

# The Iowa African-American Journal

Volume 6, Issue 2

July 2000

## Commissioners

**Theresa Clark-Kline**  
Fort Madison

**Angela Gravely-Smith**  
Iowa City

**James Hester**  
Davenport

**Isaiah Johnson**  
Denison

**Joyce McGlory**  
Des Moines

**Joseph McGill**  
Cedar Rapids

**Camille Scully**  
Waterloo

**Jerome Thomas**  
Dubuque

**Rose Vasquez, ex officio**  
Director  
Human Rights Department

*There is currently one  
vacancy on the commission*

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## Fifth Annual Iowa African-American Women's Conference

Reaping a turnout of nearly 500 participants, the Fifth Annual Iowa African-American Women's Conference continued the tradition of celebration and appreciation of African-American women. The two-day conference in Waterloo focused on the empowerment, unification and education of African-American females of all ages. The event featured keynote speakers that presented information about the status of women's physical health, as well as promoting the need for spiritual and economic well-being.

The event was kicked-off by Dr. Paula Mahone, known for her successful delivery of the McCaughey septuplets in Des Moines, Iowa. Dr. Mahone gave an overview of the



Workshop presenter Cathee Connor with conference participant

current status of black women's health in Iowa. The luncheon featured a keynote speech by Dr. Julianne Malveaux, a renowned economist and political activist. She



Mae Jemison (center) with conference participants

spoke on such issues as the importance of the 2000 US Census and black people's participation in the 2000 election. She emphasized the importance of African-American women taking care of their spiritual being as well as expanding their participation in the political process. Malveaux called for a joint effort between black and Latino women to fight against the institutions responsible for the lower socio-economic status of women of color.

Dr. Mae Jemison, a former NASA astronaut, wrapped up the day with words of inspiration for young women. She encouraged them to fulfill their dreams without letting others define what their dreams should be

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## Governor Vilsack Appoints New ICSAA Commissioners

In April 2000, six of the nine ICSAA commissioners completed their four-year terms. Two of the six commissioners have been re-appointed, including Theresa Clark-Kline of Fort Madison and Jerome Thomas of Dubuque.

Outgoing commissioners are Wilfred Johnson of Waterloo, Gwenda Naylor of Fort Dodge and Darryl Lipscomb of Cedar Rapids. As we bid them each a fond farewell, we also welcome the newest appointees to the

commission. They are Joseph McGill of Cedar Rapids, Joyce McGlory of Des Moines and Angela Gravely-Smith of Iowa City.

Citizens of Iowa who are interested in serving on a state board or commission should contact the Office of the Governor at 515-281-5211. More information is also available at [www.state.ia.us/governor/boards/index.html](http://www.state.ia.us/governor/boards/index.html).

## Commissioner Profile: *Meet Jim Hester, Davenport*



Jim Hester, ICSAA Commissioner

This year will mark the second term of Jim Hester's tenure with the Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans. Formerly serving as the chairperson for the commission, Mr. Hester attended the University of North Dakota where he played on the basketball team with former Chicago Bulls basketball coach, Phil Jackson. After graduating in 1967, Mr. Hester was drafted as a tight end for the New Orleans Saints and went on to play for the Chicago Bears. After his NFL career, he came back home to

Davenport and went to work for John Deere Harvester Works in East Moline, Illinois, where he has been a supervisor for 27 years. In April 1999, he was inducted into the Quad-City Sports Hall of Fame in recognition of his years as a player in the NFL and for earning all-state honors in basketball and football at his alma mater Davenport Central High School.

Mr. Hester is a twelve-year member of the Davenport School Board, where he has served as vice-president for six

years. Additionally, he is a member of the NFL Player Association, National School Board Association, the HiRann Lodge #19 - Davenport and is 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chair of the Metro-Com Branch Davenport NAACP. Mr. Hester is also active on boards for the Boy Scouts of America - Urban and Youth Committee, St. Ambrose College - National Youth Sports Program, 100 Black Men of the Quad Cities, Scott County Empowerment Board, and he was recently appointed to the United Way Board.

Mr. Hester believes that to change things and help the Black community, we must work together in unity to strengthen and achieve our goal for the future of our children, which takes team work, education, and understanding our role from the Black standpoint to impress upon our children. To demonstrate his own personal commitment to these goals, he is a volunteer for the Junior Achievement Mentor Program, Special Olympics, Big Brother Program, School to Work Guidance Team, DARE Program, Friendly House, Start Program and the Metropolitan Youth Program. Mr. Hester is married to wife Christine and together they have four children: Jodi, Jeff, Janelle, and Jami.

