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Note From the Director

Remembering From Whence We Have Come!

Nearly 50 years ago, August 28, 1963, from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered a 17-minute speech entitled “I Have a Dream.” During this riveting discourse, he called for an end to racism in the United States of America and a strengthened resolve of a people. Dr. King’s compelling message, which was broadcast to a large radio and television audience, as he stood before 200,000 civil rights supporters who had come to march in Washington for equal access to jobs and freedom, would become a defining moment in the American Civil Rights Movement.

Dr. King began his speech by invoking the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Emancipation Proclamation which symbolically freed millions of slaves January 1, 1863. August 1963, Dr. King claimed 100 years after the enactment of the Emancipation Proclamation, the Negro was still not free.

What did Dr. King mean by “STILL NOT FREE”? Although Blacks were no longer suppressed by the same enslavement tactics of the 1600’s, when we take a look back over the course of American history, starting with the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation, we will see numerous institutionalized tactics designed to continually devalue and oppress a people.

Let’s take a moment to read an excerpt from the Emancipation Proclamation. We will find that, although President Abraham Lincoln’s conscience could no longer allow him to support slavery, why the document is viewed in many circles as a tool used specifically for the purpose of winning the Civil War, either by military power or by forcing the South back into the Union by virtue of emancipating slaves.

“Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States, in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty-Three, and in accordance with my purpose, do publicly proclaim for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the states and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States…

I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service; and upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.”

Although the Emancipation Proclamation did not permanently end slavery, it captured the hearts and imagination of millions of Americans and fundamentally transformed the character of the Civil War. After January 1, 1863, every advance of federal troops expanded the domain of freedom. Moreover, the Proclamation announced the acceptance of Black men into the Union Army and Navy, enabling the liberated to become liberators.

Historians record, that even after President Lincoln’s accomplishment, he was deeply concerned that the Emancipation Proclamation would be seen as a temporary war measure, since it was based solely on Lincoln’s executive war powers. This caused him and his supporters to believe that an amendment to the Constitution was needed. Therefore, two years later the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution was enacted, outlawing slavery and involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime. It was the first of the three Reconstruction Amendments adopted after the American Civil War; the 14th and 15th amendments would soon follow.
Even after the triumphs of the Emancipation Proclamation, the end of the Civil War, the surrender of the Confederate states, and the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, Southern states continued to pass discriminatory legislation termed “Black Codes” to control the labor, migration, and other activities of newly-freed slaves. After the Black Codes failed to gain longevity, Jim Crow laws were enacted by those unwilling to except the equality of former slaves. Racial segregation in all public facilities, in the heart of the Southern states (former Confederacy), invoked a “separate but equal” status for African Americans, which in practice seemed fair. However, said laws created conditions for African Americans that tended to be inferior to those provided for White Americans, systematizing a number of economic, educational, and social disadvantages.

As the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum and used federal courts to attack Jim Crow statutes, White-dominated governments of southern states countered by continuing to pass alternative forms of restrictions. However, due to the resiliency of African Americans, the utilization of the judicial and political system continued to be a focal mechanism to fight for equality and overturn legalized racism.

There were many successes gained in the years to come, which were during and after the heart of the Civil Rights Movement. Many would recall the US Supreme Court case, Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, the overturn of 1896 Plessy vs. Ferguson ruling, the Montgomery Bus Boycott, The Little Rock Nine, the Woolworth’s lunch counter sit-in, the Freedom Riders, the 24th Amendment abolishing poll taxes, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Civil Rights Act of 1968, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, and prior to the Civil Rights Act of 2008.

Some would say we are not so far removed from the Civil Rights Movement and if we are not mindful, we, as a nation, are doomed to repeat many of the institutionalized biases of the past. So as we enter 2013, 50 years after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s death, and over 200,000 others who marched in Washington, 150 years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, let the resiliency of the African American community yet find an innate necessity to continue moving forward.

During January and February, we celebrated Dr. King and so many others who fought for the civil rights of all. Let us continue to move our remembrance to a year-long recognition by striving to participate in advocacy roles, in whatever form that may take on -volunteerism in a classroom teaching children to read or giving them the basic fundamentals of math and science, feeding/clothing/sheltering homeless veterans, assisting incarcerated teens to successfully re-enter society, taking in a foster child, or becoming a Big-Brother or Sister. While strong discourse in the United States is underway over health care reform, gun control, education reform, the debt ceiling, whether or not it is time to bring our soldiers home, we must continue to move forward by ensuring the most vulnerable in our society continue to have equal access to quality resources and a better way of life.

