

The Iowa African-American Journal

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Spring/Summer 2006

Abraham L. Funchess, Jr. Appointed to Lead ICSAA

Commissioners

Beverly Allen
Des Moines

term expires April 2008

Dr. Michael Blackwell
Waterloo

term expires April 2006

John Campbell, Jr.
Des Moines

term expires April 2008

Charles Clayton
Fort Dodge

term expires April 2006

Jamie Howard
Davenport

term expires April 2008

Marlene Jessop
Cedar Rapids

term expires April 2009

Redmond Jones
Davenport

term expires April 2010

Krystal Madlock
Waterloo

term expires April 2008

Jerome Thomas
Dubuque

term expires April 2008

Walter Reed, ex officio
Director

Department of Human Rights

Staff

Abraham L. Funchess
Administrator

Kim Cheeks
Program Coordinator

Inside this issue:

Ongoing Covenant with Black Iowa	2
Resources	3-4
Upcoming Events	5-7
Support ICSAA	8



Abraham Funchess Jr., of Waterloo was appointed by Gov. Tom Vilsack to head the Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans.

DES MOINES – Governor Vilsack and Lt. Governor Pederson announced the appointment of Abraham Funchess, Jr. as Director of the Division on the Status of African Americans. Funchess assumed his duties on February 10, 2006.

"Abraham Funchess is a great choice for this position because of his dedication to social causes and human rights," Lt. Governor Pederson said. "He brings considerable experience to the position. Because Mr. Funchess is dedicated to empowering Iowans to be more inclusive, this will be a great opportunity for the Division on the Status of African Americans to continue strengthening the African American

community and improving the quality of life for all Iowans."

Funchess, 38, has worked to help communities with ethnic sensitivity facilitation and diversity training. He has also been an instructor at Hawkeye Community College. Funchess is currently the Senior Pastor at Jubilee United Methodist Church in Waterloo. He is a graduate of Hampton University.

The Division of the Status of African Americans is an agency of the Iowa Department of Human Rights and exists to address the needs and concerns of Iowa's African-American citizens. The Commission on the Status of African Americans, with the support of staff, community leaders, public and private agencies and organizations, considers, reviews, and recommends programs, services, policies, legislation and administrative rules that will improve the quality of life for Iowa's African-American population.

Funchess replaced Kimberly Baxter who resigned in January.

Commission Vacancies Filled

Governor Vilsack appointed the following individuals to the Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans: John Campbell of Des Moines, Charles Clayton of Ft. Dodge, Marlene Jessop of Cedar Rapids, Redmond Jones II of Davenport, and Krystal Madlock of Waterloo. Members of the commission meet four (quarterly) times a year. Once selected, they must be confirmed by the Senate, and serve a four-year term. The process

begins with an application that can be accessed from the Governor's website at www.state.ia.us/governor/boards or by calling 515-281-0215. Applicants may apply for positions on more than one board or commission based on their individual interests or expertise.

The next quarterly Commission Meeting will be held on October 13, 2006.

Ongoing Covenant With Black Iowa

By Abraham L. Funchess, Jr.

Complacency and lack of unity are perhaps two of the biggest enemies of the hour for Black folk. Just as one becomes comfortable with what she possesses or has accomplished, something always seems to happen to jar us back to "reality" and remind us of how temporal life can be and how interconnected we are with each other. For instance, two weeks ago the St. Louis talk show host Dave Lenihan was fired for his racial comment when he called Condoleezza Rice a "coon." Just last week, conservative talk show host Neal Boortz called Democratic Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney a "ghetto slut." And locally here in Des Moines, a White female worker at the Chicago Hot Dog and Deli, reportedly told Christian activist Dawn Walker, a Black woman trying to get employment applications for the youth of her church, that they "don't hire her kind."

