



SANKOFA NEWSLETTER

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Caution: Willie Lynch Wouldn't Want You to Read This!

BEWARE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 665: "KICKIN IT" MAY CAUSE GETTING KICKED OUT

By Stephanie Durrett & Rehema Gray, Ph.D.

"I have a fool proof method for controlling your Black slaves...The Black slave, after receiving this indoctrination shall carry on and will become self-refueling and self-generating for hundreds of years, maybe thousands." (From 1712 Speech by Willie Lynch)

Stop...If you are able to read this, then you have achieved much more than that of our enslaved foreparents. If this were the 1800's, we would not only be uneducated but thwarted in our quest for education. Reading and writing were illegal, violating the slave codes, and the plantation edicts spelled out in the Machiavellian "Willie Lynch" letter to plantation owners for keeping Blacks enslaved in body and mind. Blacks were not allowed to get an education, because with education comes knowledge, and with knowledge comes power. As an African-American college student, you need to know how powerful you are, and that you have already

overcome formidable structural barriers designed to keep you in a disadvantaged position.

Students of color in poorer schools or school districts are institutionally disadvantaged by problems of inadequate college preparatory resources. A policy report by Stanford University appropriately titled, Betraying the College Dream: How Disconnected K-12 and Postsecondary Education Systems Undermine Student Aspirations, conducted a study of six states, and identified these pertinent discontinuities and inequalities in academic resources: 1) Multiple and confusing assessments; 2) Disconnected curricula; 3) Student, parent, K-12

educator misunderstandings about college; 4) Inadequate college resources & connections with postsecondary institutions; 5) Inequitable college preparatory opportunities for all students; 6) Lack of college counseling for all students. National achievement data compiled in 2001 by the Educational Trust, Inc. illustrates the disparities among students who complete the basic A-F curriculum for college eligibility. African-Americans and Latinos are less likely to complete (28% African-American; 41% white; 58% Asian; 24% Latino) the required coursework.

(See E.O. 665, page 2)

SKY'S THE LIMIT: EXCELLING AS A SINGLE PARENT

By Nakea Jeter

Against all odds, African-Americans have made great strides and contributions in politics, career advancements and education. However, feats often unrecognized are those who succeed in multitasking in the

demanding roles of a college student and a single parent. Being a single parent means having no spouse in the home and raising your children solo. This debatable topic provides conflicting arguments on whether or not one can

excel in their studies while managing a household, children and a full time job simultaneously. It is a thought that may never cross someone's mind or a situation that one may find grim.

(See Sky, page 2)

Inside this issue:

<i>Beware of Executive Order 665 'Kickin It' May Cause Getting Kicked Out</i>	1
<i>Sky's the Limit: Excelling as a Single Parent</i>	1
<i>Educational Path to Success: Lessons From Dr. Ben Carson</i>	2
<i>Crisis in Sudan</i>	3
<i>Life After 'Vote or Die': Election 2004</i>	3
<i>Complexities of the HIV/AIDS Crisis for Women of Color</i>	4
<i>Dream Big: Interview of a Former African-American VP At Dreamworks</i>	7

▲ Features ▲

● Pathways to Excellence	2
● Pan African Political Crossroads	3
● Health & Nutrition	4
● Black Economic Empowerment	5
● Listen Up	6
● Entertainment Milestones	7
● Chillin at CSUN	20

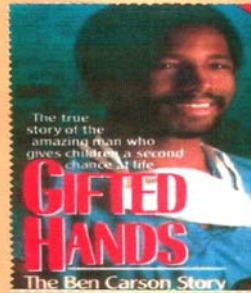
EDUCATIONAL PATH TO SUCCESS: LESSONS FROM DR. BEN CARSON

By Karen Pownall

Attending college and maintaining high grades can be a difficult task. But consider if during your grade school years you were unable to read, did very poor in class,

a volatile Black male, and had the nickname of "Dummy." This is the early life that formed the world's greatest neurosurgeon, Dr. Benjamin A. Carson. Dr. Carson was born September 18, 1951 to a single mother, Ms. Sonya Carson, in Detroit, Michigan. All the odds were against young Benjamin and his brother. His mother had a 3rd grade education and was unable to read, the family lived below the poverty level, and there was an inordinate amount of crime occurring around him. As expected, the young Benjamin began along the road to failure. Sonya Carson recognized the diverting study habits of her sons, and quickly gained control by limiting

their television and play time, and requiring that they read two library books per week. Dr. Carson was noted saying "I hated reading, but after several months of doing those **book reports**, I realized that through reading I could be anywhere, in my mind."



Benjamin S. Carson, M.D
Pediatric Neurosurgeon
Johns Hopkins Hospital

After graduating high school with honors, Carson was accepted to Yale University where he obtained a B.A. degree in Psychology. Carson transferred to the University of Michigan Medical School where he later shifted from psychiatry to neurosurgery. In 1983, at the mere age of 33 years, Dr. Carson became the Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at the prestigious Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

Four years later Carson made medical history with an operation that separated Siamese twins conjoined at the back of the cranium. He has also made several major innovative contributions to the surgical field. Carson contrived the first intrauterine procedure that could relieve pressure on the brain of a hydrocephalic fetal twin.

(See Dr. Ben Carson, page 8)

BEWARE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 665, FROM PAGE 1

These findings suggest that African-American students, already comprising the minority of college applicants, will in the future be even less competitive than their peers for college admissions. Furthermore, in a study of California's Black college students (Stony the Road We Trod), Walter Allen states that

My plan is guaranteed, and the good thing about this plan is that if used intensely for one year, the slaves themselves will remain perpetually distrustful.

(Speech by Willie Lynch in 1712)

greater academic challenges impede college graduation because of more limited academic preparation at the high school level.

Structural inequalities are exacerbated in California without affirmative action courses, and an increased reliance on standardized

screening tests for admissions and graduation. In overcoming these entrenched societal hurdles, you may very well be considered *public enemy number one*. Education is a right that we won through struggle, and was not given to us. Education is freedom. It is freedom from mental and financial oppression, freedom from the stereotypical notions that Blacks aren't intelligent and freedom from the defeatist idea that we can't thrive in this society. (See 665, page 9)

SKY'S THE LIMIT, FROM PAGE 1

The non-traditional category of a single parent/student is often overlooked.

In 1986, two parents ran nine out of ten households in the U.S. Today almost one-third of the households in America are headed by single parents, among which 86% are women. While these percentages are extremely high, they are topped by the fact that 50% of two parent families will end up being single parent families, and 50% of

children born today will live in a single parent family at some point in their childhood. The most recent studies of the U.S Census Bureau show that 58% of African American males and females are single parents. When the numbers are broken down, there are 12,687,000 female and 4,028,000 male single parent households in the U. S. With this in mind, it is no wonder why single parents seek alternatives to life, such as going to college.

The reality of raising children in a single parent home does not have to affect one's goals for achievement. Although there has not been much research conducted on the number of African American women who are pregnant who plan on attending college, nearly two thirds of African American independent students attending college have dependents. In addition to that, nearly two thirds of these students are single parents. (See Sky, page 8)

CRISIS IN SUDAN

BY ALEXANDRIA BARABINA

Genocide....Civil war.... Religious extermination....Crimes against humanity....Slave trafficking... Land alienation and power struggle for oil... All of these charges have been used to describe the current crisis in Sudan. Located in East Africa, Sudan has a population of more than 30 million people. In spatial terms, Sudan is the largest country in Africa, and is about one-quarter the size of the United States. Occupying a large expanse of the Sahara and Nubian Deserts, it is 918,000 square miles, and is the location where the rushing waters of the Blue Nile meet the majestic White Nile, as the famed labyrinth of the Nile River flows north through Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea. Historically, Sudan occupies the former site of Nubia, a flourishing African empire that reigned (along with Kemet or ancient Egypt) during Antiquity. Thus the indigenous African cultures in the Sudan predate, by thousands of years, the Arab invasion (740 A.C.E.) and penetration of Islam in Africa. Its contemporary population comprises 52% African, 39% Arab, and 9% other groups. The indigenous African people most affected by this crisis are the Fur, Zaghawa, and the Masalit. In spatial patterns the conflict is between the Islamic north and the traditional African south.



Map of Sudan with the historical landmarks of the Nubian Desert, Blue Nile & White Nile Rivers

Like all present-day African countries (except Ethiopia), the Sudan was formed as a geographical entity during European colonialism. Since gaining independence from England on January 1, 1956, several constitutions have been adopted and dismissed.

In spatial patterns the conflict is between the Islamic north and the traditional African south.

Also embroiled in a 21-year civil war, Sudan is considered a politically unstable land. It is torn between political and ethnic ideologies rooted in religious division between traditional Africans and acculturated black Arabs or Muslims. The traditional Africans are Black and they practice traditional African religions, and have retained African languages as their primary cultural identity. The Sudanese (Sunni) Muslims, or Arabs as they call themselves, also are Black but practice Islam, have adopted Arabic as their primary language, and have assumed Arab ethnic identity. These "Arabs" have formed a militia and have been terrorizing the traditional African people in the southern section of the Sudan. Although for the last 20 years the country has been divided between the Sunni Muslims in the north and the traditional religious Africans in the south, the physical conflict and massive displacement of the traditional Africans has escalated tremendously in the past two years. The Muslims have violently driven traditional Africans, particularly the farmers, off of their own property. Since the onset of this civil war, an estimated two million people have lost lives, and four million people have been displaced.