**Mark Your Calendars!**

**The African-American Male National Conference**  
in Indianapolis, Indiana

*Don't miss this one.*  
*It promises to be the best one yet!*

**October 26-28, 2000**  
Adam's Mark Hotel - Downtown  
Indianapolis, Indiana

The featured topic at this year's conference will focus on  
*Important Health Issues for the Black Male population.*

Presented by  
**The African-American Male National Council (AAMNC)**  
in partnership with  
**The National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL)**

For more information call Stephen M. Jackson at (317) 233-1744  
or e-mail [sjackson@fssa.state.in.us](mailto:sjackson@fssa.state.in.us) [www.state.in.us/icsabm](http://www.state.in.us/icsabm)

**Beauty For Ashes Ministries First Annual**  
**"Let The Healing Begin Multi-Racial Women's Conference"**  
**September 1-3, 2000**  
**Holiday Inn of Moline, Illinois**

Featuring international performing artist Minister Reanae McNeal and her one-woman play "I've Been a Woman"

Other special guests include Lori Wilke, Pastor Audrey Davis and Pastor Barb Hennington

For more information, please contact Beauty For Ashes at (319) 328-4702 or PO Box 4961 Rock Island, IL 61204-4961 or [Nae4him@aol.com](mailto:Nae4him@aol.com). Registration fee is \$45.00 before August 11 and \$55 if postmarked after August 11.

## ICSAA Intern Moves on to Office of the Governor



Jada Collier

Jada Collier, ICSAA intern from January – May, 2000 was recently named Scheduler and Personal Assistant to Lieutenant Governor Sally Pederson. A native of King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, Ms. Collier graduated from The University of Iowa with double majors in political science and African-American studies. She spent her final undergraduate semester serving as an intern in

the ICSAA office. Ms. Collier

was responsible for compiling statistical data and assisted with the coordination of the Fifth Annual Iowa African-American Women's Conference.

Through her outstanding work with the Department of Human Rights, Ms. Collier caught the attention of the Office of the Governor and within two weeks of her graduation she joined the staff there. As scheduler for the Lieutenant

Governor, she is responsible for coordinating all public appearances and for ensuring the overall smooth operation of the Lieutenant Governor's schedule. Ms. Collier often travels with the Lieutenant Governor or the Governor to provide additional assistance.

Ms. Collier's future goals include working in the political arena on the state and national levels. The staff and commissioners of ICSAA have greatly appreciated her commitment and wish her well as she begins her professional career.

Individuals interested in learning more about the ICSAA Internship Program can get more information by calling 515-281-7283 or 800-351-4659, emailing us at [dhr.icsaa@dhr.state.ia.us](mailto:ahr.icsaa@dhr.state.ia.us) or by checking out the ICSAA website at [www.state.ia.us/dhr/saa](http://www.state.ia.us/dhr/saa).

## Women's Conference, continued



KBBG, Waterloo's black radio station, broadcasting via live remote from the conference

based on gender or race. Workshop sessions covered topics from spiritual healing to counseling teenage girls about sexual violence. The sessions engaged the participants in meaningful discussions and exercises, providing tips and tools to use for personal and professional development. Ultimately, the conference proved to be an event that focused on the accomplishments and the diversity among Iowa's African-American women. It served as a forum to express the need for fellowship and leadership on a local and national level in order to achieve social and economic equality. Sponsors of the Fifth Annual Iowa African-American Women's



ICSAA Director Traevana Potter-Hall (l) and presenter Dr. Paula Mahone.

Conference included the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Iowa Department of Economic Development, the United States Department of Public Health, Wartburg College and the United States Census. The Iowa Commission on the Status of African Americans

would like to thank all of the corporate sponsors and supporters that helped to make the event a success. We would also like to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of the Waterloo Planning Committee, the commissioners, and the countless volunteers.

Most of all, we would like to thank all of the registrants for their participation and encouragement. The next state-wide conference will be held in spring 2001 in the city of Des Moines.