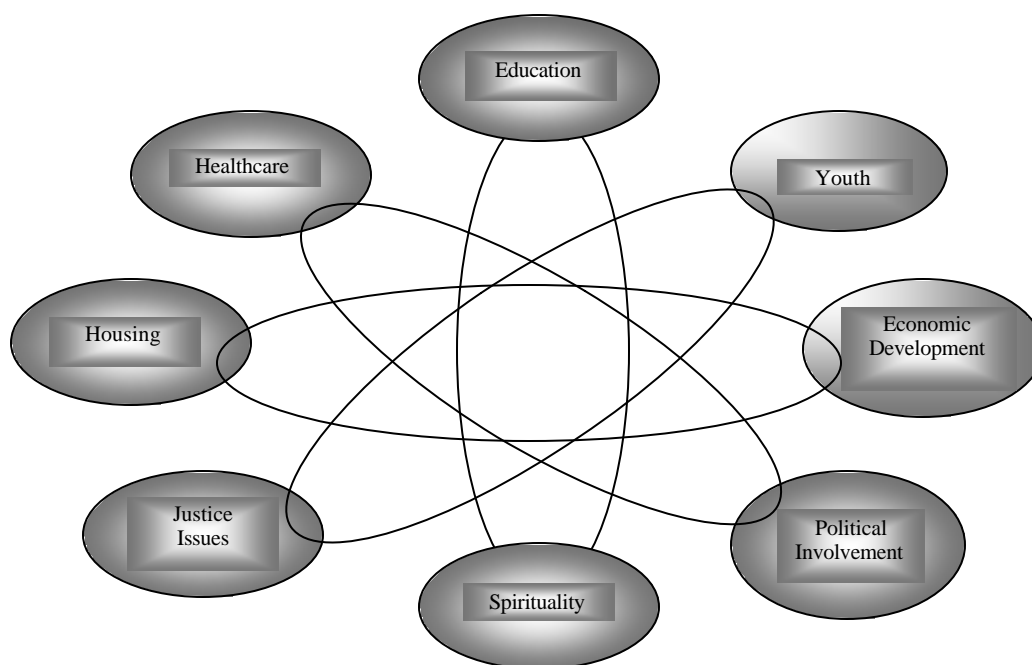
These are just three examples of the continual onslaught of oppressive verbal abuse hurled at Black people in the state and around the nation-everyday. And one does not counter this type of oppression through retaliation in kind, but rather through the deliberate and systematic effort of organization. Organization leads to the politics of change so critical to lift our people educationally, socially, and economically.

The initiative that the Division on the Status of African-Americans is currently rolling out to its constituency around the state is called the Ongoing Covenant with Black Iowa (OCBI). The OCBI is a strategic paradigm

that seeks to organize Black Iowans in various communities around critical issues that we face regularly, like the widening education gap, economic deprivation and dis-empowerment, and a certain sense of hopelessness among some of our youth, just to name a few. However, we believe that we can organize around these issues and propose concrete solutions to our problems--solutions that can change the way we as a group have thought about and done business in the past.

This grassroots effort is now taking place in some of our communities, but we have not yet reached them all. We continually invite all of our brothers and sisters to take ownership in the OCBI work because we believe that it will make a positive difference in all of our communities around the state. Some of the comments that we have received to date about this work is instructive. For instance, one sister said, "We have been waiting for this for some time," and another person commented that "I came from a city [out of state] where I was very active, and now it seems I have the opportunity to connect with other progressive people around the state."

The possibilities for greatness are certainly present within each of us. But we must organize our genius using a mechanism like to the OCBI to combat the twin evils of complacency and dis-unity, which sometimes stifles our collective ability to check unwelcome and discriminatory comments about and against our people. We must learn to love each other to a higher level of excellence.



Iowa Secretary of State's Office Introduces the New Citizen Civic Handbook

It is our pleasure to present the *New Citizen Civic Handbook: A Guide to our History, Government, Education and Voting*.

The handbook was developed to assist Iowans of diverse cultures in becoming more knowledgeable about the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship. It discusses how the United States was formed, the structure of the federal, state and local governments,

citizen involvement in the election process, and Iowa's voting process.

The handbook, facilitator guide and the *Voting in Iowa video* are posted on the Iowa Secretary of State's website: <http://www.sos.state.ia.us>

For more information, please contact Miriam Tyson at 515-281-8367 or mtyson@sos.state.ia.us

The Human Touch "Operation Restoration"



Mission

To help "New Iowans" (formally of the Gulf region) recover from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

The Human Touch is a not for profit organization initially associated with The Black Ministers Alliance. Currently funded by a grant from UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) and working in conjunction with the United Way of Central Iowa.

The Human Touch is mandated to assist individuals and families displaced by Hurricane Katrina in developing and implementing a recovery plan that will lead to self sufficiency.