(See Crisis, page 10)

LIFE AFTER 'VOTE OR DIE:' ELECTION 2004

BY MIRTA POWELL

The 2004 election was most unforgettable because of its drive and passion to encourage young people to vote. Minorities, particularly young minorities are not aware of how much their vote really counts. Rap star, Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, adopted a hard-hitting campaign slogan this year as he attempted to convince members of the hip-hop generation to go to the polls in November's Presidential election. Founded by this businessman, entertainer, actor, pro-

ducer, and designer Combs, Citizen Change is a national, non-profit organization created to educate, motivate, and empower more than 42 million Americans aged 18 to 30 years that were eligible to vote on November 2nd-also know as the "forgotten ones." Citizen Change had one mission: to make voting relevant to the young people and minorities who could rule the world if only they knew the power they possessed. Mobilizing the hip-hop generation with the

campaign's urgent **Vote or Die!** message, Diddy created a "coalition of the willing" that included media powerhouses, the fashion world, and notable celebrities like Jay-Z, Leonardo DiCaprio, Jamie Foxx, Ellen DeGeneres, Ashton Kutcher, 50 Cent, Mary J Blige, Drew Barrymore, Tony Hawk, Jada-kiss, Hilary Duff, Yoko Ono, Alicia Keys, Kanye West, and others.

(See Vote, page 10)

Complexities of the HIV/AIDS Crisis for Women of Color

By Pearl Celious-Shareef

The HIV/AIDS crisis is a complex issue and exhibits dichotomous disease patterns. There are two contradictory faces of the HIV/AIDS crisis. In Africa the HIV/AIDS pandemic has afflicted the heterosexual population. However, in the U.S., the HIV/AIDS crisis emerged in the white male homosexual community and among intravenous drug users, before spreading to the general heterosexual society. What is HIV and AIDS, and why is it so complicated to identify its etiology and provide effective preventive and treatment health care resources?

According to the MAYO References Services, the human immunodeficiency "virus (HIV) is transmitted through sexual contact, by exposure to blood (including sharing contami-

nated needles and syringes) or certain blood products, or from an infected mother to her fetus or child during the perinatal period. There are two types of the human immunodeficiency virus. HIV Type 1 is common in the United States; then HIV Type 2 is prevalent in Africa. HIV is believed to attack t-cells, which are considered the protec-



tors of one's immune system, and it is believed that this virus activates antibodies by penetrating the t-cells and transforms them into "virus factories" that attack the infected t-cells. Eventually, t-cells are diminished and then cannot do their job of fighting germs. An HIV infection is generally diagnosed in the United States by a test (e.g. ELISA and Western Blot) that detects the presence of HIV antibodies, in lieu of the actual virus. In Africa, an HIV diagnosis is usually based on a clinical case definition from the presence of certain combinations of symptoms, such as fever, coughing, and persistent diarrhea.

(See HIV/AIDS, Page 13)

Tips for Health Living

Adapted from the American Institute for Cancer Research Newsletter

1. EAT YOUR FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.
2. KEEP MOVING.
3. FAT FREE DOES NOT EQUAL CALORIE FREE.
4. GIVE YOUR FOOD THE ATTENTION IT DESERVES.
5. SNACK FROM A PLATE, NOT THE BOX.
6. "HEY UP THERE, CAN YOU HEAR ME?"
7. ADDRESS EMOTIONS.

RECIPES FOR WELLNESS

By Stephanie Durrett

8. LEFTOVERS ARE GOOD!
9. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS "NOW I'VE BLOWN IT"
10. TAKE THINGS SLOWLY.

Seafood Gumbo

Ingredients:

- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup oil
- 1 pound shrimp, cleaned, peeled and deveined

- 1 pound crawfish tails, cleaned and deveined
- 1 pound white-fleshed fish fillets, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2 to 3 cups chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped scallions (green onions)
- 1 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 4 to 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 lemon, halved and seeded
- 3 quarts seafood stock (see above)
- Salt, black pepper and hot sauce to taste
- Plenty of cooked rice
- File powder

- First chop your vegetables and parsley, mince the garlic, and put your stock in a pot on a back burner.
- Now make a nice dark roux. Once you've made the roux, cooked the onion, scallions, bell pepper, celery, parsley and garlic in it, and blended in your hot seafood stock little by little, reduce the heat to a simmer.
- Add the lemon halves and seasonings, including black pepper and hot sauce. After tasting and correcting the seasonings, simmer, covered, for an hour or so, stirring occasionally, before adding the seafood.

Free Fun Activities for

- * Arboretum of L.A. Co.
- * Autry Museum of Western Heritage
- * CA Science Center
- * Craft & Folk Art Museum

Good Mental Health

- * Getty Center
- * Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens
- * L.A. Co. Museum of Art



How do you Roc your Wear? Hip-Hop Icons 'Makin it' in the Fashion Industry

By Nakea Jeter

With so much competition in the fashion industry, how can multiple designers maintain their position at the top of the trend market? Several hip-hop icons have begun testing the waters in retail, and their ideas and creations have become extremely popular with their fans and admirers. Innovative styles have been formed to express the hip-hop culture of the African American community. However, the fashion, like the music, has cross-market appeal. Despite the recent success of hip-hop moguls in the fashion industry, the overall record of these ventures is mixed. Some endeavors have flopped due to the shifting changes

in fashion and competition from other new hip hop clothing labels, while others have been successful, like *Roca-Wear*, the *Phat* lines, and *Sean John*.

Roca-Wear has stepped on the scene and taken over. With the Dynamic Duo consisting of Damon Dash and Jay-Z, their creative ideas can not be stopped. With the flame logo, they have created apparel for both women and men. The women's line includes various styles ranging from sexy to street. Their line includes jeans that accentuate the figure and accessories, like purses and belts, with trendy looks

and funky detailing. The male line steps on the scene with fitted caps, t-shirts rocking the *Roca-Wear* logo and outerwear for those days when a jacket is a necessity.

(See Roc, page 17)



1. Obtain your 3 FREE credit reports from the nationwide consumer reporting agencies
2. Review the reports and highlight any negative information.
3. Dispute any negative information in a formal complaint to the reporting agency.
4. Under the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act the agency must investigate your dispute within 30 days or delete it.
5. Negotiate settlement payoff amounts with creditors and collection agencies.
6. When filing your dispute, compose own your letter, instead of

Moneywise: Ten Tips To Help Clean Up Your Credit

By Karen Pownall

- using the credit agency's form.
7. Send your dispute by certified mail with a return receipt request.
8. Add pertinent information to your credit file by writing a letter (up to 100 words) on positive information not be reported.
9. If you have too much debt, contact the Consumer Credit Counseling (CCC) office, they will make small payment arrangements with the creditors for you, usually interest and late fees will cease when CCC handles the account.

10. Try to limit applying for new credit until you have made the necessary repairs, inquiries hurt your overall credit score.

Consumer Reporting Agencies:

Experian, P.O. Box 2002
Allen, TX. 75013; 888/397-3742

TransUnion Corporation, P.O. Box 1000, Chester, PA. 19022
800/888-4213

Equifax, Inc. P.O. Box 740241
Atlanta, GA. 30374 800/ 685-1111

Effective 12-1-2004, the Federal Trade Commission announced that consumers in California may obtain a compiled annual credit profile by these companies at this Web site.
<http://www.annualcreditreport.com/>

STARTING SMALL, BUT DREAMING BIG AT CSUN

By Conrad Jones

CSUN campus life is made up of class, study time, organizations and parties. Club parties are the main source of off-campus entertainment. These parties gain the attention of CSUN college students because party promoters spend time and money circulating flyers and disseminating invitations by word of mouth to these social events. Two CSUN students,

Johnny Cruz (alumnus) and Chike (current) work hard as event planners to keep other CSUN students well entertained during the school year. As a CSUN graduate, Johnny Cruz (2004 promoter of the year) currently serves as CEO the of *Los Angeles Street Team*, an exclusive urban lifestyle marketing and promotions company in Los Angeles

Angeles. Chike is the founder of *Made Men Entertainment*, and full-time college student at CSUN. With a smart combination of location, audience targeting and business promotion, these young men have created financially profitable businesses using contacts already available to them on-campus.

(See Starting, page 16)

ARE YOU READY FOR LOVE?

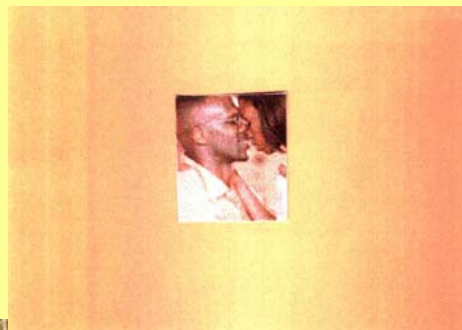
By Mirta Powell

Do you know exactly where you want to go in life and with whom you want to share your world, but you're having difficulty finding a way to get there? You know exactly what you want out of life, but the loving soul mate that you desire is nowhere in sight. Well, maybe your vision is unclear, and your purpose in life is not quite defined— not to mention your hopes for that romantic relationship are slowly fading. It is obvious that everyone wants to experience the light of love, but the question is are you ready?