Conference participants touring Exhibition Hall

# Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans

## Agenda 2000



### Health

? **Decrease the Disproportionate Infant Mortality Rate of African-American Iowans**

Iowa has the second highest African-American infant mortality rate in the nation. Presently, African-American babies die at a rate that is three times higher than that of whites. As part of the "Minority Health Advisory Committee", ICSAA will work with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) to help develop solutions.

? **Increase Health Promotion of African-American Iowans**

African-Americans are dying from heart disease, stroke and cancer at rates that are disproportionate to those of whites. In addition to working with IDPH, ICSAA will organize a state wide health conference in March 2000 that will address the health issues of African-American Iowans.

### Criminal Justice

? **Decrease the Disproportionate Incarceration Rate of African-American Iowans**

Iowa rates as the number one state in the nation in the incarceration of African-Americans. While African-Americans make up less than 3% of the total population, they are 25% of the prison population. ICSAA will serve on the "Governor's Task Force on the African-American Prison Population" to fully research the issue and to make recommendations to the Governor that will meaningfully address the issue.

? **Decrease Racial Profiling**

Many states across the nation are beginning to take action against the illegal targeting of minority motorists by law enforcement. Iowa needs to face the reality that many of its African-American citizens are subjected to harassment and civil rights violations by police and other officers on a daily basis. ICSAA will work with the Commission on Latino Affairs to develop strategies for calling attention to this issue. Some initiatives include recommendations for legislation or executive orders that prohibit racial profiling and call for traffic studies.

### Economic Development

? **Decrease the Disproportionate Unemployment Rate of African-American Iowans**

Although Iowa is experiencing record low unemployment levels, African-Americans in the state continue to have difficulty getting jobs. African-Americans make up 2.3% of the labor force in Iowa, yet in some counties, notably Polk, Scott and Black Hawk counties, African-American unemployment rates are in the double digits. ICSAA has met with the Iowa Department of Economic Development and Iowa Workforce Development to discuss progressive programs to target underutilized labor pools.

? **Support African-American Entrepreneurship**

ICSAA's 2000 conference included several workshops that focused on the development of African-American businesses. Additionally, ICSAA has collaborated with the U.S. Small Business Administration to identify ways to do effective outreach to potential African-American business owners.

### Education

? **Increase African-American Teachers in Iowa**

Iowa is experiencing a shortage of teachers of all ethnic backgrounds. ICSAA will assist the Iowa Department of Education with the evaluation of diversity initiatives within the comprehensive strategy for the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers.

? **Increase Diversity Training for Education Professionals**

ICSAA will continue its educational outreach initiatives by presenting information to educators across the state about the condition of African-American Iowans. ICSAA will continue to provide referrals for agencies and organizations that are interested in diversity consultation.

? **Expand Multicultural Curriculum**

Although schools are legislatively mandated to have non-sexist, multicultural curriculum, very few are doing so satisfactorily. ICSAA will continue to serve as a resource to support multicultural curriculum through the provision of technical information and referrals.

## “I’ll Make Me A World in Iowa” Celebration Day A Success

The second annual “I’ll Make Me a World in Iowa” celebration of African-American arts and culture was a sight and sound sensation. Held on February 5 at the Iowa Historical Building, there was simultaneous dance demonstrations, jazz performances, storytelling, videos on African-American life, gospel choirs, displays and exhibits, visits by VIPs, and performances by three headliners - Chuck Davis, Greg Alan Williams and Reanae McNeal. In addition, there were samples of soul food by four restaurants and catering services. The entire event, including food samples, was free.

“Obviously, there were substantial costs involved,” said Frank Tribble, a noted Des Moines jazz musician and chairman of the 2000 Planning Committee. “This event would not have been possible without the generous assistance from our presenting sponsor, United Parcel Service, and numerous other corporate sponsors.” A special reception was hosted by First Lady Christie Vilsack at Terrace Hill as a kick-off to “I’ll Make Me A World In Iowa”. The outreach program included two ICN broadcasts for school children, a curriculum packet on the history of African-Americans in Iowa, and the building of an 11-foot-tall Freedom Ship. “The significance of this event is to show all Iowans that there is diversity in Iowa and that African-Americans have certainly made themselves



Enjoying the “I’ll Make Me A World In Iowa” Reception at Terrace Hill are (l to r): Commissioner Isalah Johnson, Betty Johnson, Commissioner Gwenda Naylor, and Governor Tom Vilsack.

known when it comes to the arts,” said Tribble, “This is something that African-Americans should take pride in.”

