a one."

R. Donahue Peebles, chairman of the



Former Washington Redskins' Clinton Portis (left) and Tonya Veasey, chair of CBC Spouses serve food at the Community Breakfast and Health Fair

CBCF Board of Directors, noted the irony that anyone is homeless in the world's most prosperous country. He noted his work with the CBC founders while an intern on Capitol Hill, and remarked that events like the Community Breakfast and Health Fair would meet their goals in founding the organization. "Here we are, 50 years after the Civil Rights Act passage and we're in the nation's capital of the greatest country in the world. And we're in a mission where men and women are homeless. I'm proud to be involved with the spouses, who remind us of the great debt that our country owes to every one of its citizens."