Love will eventually overwhelm you, and renovate your entire life (in a good way of course). Unfortunately, most of us won't be in a place to recognize this wonderful experience or understand the impact when it's happening, because love seldom shows up in the places that we expect. Many of us

may miss the shift because of our unrealistic expectations about love. The truth is that until you learn to understand your desires, you are never going to find the love so desperately sought. Love is hidden in your heart, and no relationship with anyone can expose it or trigger it in your life. It has to be something you connect with on your own first.

It is important for us to work hard and become aware of who we are, especially before we enter into a love relationship. As an individual you



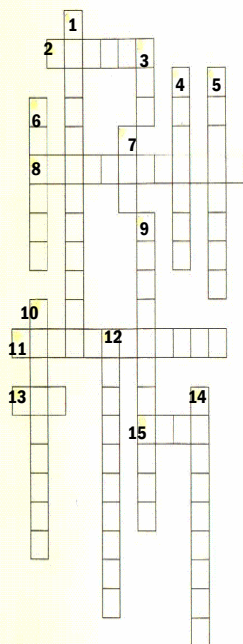
must accept yourself for everything that you are. Believe me it's not easy work; as a matter of fact it is often painful and very frightening. You have to take the time to reflect, evaluate and unlearn many of your personal beliefs about love.

Let's "be real" here, life is all about love. Loving relationships comprise the essence of life. However, neither life nor love requires us to give up our dignity, self worth or career objectives. Sometimes it is hard for us to understand this, because we tend to think that love requires us to sacrifice and give up a part of ourselves in order to attain our soul mate. We do not recognize that the main demonstration of love is the experience and realization of giving more of who you already are by the

(See Love, page 17)

HIP-HOP & R&B PUZZLE

Hip-Hop and R&B Crossover



POETRY

By Alexandria Barabin

And he was beautiful

And he was beautiful
But didn't know it
Or didn't realize it always
So he purchased expensive threads of cotton
and silk
To cloak his obsessive search for self identity
His fashionable things and his flashy bling
Blinded everyone from his insecure inner being
It got to the point that even he was caught up

In the fabric of his fabricated life.
Clubbing
Searching
Dancing
Hurting
Empty.
Looking for food that would feed his soul
Looking for fuel that would make him full
'Cause he always drove his car around with the
gas gauge
Only 1 bar above E

HIP-HOP PUZZLE QUESTIONS

- Across
- 2. The "King of Crunk"
 - 8. Rapper/Actress which hosts a film entitled "Mama Africa"
 - 11. Destiny Child quote, "My body is too..."
 - 13. A popular black television station
 - 15. R&B singer-songwriter-producer raised in Senegal, West Africa

(See Puzzle, page 12)

But, then what do the fabulous in poverty do
When they must go to work and eat
For himself he sought out fulfilling water
That would make his belly feel full of real meat
Eating oatmeal and grits for dinner so as not
to wake up hungry
Because the weekend is coming and the hot
spot
has a cover charge: \$10
But the first two drinks are on the house so
it's all good
And he searches to find freedom at the bottom
of his margarita glass
And in the middle of a crowded dance floor.
(See Poetry, Page 19)

DREAM BIG: INTERVIEW OF A FORMER AFRICAN-AMERICAN VICE PRESIDENT AT DREAMWORKS BY Conrad Jones

Maximizing one's profit is an ultimate goal for those in the entertainment industry. There are plenty of ups and downs of this business. Producers and executives want to make it big and become the leading light. Everyone wants to be recognized for "doing it big." For a prospective African-American business person what do you do when most corporations do not embrace diversity? The response is that you must turn to entrepreneurship. Many business savvy people choose to go into business for themselves; they want to fulfill aspirations of living their lives to the fullest. Entrepreneurship is one of the most difficult undertakings, and success is often unpredictable. However, the thought of becoming your own boss can be too intriguing to pass up. Having the power to dictate your own career, and creating a financial future, is what entrepreneurship is all about. Ownership is key in this business.

I interviewed Bruce Walker, former Sr. Vice President of Motown and General Manager of Urban Music DreamWorks Records. In a bold entrepreneurial move, he is now president of his own recently-formed company, B & B Entertainment. This is a summary of my interview with him about his business and the entertainment industry.

How did your organization form?

Well, after leaving DreamWorks re-

cords, I decided I wanted to start my own business. Businesses are changing, and are fusing with television. Television is a great asset for a record label because you're able to gain more exposure.

What is your organization mainly about?

We do musical and television production, as well as marketing and consulting.

What influenced you to begin your own organization?

I was tired of dealing with the internal politics of corporations.

What are some of the pressures young black entrepreneurs may run into when starting their own organization?

Finances are the main pressure you will run into. My advice when starting your own business is not to use your own money. Don't focus or settle for a rapid growth, focus on a continuous growth. Expect a profit of only 1/10 of your assets you have in mind, so develop your business plan on the 1/10 profit margin. For African-Americans, color needs to be recognized as a stumbling block as well,

For African-Americans, color needs to be recognized as a stumbling block as well, because there is no racial diversity.

because there is no racial diversity. This entrainment industry is controlled mainly by white and Jewish executives. Then the television business is primarily run by gay and lesbians executives.

Do you have any advice to students that are trying to follow your lead?

The entertainment industry is the most competitive, political and hardest to become financially successful. Its growth is based directly on the economy—maintaining a balance of maximizing gains and minimizing losses. Basically, it requires developing a quality product that the consumer desires and is compelled to purchase.

What are some of the important steps for young Black entrepreneurs to take in order to become successful?

Get educated on business first, and then take an extensive look at the marketplace. Survey the market to determine consumers and executives needs. They want to see what makes your product most desirable and compelling.

An article in June, 2003 *Black Enterprise*, "The Resurgence of Black Business in America," observes that more African-Americans are striking out and forming their own businesses.

(See Dream, page 15)

I just came home from viewing "Ray" and all I can say is WOW! I admit that I knew most of the pertinent facts about the life of Raymond Charles Robinson. However, I didn't have a clue about the profundity of his triumphs over the tragedies and obstacles in his life. I'm happy to say that this assignment turned out to be a fortuitous and gratifying experience.

"Ray" provided the viewer with a glimpse into his impoverished

MOVIE REVIEWS: "RAY" By Pearl Celious-Shareef

family background, an understanding of his feelings of guilt associated with the drowning of his younger brother, his loss of faith pursuant to his blindness, the pressures attendant to being a blind Black artist performing in and traveling through the "Jim Crow"

U.S.A., and the fears that propelled him to use/abuse and ultimately become addicted to heroin. It also gave the audience an understanding of his strength—as he withstood the conspiracy between the local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, which were determined to destroy him.

(See "Ray", page 16)

DR. BEN CARSON, FROM PAGE 2

(Carson, from page 2)

He completed a successful hemispherectomy, that alleviates suffering of infants from continual seizures, resulting in half of their brain removed (the remaining half compensates for the removed half). This is an extremely delicate and complex procedure, which gives children without hope a chance for a normal life. Dr. Carson later authored two books, *Gifted Hands* (his autobiography) and *Think Big*. Currently Dr. Carson offers a scholarship program to high school students and is a mentor to thousands across the country. The young child who was once referred to as "Dummy" now has rewarding life and a flourishing career at the apex of the medical profession.

This brief biography of Dr. Benjamin Carson is pertinent to understanding the significance of continual education, and that the road to

success is there but with encouragement it doesn't have to be a lonely road. Many students, janitors, scientists and even prisoners can identify with some aspect of Dr. Carson's life, however encouragement and perseverance determined his results. Very often people seek the wrong outlets to deal with their perceived incompetence instead of seeking the right resolution.

As our daily lives are surrounded with various negative societal influences, they are easily alleviated when we step beyond them by making educated decisions. Unfortunately, many parents who are overwhelmed with working and maintaining a family simply do not encourage their children to take the extra step "at-home" to improve on their reading or math abilities. Once these children fall behind if they are not encouraged to catch up and excel, they will probably lose inter-

est in school and find solace elsewhere, usually in gangs.

In 2003, an estimated 2,085,679 men and women were incarcerated within the United States. The majority of this astronomical figure is minority and lacking basic education. As the African American male remains over-represented in numerous "negative" populations, we must attempt to correct this stigma by fully educating ourselves and our children.

Education is as vital to our lives as food and water. To continue growing we must nourish our minds with valuable information, which we need for developing successful and rewarding lives. Dr. Benjamin Carson was not a miracle, but he was encouraged to excel. Fortunately, his life's story is a beacon for all of us.



(Sky, from page 2)

Although becoming a single parent is not often a decision that one would usually make, it has its benefits such as discovering the capabilities that you once may have never thought existed. Single parents tend to be more self-reliant and less dependent on others to provide for their children. Granted, being a single parent/student does have its difficulties; it is not always a stroll through the park. Financial struggles may occur, stress will increase and the pressure will most definitely be felt. There are key strategies for overcoming what may seem like a humongous educational hurdle:

1) **Do your research:** conduct searches on the internet for scholarships from different organizations that may sponsor single parents. Pell grants and student loans are also available for students with dependents.

2) **Know your college campus:** Many campuses offer day care facilities or early childhood development centers for students near or around campus. There is also

funding for students through the financial aid department where money for day care is determined by your income. If funding is a problem, some schools offer volunteer services at the daycare center in exchange for a reduced rate or even free child care.