The next “I’ll Make Me A World In Iowa” Celebration Day will be held January 27, 2001 at the State Historical Building in Des Moines. Planning Committee Co-Chair Betty Andrews says, “I’ll Make Me A World In Iowa” is evolving from a single day event into a cultural movement that strives to educate Iowans about African-American heritage in the state.”

## Iowa State Government Cleans Up Its Own Rules

As an agency of the State of Iowa, the Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans is pleased to participate in a comprehensive administrative rules review which is being coordinated by the state’s executive branch. Activities included in the rules review include preparing a plan which articulates the manner in which ICSAA plans to review all of its laws and rules. ICSAA urges all interested persons to review its agency plan by visiting the ICSAA web site or by contacting the office to request a copy.

Other activities of the rules review are scheduled to take place between now and December 2002. These include

the preparation of an inventory of which identifies each place where ICSAA is located in the Code of Iowa and the Iowa Administrative Code. Upon approval of the inventory, ICSAA will then prepare written comment which will assess its rules and propose recommendations based on constituent input. It is critical that citizens get involved in this process by contacting ICSAA with comments about its administrative rules and procedures. This will ensure that the recommendations for potential changes to the system will reflect citizen concerns.

## Public Hearings To be Held in October

African-Americans in Iowa have a unique opportunity to shape public policy by participating in one of eight regional public hearings hosted by the Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans this fall. ICSAA commissioners and staff travel throughout Iowa to gather information on issues affecting African-Americans in the state. Individuals and organizations with an interest in these issues are encouraged to present written or oral testimony at the public hearings. Testimony will influence the ICSAA 2001 Agenda to include proposals to the Governor and General Assembly as well as other constructive action.

All persons or organizations wishing to present information for consideration at a public hearing are welcome, as well as any community members who are interested in learning more about the ICSAA. This will be an excellent opportunity to meet commissioners and discuss issues that are important to African-Americans. All hearings will be held in October 2000 and the official will be available in August. Tentative locations include Sioux City, Des Moines, Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, Dubuque, Davenport and Burlington.

**IOWA COMMISSION ON THE  
STATUS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS**

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Website: www.state.ia.us/dhr/saa

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## Across Black Iowa...

**Des Moines:** Minority children in Iowa are much more likely to fare poorly in life than white children, according to a new Iowa Kids Count special report. This report, released by the Child and Family Policy Center in Des Moines showed that while Iowa ranked seventh-best in the nation last year for overall well-being of children, that didn't necessarily hold true for African-American, Hispanic and Native American children. Data compiled by the non-profit group showed that African-Americans have an infant mortality rate three times greater than whites, a child abuse rate nearly four times greater, a juvenile detention rate 10 times greater, and a juvenile incarceration rate more than 25 times greater than whites.

**Des Moines:** A group of demonstrators known as *Concerned Community Citizens* have met frequently during the last several months to protest the death of Charles Lovelady, an African-American man whose death on February 16, 2000 at the hands of two white nightclub bouncers was determined to be a homicide by Polk County authorities. *Concerned Community Citizens* have gathered outside the doors of the Polk County Courthouse to protest a grand jury decision to indict former Graffiti's bouncers, Jeffrey Portman and Tom Dueber, both 25, on non-felony charges of involuntary manslaughter. Dueber and Portman have pleaded not guilty during their arraignment for the aggravated

misdemeanors. Nationally prominent trial lawyer Johnnie Cochran has joined Robert Wright, attorney for the Lovelady family, to represent them in a wrongful-death lawsuit targeting the two bouncers.

**Iowa City:** Although blacks represent a little less than 3 percent of Iowa City's population, new statistics show Iowa City Police Department officers stopping African Americans at well over twice that rate. Police made 11,746 traffic stops since last August and, of that number, 925 motorists were black, or 7.8 percent. An initial report last summer showed blacks making up 9 percent of the motorists police pulled over for possible traffic violations in July and August 1999. Iowa City is the only municipal police agency in the state collecting these figures. The information was supplied by officers on the scene. The department started keeping data last year to determine whether Iowa City police officers are pulling motorists over based on the color of their skin.

**Decorah:** Several African-Americans associated with Luther College have been subjected to racial harassment in the last several months. Incidences have included graffiti on private property containing racial slurs, verbal assaults by white youth and threatening telephone calls. An investigation is ongoing.