For more information contact:

The Human Touch
Operation Restoration
1620 Pleasant St
Des Moines, Iowa 50314
515-243-8700

Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence Announces LIFT Program



Leadership Institute for Tomorrow (LIFT) Program Information for Applicants (Class of 2007)

Admission Statement

The Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence, which is a coalition made up of domestic violence programs in Iowa, admits that it is a primarily white coalition dominated by white women. We recognized that the combination of racial prejudice and the power that enforces that prejudice exists in all facets of ICADV on an individual, as well as an institutional level. We know that European Americans benefit from privileges that are not available to people of color. We acknowledge that the voices of women of color have not been heard. The institutionalization of white feminist thinking and values create and maintains an environment within the Coalition that prevents full participation of women of color as leaders, advocates, and women seeking services.

Mission

LIFT's mission is to support the hiring, promotion, advancement, and leadership of women of color in administrative and management opportunities.

Overview

The 2007 LIFT class will begin in October of 2006 and end at graduation on September of 2007. An independent LIFT Advisory Committee will assist ICADV in selecting approximately 10 women of color based on a competitive application process. An emphasis will be placed on candidates who identify as African American and demonstrate a potential for success in a leadership/management role in a domestic violence program or other non-profit agency.

Six 3-day training sessions will be held through the year to prepare the candidates for employment. Training topics include: feminist management strategies; grant-writing; developing an agency budget; nonprofit boards; economic justice issues; leadership development; employment law; policy development; etc.

Application packets are from the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence; contact Joan or Adam at ICADV at 515-244-8028 to have a packet mailed/faxed to you. Electronic applications are also available. Application deadline extended to September 11, 2006.

Sisters On Target Banquet
Saturday, October 14, 2006
Holiday Inn top of the Tower
1050 6th Avenue
Des Moines

Keynote Speaker: The Honorable LaMetta Wynn, Mayor of Clinton, Iowa

Reception 5:00 p.m. Dinner 6:00—9:00 p.m.

Contact : Kim Reed at 515-282-4450

Mark Your Calendars



**Families, Workers, & Neighbors:
Discovering Our Hidden Assets**

**Conference • October 16, 2006,
Institute • October 17, 2006**

**Iowa State University, Ames
For registration information visit:
<http://www.iowamosaic.org>**



"QC FIRST FRIDAYS"

"Coming **ART**" party

Friday, September 1st from 6P-10P

Isle of Capri, 1777 Isle Parkway in Bettendorf, Iowa
Mr. Jesse Adams of Rock Island High School and others will
be featured. Musical entertainment provided by the
world-renowned jazz duo "Boris & Tony."

All proceeds will be contributed to the September 11th
Disaster Relief Fund.

For more information, contact Hiram Harris at 563-391-9693 or
678-588-2799 or e-mail (HiramCHarris@aol.com).

Website: www.geocities.com/qcfirstfridays/qcfirstfridays

NAACP

Cedar Rapids Branch
Freedom Fund Banquet
Saturday, October 21, 2006
Clarion Hotel
515 33rd Ave SW
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Theme: "Education is the Key"
Keynote Speaker: Abraham L. Funchess, Jr.

For more information contact:
319-366-5500
Email: mwilsonnaacp@naacpcr.net

NAACP

Des Moines Branch
Annual Freedom Fund Banquet
Saturday, November 11, 2006
Embassy Suites on the River
101 East Locust
Des Moines, Iowa

Theme: "Voting Our Values, Valuing Our Votes"
Keynote Speaker: Kevin E. Lofton, FACHE

Reception — 5:30 p.m. Dinner — 6:30 p.m.



SAVE THE DATE

Different Colors of Violence Conference VII **Choose Respect: Give It. Get It.**

A free conference designed to help urban pre-teens & teens identify and prevent violence in their
homes, schools, communities, and in relationships

Grand View College Campus
**Johnson Wellness Center - E-15th & Morton -
Des Moines**

Thursday, December 14, 2006
HIGH school students

Friday, December 15, 2006
MIDDLE school students

Sponsored by
Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Women of Color Advisory Network

community_resource@iowacasa.org

immigrantoutreach@iowacasa.org

515.244.7424

Museum Announces September 29, 2006 Premier of Iowa African American Women's Conference

Laying Claim to Our Spirit: 2006 Iowa African American Women's Leadership Conference

Featuring keynote presenter Judy Belk, Senior Vice President of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors
A Program of the African American Historical Museum and Cultural Center of Iowa

Friday, September 29, 2006 • Crowne Plaza Hotel • Cedar Rapids

The focus of this enlightening conference includes past, present and future trends.