3) **Remember that you are a parent first:** Your child is your first priority! Set up a schedule where you allot a certain amount of

*"With your drive for education,
the sky's the limit"*

time for your child and your studies; and do not overlap these two roles. Be attentive to your child's needs. Seek support from other family members when stressful academic demands arise, class reports, midterms or finals. Be prepared to have a babysitter arranged during unique conditions. Stay involved!

4) **Leave the parenting outside of the classroom:** When you are at school stay focused on school! Alert your professor in advance about your situation in order to work out a mutual agreement of what to do in case of an emergency (e.g. illness, accidents, or child care problems). Although some profes-

sors are empathetic, they are not obligated to work around your schedule, so do not abuse their kindness.

5) **Enjoy the college /parental experience:** remember that the drive to excel in higher education is something that should be celebrated and enjoyed. Balancing responsibilities for your child and studies may be a difficult task; and you may feel that you are torn between two priorities. However, keep in mind that you are learning and growing more in every aspect of your life. Focus on the fact that you are flourishing as parent and as a student, which is a complex task that many people cannot manage. After completion of grueling assignments, give yourself a special treat. You are a wonderful parent and student who deserves a round of applause.

The storm may seem endless and the battle may appear to be overwhelming, however, do not be dismayed. Keep in mind that without struggle, there is no progress. You can and you will excel. By means of hard work and determination you can and will succeed, just have faith in yourself and in all that you attempt. With your drive for education, the sky's the limit!



EXECUTIVE ORDER 665, FROM PAGE 2

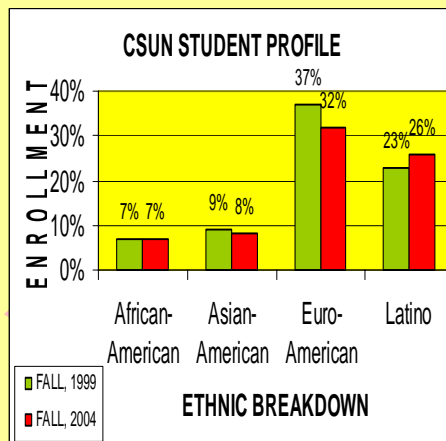
(665, from page 1)

African-American freshmen students this is a special cautionary message for you, particularly those who I see “kickin it” near Sierra Hall between 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on a daily basis. Realize that the “Willie Lynch method” and Executive Order 665 are hidden hurdles lurking in the shadows for those students who underestimate the serious business of getting a college education. You should seize the power and get serious, before you are “stopped out” (or expelled) by Executive Order 665, which is a major challenge for many freshmen enrolled in remedial courses. The CSU system seeks to reduce the amount of money spent on the remedial courses. In other words, they are not shelling out any more money on educating the so-called underachieving students.

Initiated by the California State University (CSU) trustees, effective Fall, 1998, Executive Order 665 is a policy mandating that students pass an English Placement Test (EPT) and an Elementary Level Mathematics (ELM) competency exam at the end of their freshmen year, unless exempted. After acceptance into the CSU system, based on assessment of grades and SAT or ACT scores, students may need to take the EPT and ELM-- and a “below average” score on either of these tests requires placement in remedial or developmental classes. Referred to as “09 classes,” these remedial courses are offered for “credit/ no credit” and do not count toward graduation requirements. A “credit” in these courses is required for one’s advancement to the regular general education courses, which do count toward graduation. Students are given two semesters to fully complete the remedial education classes. Receiving a “no credit” (signifying failure) in these courses can result in being “stopped out” (meaning disqualified or kicked out) of school by the University.

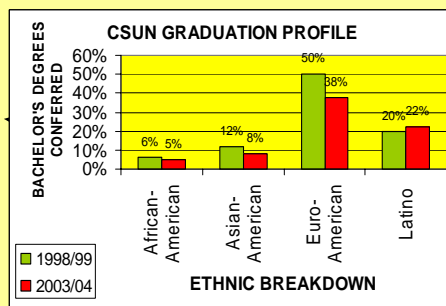
Before Executive Order 665, 70%-80% of incoming African-American students required remedial math and English courses. According to a CSU Developmental Mathematics performance data, the passing rate for remedial math over the last five years was 82.4 percent in 1997 prior to Executive Order 665, and 39.6 percent in 1999 after its implementation. However, in 2001, a total of

2,200 African-American and Latino students were expelled because of failure to pass the math and English remedial exams. Semester after semester, minority students



Source: CSUN Institutional Research

are kicked out due to this Executive Order. Since Executive Order 665, the upward trend in African-American CSU enrollment has been affected by students expelled for failing math and English remedial exams.



If disqualified, gaining re-entry into the University isn't an easy feat and most students don't return, even though it is a remote possibility. According to Dr. William Watkins, CSUN Vice President for Student Life, there is a 21% dropout rate at CSUN of first-time freshmen in the first year. Because of the persistently high rate of attrition CSUN has established an “Early Warning System,” seeking feedback from professors about non-academic and academic indicators of students’ susceptibility for dropping out of class. Warning signs, such as attendance, submission of assignments, grades, class participa-

tion are recorded—and if warranted these students are contacted before the third or fourth week of the semester to report to the Advising Resource Center/EOP where it will be forwarded to the College Based Student Services Center/EOP Satellite serving these students for counseling intervention.

After clearing the initial hurdles of Executive Order 665, college matriculation and graduation is still far from certainty. According to a recent *Educate L.A.* article, the overall CSU graduation rate is 54% and 90% of students take 6 years to graduate, instead of the usual 4 years. At CSUN the graduation rate is even less than the overall CSU rate. In a Pan African Studies Department presentation, Dr. Watkins stated that at the end of 6 years the graduation rate at CSUN is less than 30%, and among African-American students this feat is 26% or less.

One could blame this attrition witnessed at CSUN on several issues. First, most African-American students attend high schools in insufficiently funded urban areas, and have unequal opportunity to access college preparatory classes as students in sufficiently funded high schools. Second, students might be faced with competing educational and social priorities, which detract from their studies. Third, odd as it seems, some students are unaware of the requirements and ramifications of Executive Order 665. Could the ultimate consequence of Executive Order 665 result in denied access to African-American students? You be the judge! (See 665, page 10)



EXECUTIVE ORDER 665, CONTINUED

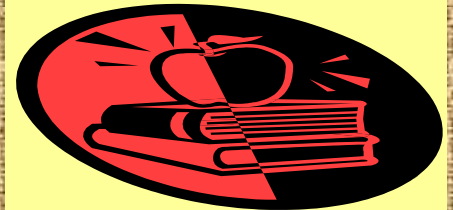
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This lackluster African-American educational performance profile at CSUN is in stark contrast to the stellar accomplishments of African-American students at Ivy League colleges and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's). Even more dismal, the low graduation rate at CSUN falls well below the 40% college graduation rate of Black students nationwide analyzed in 1-19-2005 edition of *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*. According to an article, "The Persisting Racial Gap in College Student Graduation Rates," "Nearly 19 out of every 20 black students who enter the highly competitive academic environment of Harvard, Princeton, Haverford, and Amherst go on to earn their diplomas." Trends at most HBCU's are also witnessing an upswing in college graduation rates of 10%-40% or more. For example Fisk University increased its graduation rate from 46% in 1993 to 63% in 2004. These patterns indicate that there is a defi-

nite potential for improvement among African-American students, given the right support by the university and commitment of students to apply themselves in their studies. If high college graduation rates are attained by Black students at other colleges and universities, it should also be possible at CSUN!

Don't be blindsided by Executive Order 665. At CSUN, there are many different places where students can receive the help that you need. One place is the Pan African Studies (PAS) Department writing lab; they have excellent staff there to assist students with writing assignments and essays. They have an excellent computer lab in the writing program and at the Black House, which can assist with Internet research for those who do not have access to a computer. Also, the Developmental Mathematics Program offers tutoring by highly skilled professionals covering all the required math strands. Try talking to the PAS professors about the difficulties that

you are experiencing in your classes, they are usually more than willing to aid you with your studies. Other academic help can be provided, all students have to do is take heed from past struggles and demand adequate resources. Remember closed mouths don't get fed. Despite the oppressive intents of the "Willie Lynch method" and obstruction of Executive Order 665, CSUN students have the potential to accomplish their academic goals, all it takes is getting our minds right-- as proven by the current stellar performance of African-Americans at elite and HBCU schools and lessons learned from the Black student struggle. Knowledge is power!!



VOTE, FROM PAGE 3

The buzz on the street was: "GET BUSH OUT." It was not so much that John Kerry would be the answer, but a Kerry win and a Bush defeat would've helped the momentum and further ignited the excitement and passions held by many within the hip-hop community who went to the polls. Instead, what we were left with was a Bush Presidency. Adding insult to injury is the fact that he went from being a man *selected* (by the Supreme Court) to a man who now holds the *elected* record for receiving the most votes ever in U.S. history! It was about 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time on November 3rd when the Democratic challenger, John F. Kerry conceded, and George W. Bush was elected to a second term presidency. So, what now? What could have been done differently? Did the numbers of people who came to the polls add up to the expectations? Did the hype match the reality? The toughest pill to swallow after the election was watching the newscasts and

reading articles where the question was mockingly being asked—"Where was the Youth vote?" "Why didn't they follow through?"

"Where was the Youth Vote?"
"Why didn't they follow through?"

There are several crucial factors that influenced the outcome of this election. An accurate analysis cannot be made without considering the heartache people faced in Ohio, which in turn decided the national election. For example these problems reported in the Cleveland, Ohio newspaper affected the tally: "In precincts 1A and 5G, voting at Hillman Elementary School, which is a predominantly African American community, there were an insufficient number of voting machines in three precincts. The standard was to have one voting machine per 100 registered voters. Precinct A had 750 registered voters. Precinct G had 690. There should have been 14 voting machines at this site. There were only 6, leaving three per precinct, less than 50 percent of the standard. This caused an enormous bottleneck among

voters from the African American community who had to wait a very long time to vote, many of them gave up in frustration and left. It was estimated to be about 8,000 votes lost for Kerry."

We must also consider the African American vote that went towards Bush for "moral" reasons. It was stated that regular churchgoers voted dramatically for Republicans in the election in protest of gay marriage and abortion. However, they simultaneously voted for the money and oil-driven "war on terrorism" that is taking the lives of thousands every month. Isn't that a moral issue also? Twenty percent of those same voters identified morals as their major concern and voted overwhelmingly for George Bush. Again, Ohio was a battleground state because of the African American vote in Cleveland. Many Pastors and church leaders encouraged their members to vote Republican due to moral reasons. And believe it or not, many of these African American churchgoers include hip-hop youth.

(See Vote, page 11)

CRISIS IN SUDAN, CONTINUED

(Crisis from page 3).

To add insult to injury, the government in Sudan has assisted the violent militia in their human assault by making claims that they are unable to identify any of the culprits, in addition to providing weapons for the Arab militia.

In February, 2003, the *Sudan Liberation Army* (comprising Africans in Darfur) launched attacks on government positions in the province. During the past two years this conflict intensified in the Darfur province, with the infliction of widespread government bombing raids and massacres by this "Arab" militia, called the *Janjaweed*, which has a variety of political and social meanings. The *Janjaweed* have caused thousands to flee their homes in Darfur (the western-most province in Sudan), and find refuge in neighboring Chad. Since Darfur is the size of Iraq, this has created widespread dislocation and destabilization of African communities in southern Sudan. According to the BBC, "The *Janjaweed* have attacked black Africans from the Fur, 'Massaleet,' and 'Zagawa' ethnic groups with a ruthlessness not seen in the region for sometime." As a result of blatant "ethnic cleansing," this conflict has taken the lives of at least 50,000-70,000 warriors and civilians in Darfur, and has displaced approximately 1.5 million of Sudanese people and turned them into refugees. The temporary housing of the refugee camps is not suitable for long-term habitation, and does not provide sufficient protection from the *Janjaweed* attacks. "More than 75 percent of



If this is not difficult and terrible enough, there is a slave trade currently conducted...

them are women and children. Their lives are being threatened by hunger, disease, and insecurity" said Hugh Palmer, president of American Refugee Committee. He goes on to say, "Unfortunately, the world has been slow to take notice." The United Nations and United States have voiced concerns by questioning these horrifying actions. However, no serious peacemaking action has been taken recently, and the Sudanese government has shown little resolve to abide by brokered peace terms. Terminology has been a stumbling block to brokering a peace treaty; this has also hindered the official designation of the conflict as genocide. The Sudanese government has asserted that those claiming *Janjaweed* simply mean criminals or bandits, and it does not acknowledge any information (to the contrary) about an organized group seeking to prove something. However, others who are living the experience say *Janjaweed* means the Arab criminals. This confusion over labelling is significant because the language use creates a differing local and international view of the situation. If *Janjaweed*s are considered a militia and an organized group of religious hunters, the government can be pressured into stopping the source. The U.N. will then follow up with an investigation monitoring the claim of genocide. If *Janjaweed*s are seen as common criminals, then the government could be asked to investigate each individual crime and continue to do nothing.

(See Crisis, page 12)

VOTE, FROM PAGE 10

When we look back at this election, the most imperative question we must deal with is this: Was it enough to hate Bush alone if you weren't in fact "feelin" Kerry at all? The fact of the matter is everyone should be aware of the real point of all the hip-hop campaigning that was going on during this election. The purpose wasn't intended to get Bush out of office so much as it was to flex our power and prove that we could influence an election.

Conventional wisdom suggests that "we look and build around small, achievable victories versus trying to get it all in one shot. While hitting a homerun on the first try is great and will create momentum and attention-- playing the entire game will be more beneficial in the long run. It will aid in building a solid, long-lasting foundation and establish important meaningful team relationships for eventually winning the game. It will also allow the accomplishment of important work to be done, minus the roar of the crowd and all the hype that comes when

you hit it the ball out of the park

The bottom line is...the election results may have been disappointing to some and our expectations may have not been met, but that does not mean we failed as a political movement, we went to the polls and gave it our best shot. We will continue to make a difference and demand to be noticed. Don't be discouraged just keep fighting... the race is not given to the swift but to the one who endures to the end.

"Don't be discouraged just keep fighting... the race is not given to the swift but to the one who endures to the end."



CRISIS IN SUDAN, CONTINUED

(From page 10)

If this is not difficult and terrible enough, there is a slave trade currently conducted while the war is going on. Sudanese boys and girls, undoubtedly displaced from the pillaging, have been taken into the slave market and are being sold for a few dollars. The *Janjaweed* have engaged in systematic abduction and enslavement of Africans, and widespread capture and rape of women—particularly when they venture beyond the camps for water and firewood. “The plight of Sudanese slaves, captured and abused by their own countrymen, has attracted sympathetic attention all over the globe...(however) now that the U.S. is engaging in building its anti-terror coalition, human-rights issues have taken a backseat to geopolitics putting the issue of slavery in Sudan on the back burner.” (www.africana.com)” It becomes a more complicated discussion when it must be considered that human rights and Christian groups are purchasing many of the slaves. They contend that it is an act of mercy to buy the freedom of someone undeserving of this type of punishment. While no one disagrees with their kind heart, many disagree with their actions. Those who oppose this individual manumission contend that the money used to purchase one slave’s freedom is used to fund enslavement of other kin. It also in-

The plight of Sudanese slaves, captured and abused by their own countrymen, has attracted sympathetic attention all over the globe...

no resolution: Should we save a few and give them freedom or save none until everyone is free? These are the questions we must ask ourselves as we take a position about this human rights issue.

Sometimes getting lost in describing the horror of this conflict is the land alienation issue, and the objective to drive Africans from valuable fertile and oil-rich land in southern Sudan. In a penetrating expose, *Oil Profits Behind West’s Tears for Darfur*, Norm Dixon reveals that the often unspoken factor in this conflict is the existence of oil in Sudan’s southern region where undercurrents of international competition have emerged to gain an opportunity to “invest in and extract profits from Sudan’s burgeoning oil export industry.” The Darfur conflict is a more recent occurrence, which triggered the interest of the west. It wasn’t until February, 2003, when the Darfur rebellion erupted, that the U.S. and Europe raised the issue of human rights violations in Sudan. This conflict began when Africans rebelled against the Sudanese government and attacked government property—accusing it of favoring the Arab-dominated north. Retaliatory bombing of African villages by the Sudanese government,

escalated this long-running conflict. Dixon further reveals that “[o]nly when the escalating crisis in Darfur threatened to derail the north-south peace deal and prevent the opening up of Sudan’s lucrative oilfields to Western exploitation did the U.S. start waving the threat of UN sanctions against Sudan.” Currently, China has drilling rights (western countries do not), and has opposed U.N. Security Council moves to label the conflict genocide.

Although the situation in Sudan is grim, organizations like American Refugee Committee and World Vision are approaching this conflict from a humanitarian standpoint by accepting donations and generating survival kits for the refugees. These survival kits include blankets, fuel for cooking, firewood, water cans and agricultural tools. They bring aid and relief to thousands living in the camps. Responding to a worldwide outcry over the continuing atrocities, in September, 2004, the U.N. Security Council decided that the African Union should deploy troops to guard the camps in Darfur. However, the 3,000 troops initially planned for were woefully inadequate for securing such a large territory, and this omission proved to be another stumbling block in efforts to halt the conflict.

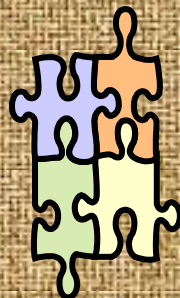
(See Crisis, page 13)

(From page 6)

Down

1. Recorded a hit entitled, “Rain” in 1997
3. If this rapper ruled the world, “I’d open every cell in Attica and send them to Africa”
4. She was “One in a Million”
5. His debut album was “Feel My Power”
6. Which hip hop artist’s real name is David Blake
7. This R&B group was never “2 Proud 2 Beg”
9. A rapper whose upbringing revolved around the Black Panthers
10. Hip Hop Slogan for the youth in the 2004 presidential election
12. This R&B singer educated herself by taking journeys to Africa
14. Famous rapper born in Long Beach

PUZZLE, CONTINUED

**Hip-Hop Puzzle Answers:**Across

2. Lil Jon
8. Queen Latifah
11. Bootylicious
13. BET
15. Akon

Down

1. Missy Elliott
3. Nas

4. Aaliyah
5. MC Hammer
6. DJ Quik
7. TLC
9. Tupac Shakur
10. Vote or Die
12. Lauryn Hill
14. Snoop Dogg

HIV/AIDS CRISIS, CONTINUED

(From page 4)

The "Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome" (AIDS) is connected to an HIV positive status, with the onset of additional symptoms, such as a flu-like condition, fever, rapid weight loss— and other signs that the immune system is being debilitated. It comprises any one of twenty-five unrelated diseases (and previously known) that simultaneously occur with an HIV-positive status, and diagnosed as a syndrome called AIDS.