Tentative topics include:

Past:

- Preserving Our Legacy
- My Personal Story
- Our African Roots

Present:

- Civic Involvement
- Reclaiming Our Families
- Diabetes/Health Care

Future:

- Passing the Torch
- Identity
- Diversity

Who should plan to attend this conference:

Professionals, community volunteers, students and anyone interested in the legacy and future of African American women in Iowa.

The registration fee of \$95 includes the Opening Reception, Legacy Breakfast, Networking Lunch, Breakout Sessions and the Closing Reception.

Thank you to our current sponsors:

**Bankers Trust • Alliant Energy • Principal Financial Group
I'll Make Me a World in Iowa • Fort Dodge Animal Health**

Additional sponsorships still available starting at \$500.

Special thanks to the 27 women from throughout Iowa serving on the Blue Ribbon Steering Committee planning this outstanding event.

Conference brochures will be mailed in June 2006.

Be Proud... Be Aware... Be Connected...



Keynote

Presenter:

Judy Belk is Senior Vice President of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, a

non profit organization advising individual donors, family foundations and corporate giving programs. Over the past ten years, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors has managed over \$850 million in grants to over 40 countries. Judy has written and lectured extensively on organizational ethics, race, and social change. Her articles have aired on NPR and have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The San Francisco Chronicle* and *The Washington Post*.

Special Guests: Jo Moore Stewart and Marie Moore Lyles, natives of Ottumwa, Iowa. The Moore sisters are shining examples of preserving our legacy. Jo Moore Stewart has been the Director of Publications at Spelman College in Atlanta since 1978. An author of six books and a professional photographer, Ms Stewart was an associate editor on the staff of *Better Homes & Gardens* and a staff photographer for the *Mason City (IA) Globe Gazette* prior to joining Spelman. Marie Moore Lyles has a lifetime of experience in the field of occupational therapy including working in the Ottumwa school system, coordinating a civil rights project for the United Cerebral Palsy Association and developing curriculum for Tuskegee University.



Laying Claim to Our Spirit: 2006 Iowa African American Women's Leadership Conference

Featuring keynote presenter Judy Belk, Senior Vice President of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors

Friday, September 29, 2006 • Crowne Plaza Hotel • 350 First Ave SE • Cedar Rapids, Iowa

- Yes!** I want to attend Laying Claim to Our Spirit: The 2006 Iowa African American Women's Leadership Conference on Friday, September 29. Enclosed is my registration fee of \$95* which includes the Opening Reception, Legacy Breakfast, Networking Lunch, Breakout Sessions, and the Closing Reception.
- No,** I am unable to attend. I would like to show my support to the conference and the African American Historical Museum and Cultural Center of Iowa by becoming a member. Please send me details about membership levels.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____
 Method of Payment: Discover Card MasterCard Visa Check Bill Me
 Credit Card # _____ Exp. date _____
 Signature _____

Send this form and payment of \$95 to:

African American Historical Museum and Cultural Center of Iowa
 Attn: Joe Nolte, 55 12th Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

The registration fee of \$95 includes admission to the Opening Reception, Legacy Breakfast, Networking Lunch, Breakout Sessions and the Closing Reception.

- To ensure adequate refreshments, please check this box if you will be attending the complimentary Opening Reception on Thursday evening.

Hotel Information:

The Crowne Plaza Hotel is the official hotel for Laying Claim to Our Spirit. Room rates are \$89 per night plus tax and surcharges. Make reservations by calling 319-363-8161. To receive the group rate, mention code AAM or state that you are attending the Iowa African American Women's Leadership Conference.

For more information, contact:

Joe Nolte
 319-862-2101 x14
 319-862-2105 (fax)
 joenolte@blackiowa.org
 www.blackiowa.org

*No refunds will be given. If you are unable to attend, you are welcome to send a substitute.
 Additional information on the breakout sessions will be coming in June.
 Confirmation information and directions will be sent to you via email.



ICSAA

Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans

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Des Moines, IA 50319

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Kim Cheeks, Program Coordinator

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Fax: 515-242-6119

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

Email: dhr.icsaa@iowa.gov

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**The Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans needs your support!
Yes, I want to make a difference in the lives of African American Iowans.**

Please use my/our gift to support the following:

- Ongoing Covenant with Black Iowa Initiative
- Educational, Health, Economics, or Criminal Justice Programs
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone (home & business): _____

Email: _____

Payment Options

My Check or Money Order for \$ _____ is Enclosed

Please make payable to the Iowa Commission on the Status of African-Americans

Please include my/our name in the Annual Report Yes _____ No _____