As of 1999, AIDS in the U.S. became the leading cause of death for African-American women in their prime (25 to 44) years, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). In that same year 2,400 African-American women died of ARC (AIDS related complex), that's almost 7 per day. By the end of 1999, 37,862 African-American women had died of AIDS since the start of the epidemic. By the year 2000, African-American women made up 16% of all AIDS cases but only 6.5% of the total population. The CDC estimates that 1 in 160 African-American women are infected with HIV and that, in the 34 states that have HIV reporting, 68% of reported HIV cases, among women, occurred in African-American

women and among those women 1 in 4 were diagnosed at age 24 or younger. These rates were 21 times higher for African-American than they were for Caucasian women. In that same year (2000) in sub-Saharan Africa, which accounts for nearly 70% of HIV/AIDS cases worldwide, women represented 58% of adult infections. On July 7, 2004 Stephen Lewis, UN special envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, announced that he "found it both startling and terrifying that in Africa 75% of all those infected, between the ages of 15 and 24 are young women and girls." Why has AIDS gone from being primarily a "gay plague" to becoming one affecting so many women of color? Why are African and African-American women so disproportionately represented in the statistical data of HIV infections and premature deaths from AIDS?

The actual timeline on HIV/AIDS has been highly debated by the medical industry since 1978 when gay men in the U. S. A. and Sweden began to show signs of the illness that would later be called AIDS. However, the problem of HIV/AIDS affecting/infecting African women in Africa and the Diaspora women did not begin to show up on statistical charts,

Why are African and African-American women so disproportionately represented in the statistical data of HIV infections and premature deaths from AIDS?

until the mid-1980's. The major problem is that even after it became clear that the infection rates for women, especially women of color, had begun to rise disproportionately to all other groups, there was insufficient effort in finding the reason(s) for this increase, due to these following actions by the medical community.

1) Women tend to get diagnosed later than men, thus are sicker when they do present themselves for medical attention. 2) Women are more likely to receive less aggressive treatment, e.g. in the case of a male and female complaining, to a physician or to a hospital emergency room, of the same symptoms, the male is likely to receive diagnostic tests while the female will likely be told she's suffering from stress or that she has the flu and will be sent home with an aspirin. 3) Women, usually lower on the economic scale, therefore, are lacking the resources to demand quality or consistent healthcare and they generally allocate whatever resources they do have to the care of their children. 4) Women experience a decreased ability to demand safer sex (latex condoms) because in many cultures that request is construed to be an admission of their own sexual infidelity.

More covert reasons range from the institutional racism, which imposed disparities on health care access for women of color, as well as lack of health care insurance to pay for the expensive AIDS cocktail treatments.

(See HIV/AIDS, page 13)

CRISIS IN SUDAN, CONTINUED

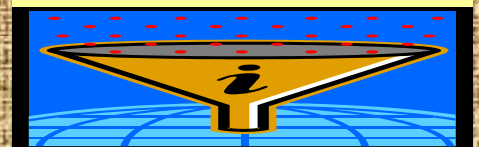
(From page 12)

Sudanese government officials agreed to a framework giving Africans in the southern provinces rights to self-determination and sharing proceeds from future oil profits. There are still many unanswered questions about the mechanisms for implementing this peace treaty, so external pressure to live up to the agreement is still needed.

What are you going to do about it? (The aforementioned organizations are legitimate and accept donations; write to your congressional representatives, the president, the governor, or other political organizations). The world will be watching for our actions to bring this tragic era to an end.

In January, 2005, the north-south parties to this conflict

(excluding the Darfur combatants) signed a U.N./U.S. brokered peace treaty in Kenya. Bowing to international pressure,



Stop the slave trade! Get involved.

HIV/AIDS Crisis, continued

(From page 13)

More covert reasons range from the institutional racism, which imposed disparities on health care access for women of color, as well as lack of health care insurance to pay for the expensive AIDS cocktail treatments. Additionally, there may be biological reasons that could explain why women may be more vulnerable to contracting an HIV infection during sexual intercourse than men (women have a larger mucosal surface, the vagina, which is more susceptible to tear during the sex act than is a man's penis). Even after HIV infection is present, the course of the illness differs in men and women. Women tend to get sicker, progress from HIV to full-blown AIDS and die faster from ARC's faster than men. Many doctors believe that one difference is the effect of the hormone estrogen excreted in women; another difference is differential medical treatment reaction in men and women.

High risk sexual behavior has increased vulnerability of women, and possible exposure to HIV/AIDS. In the U.S., known as the "Down-Low" ("DL"), simply stated the "DL" is practiced by men who are either bisexual or closeted homosexual but occasionally have sex with women or are married but still having sexual relations with men (men having sex with men/women MSM/W). Unaware of this homosexual activity, wives and girlfriends of these men are, subsequently, more vulnerable to contracting HIV/AIDS. In Africa, the traditional marriage practice of polygyny (marriage of one man to two or more wives) may inadvertently contribute to the spread of HIV/AIDS. In fact, a United Nations publication, UNAIDS, *Report on Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic, 2002* identified married women as a high risk HIV/AIDS group. "Marriage is no protection against HIV. Married women have higher rates of HIV than unmarried sexually active

"Marriage is no protection against HIV. Married women have higher rates of HIV than unmarried women do."

ETHNIC PATTERNS IN AREAS WITH HIGHEST AIDS INCIDENCE IN L.A. CO.

Service Planning Area	African-American	Asian	Latino	White
<i>Highest AIDS Cases</i>				
1 st Metro L.A. (SPA 4)	6%	16%	55%	22%
2 nd South Bay/Long Beach (SPA 8)	14%	15%	33%	37%
3 rd San Fernando Valley (SPA 2)	3%	10%	36%	51%
4 th South L.A. (SPA 6)	40%	1%	55%	3%

Source: L. A. Co. Dept. of Public Health, County Service Planning Area Profiles, 1997

women do." While on the surface this statement may sound unbelievably strange, married women in Africa and the U.S. are indeed vulnerable.

Numerous research studies reveal that married women in the U.S. (legal or common law) feel that as long as they are in a perceived monogamous or relationship, AIDS is not something they need to be worried about. Traditionally, safe sex was defined as engaging in monogamous relations or using a condom. They offer numerous excuses for not insisting that their husband/sexual partner use a condom, the primary one being that their

partner says that he doesn't experience full satisfaction when wearing a condom, followed closely by his refusal to wear one. Another reason,

often given, was that their husband/significant other would accuse them of being unfaithful if they suddenly insisted on condom use. Married women (regardless of ethnicity) do not perceive themselves as high risk, which has generally been defined as homosexual men, intravenous drug users, and prostitutes. Women not fitting this HIV/AIDS high risk group have not been properly educated through research and preventive services about their vulnerability. The onus

is on those of us who are aware of the problem(s) to enhance the public's awareness. Just as we are constantly being reminded of the European plague, we need to remember that currently there is no cure for HIV/AIDS and that it is neither diminishing nor is it under control, especially within the African-American community. AIDS drug cocktails and Protease inhibitors are useful for improving the quality of life for HIV patients, but one unfortunate downside is that because they help to stave off the progression from HIV to full blown AIDS and give the appearance of health, a lot of the fear associated with HIV has dissipated.

Just as the HIV/AIDS crisis emerged from contradictory effects, the AIDS incidence in Los Angeles County reflects this dichotomy. According to the January, 2004 Los Angeles County *HIV/AIDS Semi-Annual Surveillance Summary, 1982-2003*, males had a substantially higher (43,891) incidence of AIDS cases than females (3,737). Among this population it affected 9,727 African-Americans, 14,054 Latinos, and 22,510 whites. In addition, the Los Angeles County data indicates that the majority of AIDS cases are still in predominantly white communities (West/Hollywood [Metro L.A.], South Bay and the San Fernando Valley).

(See HIV/AIDS, page 15)

HIV/AIDS, CONTINUED

(From page 14)

Contrary to local HIV/AIDS incidence patterns, on the international scene the HIV/AIDS pandemic is concentrated among African people. Despite the staggering scale of the disease, preventive and treatment health care resources are woefully inadequate, and slow in providing access to health services. Ironically, in 2003, the Bush administration initiated the HIV/AIDS Act, which committed \$15 billion over the next 5 years to fight AIDS abroad. However, according to Salih Booker, Executive Director of Africa Action "The \$15 billion commitment President Bush announced to fighting AIDS in Africa is a cruel hoax because none of this money is being made available now. Faced with this most deadly global threat, the Bush Administration continues

to stall and its empty promises are costing thousands of African lives every day." According to the *AIDS Treatment News*, Bush's HIV/AIDS policy creates more questions than answers.

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It seems apparent that as long as the statistics show that HIV/AIDS is complex and contradictory with respect to the Africans in Africa and the Diaspora. With limited media coverage and insufficient program funding and research, no cure, we must find a way to address the HIV/AIDS problem within our community. Local HIV/AIDS community providers, such as AMASSI, Minority AIDS Project, JWCH, Inc., Womenlink, dedicated HIV/AIDS health care professionals at the Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science, and the recent summit on "African-Americans and HIV/AIDS need to be commended for their valiant efforts in the face of scarce resources and deceptive government support. AMANDLA (the Power is Ours).

DREAM BIG, CONTINUED

(From page 7)

The majority worked in corporate America, and are turned off with the struggle against racism or turned on about pursuing their own dreams. Here are some of the assets African-Americans are bringing to the entrepreneurship table.

Slowdown in the economy is creating new opportunities—as people are nudged out of the corporate nests, African-Americans are turning their high-level expertise into business leadership ventures.

Experienced executives start businesses—a new breed of community business persons, who represent bold risk takers in the service-based industry are starting technologically-based businesses.

New business environment—meeting today's demands requires multiple skills in product development, marketing savvy, computer skills, management competency, and financial expertise.

Tips for winning a business contract-

This combination of skills can be enhanced by these additional tips for success: 1) ***Do Your Homework***: re-search your prospective client;

2) ***Needs Analysis***: perform an assessment of your client's product potential;

3) ***Product Pricing***: determine if your prices are consistent with client's goals

4) ***The Competition***: identify your competitors and their pricing;

5) ***Unique Selling Proposition***: develop a 3-minute sales pitch;

6) ***Sales Objections***: be prepared to defend doubts about your proposal.

In conclusion, this industry is filled with many ups and downs, mostly defined by money. As Bruce Walker emphasized, a thorough knowledge of the industry is imperative to build a successful entertainment business. Although entrepreneurship is not the road for everyone,

it is an alternative for those looking to make a personalized mark in the world by pursuing their unique interests. Remember, ownership is the key to success.



STARTING SMALL, CONTINUED

(From page 5)

These statements are highlights from my interviews with these aspiring promoters.

How did your organization form?

Chike: We were looking for a way to bring together the black youth (18 and over) in the community.

Cruz: I thought there was a need for quality entertainment. I always enjoyed putting events together, since I was in a fraternity.

What is your organization mainly about?

Chike: Basically, we advocate a good time. We throw parties and events so people can be entertained.

Cruz: Providing quality events for an urban college demographic.

What influenced you to begin your own promotion company?

Chike: I wanted to earn my fair share of what was due.)

Cruz: I wasn't happy with what others (promoters) were doing. So I thought I had the potential to do a better job.

Where do you want to take your organization? (Goals)

Chike: I want to become the head and lead promotional organization in Southern California. I also want to become more than just a party-throwing entity. I would like to organize more major events, concerts

and promote various artists. I basically want to build a promotional empire.

What separates your organization from others?

Chike: We try to be more people friendly. We actually listen to our people's concerns. We consider "us" as part of the people. We know where the people are coming from. We don't act like we are bigger or better than our people.

Cruz: We don't focus on profits, we concentrate on image.

Is your organization involved in the community? How?

Cruz: Yes, that's how it started. My organizations are all 100% college students.

Chike: We recruit our members from the community.

Do you feel that your organization has an impact on students here at CSUN (or any college)?

Chike: We have an amazing impact on students on campus. We give them something to talk about when they get back to campus.

Cruz: Yes, you have to be a full-time college student to be part of my organization.

For other CSUN students seeking to develop their own business, here are some helpful hints from the *Black Enterprise* magazine:

- *Formulate a business plan
- *Determine your market location
- *Assess consumer needs, gaps and resources
- *Project sales revenue
- *Research your market location (trends, services, etc.)
- *Choose a business location
- *Learn the law and policies regulating your projected business
- *Calculate costs business equipment & other operations expenses
- *Promote your business and product
- *Remember that your business plan is never done.



(From page 7)

(By using flashbacks, the filmmakers allowed us glimpses into the motivating childhood factors that propelled the adult Ray. Without excusing or judging Ray's behavior the viewer was empowered to view the world from his perspective—why he insisted on being paid in single dollar bills, found it difficult to trust anyone, was astute in business dealings and seemingly heartless and tender when dealing with his women.

“RAY,” CONTINUED

Jamie Foxx seemed to become, not just act the part of, Ray Charles. He seamlessly walked, talked, and used the same facial expressions that were characteristic of “Baby Ray.” The talented Mr. Foxx, in addition to his obvious acting ability, is an accomplished musician, who can sing, but he began his career as a stand up comedian. In order to play “Ray” he had to pass the Ray Charles test as a part of his

audition. For his superb performance in “Ray,” he won a Golden Globe Award for “Best Actor in a Musical or Comedy” and was nominated for an Oscar for Best Actor Academy Award. If I were a member of the Academy nominating committee, he would have my nod. If I could cast a vote, it would be for him.



(See Carter, page 18)

READY FOR LOVE?, CONTINUED

(From page 6)

Unfortunately many people enter relationships looking for love to fulfill us. Often times we forget to set boundaries in our relationships, because of that, there never seems to be enough love to fill the void we have all, (at one time or another) felt in our hearts. The bottom line is people cannot fulfill your needs—even though they may want to or they may try to live up to these expectations. Aware of such expectations, they may even convince you that they can, but they cannot. The only thing people can do for one another is share the intensity in achieving personal goals, and make the quest seem less urgent. When we enter into relationships without knowing who we are, unfortunately this may create a distraction and derail one from achieving personal goals.

Out of a desire to maintain the relationship, we may impulsively assist one another by substituting a pressing need with a temporary gratification. However, the drive to fulfill personal goals does not disappear, because although people seek nurturance through loving relationships—the affirmation of love only exists in your own heart.

Spelman College professor Beverly Guy offers these tips for a positive relationship in her book, *Gender Talk*, which are directed towards young women, but could also benefit women and men.

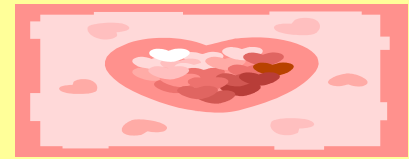


Start from a place of power: The first thing to do is overcome the sense of desperation about finding a suitable partner.

Boost your self-esteem: If you have a pattern of unhealthy relationships, perform a realistic assessment about emotional readiness for self-love.

Set nonnegotiable standards: Form a set of criteria for your soul mate and stick to it.

Tune out negative messages: Don't be swayed by the prevailing opinion about the scarcity of good men as a reason to "settle" for an undesirable relationship.



ROC, CONTINUED

(From page 5)

Kimora Lee Simmons, the wife of the very talented hip-hop icon Russell Simmons, always had an eye for fashion. At age 13, she became the muse to the house of Chanel and its designer Karl Lagerfeld. This gave her insight to the world of women's fashion and how women express themselves through their clothes. *Baby Phat* was first introduced on the fashion scene as Russell Simmons promoted his men's clothing line *Phat Farm*. Kimora produced baby tees for models to wear on the runway which gave her the idea of launching her own clothing line. *Baby Phat* has created denim sepa-

They have quenched the thirst of those who have longed to make a bold statement with hip-hop attire.

rates, tees, outerwear, accessories, lingerie and shoes. *Baby Phat* influences young women to be confident, sexy, and fashionable. With the sexy kitten logo, any average woman can feel and look like a runway model.

Sean "P.Diddy" Combs, a successful rap artist and producer, always had a dream to start his own clothing line. In 1998 he gained the confidence to fulfill his dream and launched his own brand called *Sean John*. This brand included jeans, sports wear and outerwear. For three years, *Sean John* has won prestigious awards for his designs and creations. You see his clothing line on everyone of

all different ages from infant and toddlers to teens and adults in all lines of work. In February 2001, *Sean John* produced its first nationally aired fashion show on the E! Network.

All these prestigious African American designers have accomplished the unthinkable. No need to worry about what they are going to wear to the next hip-hop show because they have their own designs. They have quenched the thirst of those who have longed to make a bold statement with hip hop attire. With all these great selections how can you choose just one?

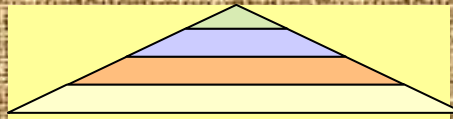


AFRICA, CONTINUED

(From page 20)

However, the Associated Students allocated only \$500 for the entire event, which included guest speakers and a culminating evening of entertainment and dinner. Discouraged, but not defeated, ASO took the issue to other student leaders. At the following Associated Students board meeting, members of ASO and BSU attended. One by one, they spoke out against the financial insufficiency and demanded that the board reconsider the allocation. To the pleasure and surprise of many, the allocation was adjusted considerably.

This unified front gave ASO the opportunity to plan an excellent program with informative and enthusiastic speakers, as well as professional entertainment. The opening ceremony included traditional dancing, drumming, libations, and Audrey Kitagawa from the United Nations was the guest speaker. The ceremony was rich with African culture, followed by an art exhibit



and a documentary at the Black House. Other events that week included a faculty panel discussion on continental topics, a lecture on the crisis in Sudan, and an African Banquet with a fashion show of traditional African attire.

As if Africa Week weren't enough to keep one's social calendar full, the Black Student Union (BSU) organized "A Week of Activism" to commemorate the "Valley State 19" (original BSU members) who fought for and formed the Pan African Studies Department. The BSU decorated the Black House with activist memorabilia and historic moments. Photos of Angela Davis, Kwame Ture (born

It was a blessing to see the different Black organizations come together in celebration of one another.

Stokely Carmichael), founding BSU members, and other activists in the 60's and 70's movement adorned the walls. Additionally, the BSU held its first annual Black Homecoming Formal in the Grand Salon. The formal included a court of distinguished men and women on campus. From that court, an interview committee selected a king and queen. Sky Kuku and Alexandria Barabina (that's me) were crowned at this historic event.

I was very impressed with the amount of preparation and planning that went into each activity. It was a blessing to see the different Black organizations come together in celebration of one another. I have been on campus for 4 ½ years. Never have I seen CSUN students with such enthusiasm and passion for reflection and progression outside of Black History Month.

Oppressed people of Africa and the Americas, Sons and Daughters of traditional African royalty keep the fire burning and press on!

"Coach Carter" Movie Review

by Alexandria Barabina

(From page 16)

Lean on Me meets *Remember the Titans*. That is the cinematic image that comes to mind when I think about the new Samuel L. Jackson film, *Coach Carter*. Based on actual events, the story of Coach Ken Carter and his experience at Richmond High School is one of motivation, discipline and progress. Jackson plays the lead character as he takes charge of a mediocre basketball team. He accepts the job of a coach, but takes on the role of guidance counselor, teacher, mentor, father and friend.

After forcefully instilling team discipline, the "Richmond Oilers" are

undefeated on the court. However, Carter realizes that their academic and personal lives were suffering. As Coach begins to demand the same excellence in the class room that he requires on the court, he receives criticism from the players and their parents in addition to pressure from the principal and local school board to stop his promotion of academic success. After all, he is only a basketball coach, right? Determined to do what he felt was right, Coach Carter faced media backlash, even unemployment, to continue doing what he thought was best for his players.

Coach Carter also addresses other social issues: educational standards, school funding, low graduation and high incarceration rates, and an unbalanced emphasis on sports. It is also clear that, although education is more essential, sports are the only available alternatives to drug and

criminal life.

Coach Carter also addresses other social issues: educational standards, school funding, low graduation and high incarceration rates, and an unbalanced emphasis on sports. It is also clear that, although education is more essential, sports are the only available alternatives to drug and criminal life.

This heroic life story has poignant lessons of endurance, strength and unity. The acting is exceptional, by the professionals and the novice. *Coach Carter* will warm your heart and challenge you to go beyond the call of duty and see more for yourself, as well as others.



REFLECTIONS, CONTINUED

(From page 20)

I think that the Black students on this campus are interested in reading about issues that directly affect them. They want to see and hear themselves in student literature (it sure does not happen in the *Sundial*). I believe that the professors in the PAS department will be impressed with a student written newsletter. They will be proud of their students and support them by passing along information.

Maybe I feel this way because of my experiences here. I have met several really great and influential people who have taken a part of themselves and invested it into me. I came here under Executive Order 665 (see Stephanie Durrett's article for explanation). The first professor I met was Dr. David Horne and he explained to me, with serious passion and conviction, that the system did not want me. If that were not enough, he continued by telling me that I was never to be comfortable here because there was no room for complacency. He told me that I would have to fight to stay here. Once I was really here (out of E.O. 665), he said I would have to fight for my seat in

I hope you enjoy reading our Sankofa Newsletter, as much as we've enjoyed creating it.

classes outside of the PAS department, that no one cares if a little Black girl doesn't get priority, and that counselors often gave out wrong or misleading information to Black students. For such actions, many Black students were often misinformed about proper classes and not graduating on time. He, and a former student, T. Foxx, told me that I better keep a copy of my entrance catalog to keep track of my progress. "This is your student bible. You live by this. If they change the rules later on, you open up your catalog and make them adhere to the rules you came in under," T. Foxx said.

Dr. Horne made me realize just how adverse this system was: "You can't expect anyone around here to do it for you. Most of them don't care if you graduate or not. Most of them don't expect you to graduate, just as long as they get paid. You have to figure out a way to work the system." They were both right! The message seemed grim, but its warning prepared me, and led me to my present status as a graduating senior. So with the same passion and motivation, I tell the incoming freshmen who enter the PAS writing lab enrolled in 097 or 098 classes, "This place does not want you and will not help you. You have to prove yourself and your existence every time you enter the class or you will be stopped out of school." I want to warn and prepare them for what is to come.

It is with the same guidance and love that I have embraced the



position of editor of this newsletter. I believe that every article in this newsletter speaks to the needs and wants of Black students, covering such topics as entrepreneurship, professional success, art, social events and more. I believe the readers are interested in reading about the genius of Dr. Ben Carson, the AIDS epidemic, or commentary on Black love. I know you want to hear about Black ownership in the entertainment business because the paper chase is real. I know there are many single parents still pursuing a Bachelor's degree, who need to be encouraged. I know enough of us made a New Year's resolution to change our eating habits in an effort to start the year off right who need some guidelines for healthy eating. I have confidence in hard-working students juggling jobs and their studies. I am praying for the student experiencing severe family problems, yet managing to attend class everyday. I give it up to all of those who came back to see another semester rather than giving up over the break. You are still here.

I hope you enjoy reading our *Sankofa Newsletter*, as much as we've enjoyed creating it. Remember to take some things personally and make a commitment or contribution to change. Become the change that you see. *Christ Bless and Salama (Peace)*

POETRY, CONTINUED

(From page 6)

I cry out
I cry out to the Lord for I am His unclean vessel
Unworthy of His love
Undeserving of His grace
Unfit to look upon His perfect face.
Although He showers me with blessings
And His love has no end
I insist upon making myself sick with sin.
When my stomach feels like knots

And my knees weaken and bend
I bear witness to my own shame
Because I've caused my savior pain.
And my disloyal disobedience is uncalled for
So I stare at the mirror telling myself
"No More!"
I can't express the amount of damage to my soul
I've done
Yet father, you look down with forgiveness and
call
"My daughter. My son."
I cry out to my savior
For forgiveness and to repent
As I recall in my mind the price of His blood

And how it was spent
I cry out His name to heavens cloud
I whisper or scream
I cry or speak loud
No matter the manner of delivery
I trust in the One who sees everything
The Christ that offers forgiveness to those with a true heart
On the road to righteousness
Cleansing of sin is the start
This Christian life has a journey and expected end
So as you walk with Christ,
May He be your guide and friend.

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Sankofa Book Recommendations

Thought Provoking Non-Fiction (The Real)

Anthony, Earl- *Time of the Furnaces*
Achebe, Chinua- *Things Fall Apart*
James, George- *Stolen Legacy*
Michael Sokolove- *The Ticket Out: Darryl Strawberry and the Boys of Crenshaw*
Ellis Cose- *The Envy of the World: On Being A Black Man In America*
Stanley Crouch & Playthell Benjamin- *Reconsidering The Souls of Black Folks*
Walter Mosley- *What Next: An African American Initiative toward World Peace*
Paulo Freire- *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*
Yvonne Bynoe- *Stand & Deliver*
Pan African Studies Dept.- *Student Voices: The Hip Hop Generation Speaks Out*
Randall Robinson- *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks*
Bakari Kitwana- *The Hip Hop Generation*
Joseph T. Hallinan- *Going Up the River: Travels in A Prison Nation*

Creative Stimulating Fiction (The Art)

Denene Millner/ Nick Chiles- *a love story*
Timothy B. McCann- *Forever*
Victoria Christopher Murray- *Joy*
Walter Dean Myers- *Monster*
Michael Datcher- *Raising Fences: A Black Man's Love Story*
Patricia Jones- *The Color of Family*

CHLLIN' AT CSUN: EDITOR'S CORNER

**Editor's Note—Reflections on Life
@CSUN**

This newsletter is the result of the Pan African Studies 355 (*Black World News Practicum*) class taught by Dr. Rehema Gray. My classmates and I have worked continuously all fall-semester to produce the *Sankofa Fact Sheet* and the *Sankofa Newsletter*. As the semester came to a close, I asked myself, "For what?" Why are we working so hard on these projects? We have already been warned that students are not going to read serious articles, and teachers may not be supportive of student projects. So, why then have we been putting so much effort into this project? For whatever reason, be it naivety or faith, I believe differently.

(See Reflections, page 19)

Black History Month Re-Cap

- 1-Opening Ceremony
- 2-Film series Begins @ the Black House
- 3- Speak Your Mind Poetry Slam
- 7- Black Health Fair
- 10- Importance of Soul Food
- 18- Today, Tomorrow Hair and Fashion Show
- 22- Sister Circle @ the Black House
- 23- Black Men Unit @ the Black House
- 28- Closing Ceremony

Correction Notice

From *Sankofa Fact Sheet*
Do you know how the PAS was formed?
PAS Majors: (Upper Division)
51% Unfamiliar

Africa and Activism

by Alexandria Barabin

Habarini wote!October and November of Fall 2004 was surprisingly eventful. Usually, Black CSUN students wait until February to have a calendar full of events, however not this semester. Between the African Student Organization (ASO), Black Student Union (BSU), and other Black organizations on campus, we were saturated with several social and educational events.

Monday, October 25 began Africa Week sponsored by the African Student Organization (ASO). Its existence is a testimony of the alliance formed between the Black organizations. Initially, the ASO proposed a budget of approximately \$3,000 to fund activities for Africa Week.

(See Africa, page 18)