Therefore, I submit to you, that even though as a people the ‘from whence we have come’, today looks much better than where we have been, it is not time to take an extended vacation from pursuing victories concerning the civil rights issues of today. When African Americans in New Mexico, continue to report high rates of disproportionate disparities, (69.9% obesity, 40% of African American high school seniors not graduating, 33% college graduation rates (which means out of the 60% of African American seniors who do graduate high school, only half are entering New Mexico universities), highest infant mortality rates 12%, 23% of the 2.8% population living below the federal poverty line), we must continue to move forward as we remember the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” Let us not become comfortable nor idle due to the successes of the past, let us continue to stand together as we continue to improve the quality of life for all in New Mexico!
Eighth Annual African American Day

African American Day at the Legislature is a bi-annual event, scheduled during the 60-day Legislative session. It has become a powerful movement for African Americans because it represents a unified statewide approach to emphasize the voice of the African-American community through a visible presence. The participants represent a perfect blend of a cross-generational population of the African American community. “It also provides an opportunity for our community to have some face-to-face networking time with the Legislators,” words expressed by Sheila Thomas, the President of the African American Legislative Day Council.

The history of African American Day at the Legislature was the dream of one of New Mexico’s most renowned Civil Rights Activists, Ms. Alice Faye Hoppes. For Hoppes, it was most important for African Americans to make their presence known in the state of New Mexico, and what better time to do it than when everyone is lobbying legislators. She felt that it was extremely important for the State to recognize the presence of the African American community and the valuable contributions that African Americans have made. She worked feverishly to have African American Day at the Legislature become a staple event during the legislative session. Today, Ms. Hoppes’ vision continues to fill the corridors of the Roundhouse in Santa Fe.

The day’s event was highlighted by Guest speakers, entertainment, education, food, and student scholarship awards. This year’s keynote address was presented by Boyce Watkins, who is an American author, economist, political analysts, and social commentator.

However, the day could not have happened without the consistency and dedication of the African American Council - Sheila Thomas, President; Maxine Jones, Vice President; Harold Bendaw, Treasurer; Lanthia Miles, Secretary; Joycelyn Jackson, Scholarship Awards; Ronald W. Hinson; Schuyler Michael; Rep. Sheryl Williams-Stapleton; Jessie Waddles; and Rev. N. D. Smith. Additionally, the Council would like to thank all of the Sponsors for their support.
At the New Mexico State Legislature
A Book for Governor Susana Martinez

Jamal Witter, A Special Young Man

Jamal with his mother Amanda

“Jamal is simply an awesome child” an assessment that was shared with us by his adoring mother, Amanda. Generally, these are the sentiments you expect a mother to express about her only child. However, after spending a limited amount of time with Jamal, we find ourselves in full agreement with her assessment.

Jamal Witter is an energetic young man who has just turned seven. One can easily follow the rationale for his mom’s statement that his presence lights up a room, because that is what we experienced throughout our interview with him. Generally, your first impressions in a visit with Jamal will lead you to believe he is like any other child his age, energetic and in constant motion and looking for attention. But what you will soon discover is that this young man’s demeanor and presentation will impress you in such a way that you will forget he is a child in the room. His politeness and ability to engage you in conversations that will entertain even an adult mind, will reveal to you that there is something special about this young man.

The something special about Jamal that we are talking about was recently recognized at the 2012 Albuquerque Reads graduation program. Jamal was graduating from kindergarten, and he, along with several other students, was asked to read sentences to the audience. Jamal’s readings impressed members of the audiences so strongly that he was later asked to read at the Chamber of Commerce Annual Breakfast. He read the story of the Hungry Caterpillar to them and was later given a project to provide something special for Governor Susana Martinez.

That project turned out to be a book written by Jamal, and was presented to Governor Martinez on the occasion of her 2013 Address to the business communities of New Mexico. The title for the book was “The Governor Rocks!” The content of the book reveals the heart of a young man who envisions a lifetime of accomplishments. In the first sentence of the book he thanks the Governor for supporting his education. This was only the beginning; the remainder of the book details the importance of reading in enabling him to obtain a good job. Throughout the book, he shares with the Governor the importance of education for his classmates, and he even talks about her role in making sure President Barack Obama takes care of the law. He concludes his book with these words, “New Mexico wouldn’t be the same without Governor Martinez. She rocks!” Throughout the book you will find the artist in Jamal as his artwork accompanies each page of the book.

Jamal is an honor student at Bel-Air Elementary school. He is a gifted student who excels in math and writing and he has been placed in gifted classes. You don’t have to look far to find out why Jamal is so accomplished in his classwork. His mother, Amanda, explains to us Jamal’s favorite activities that contribute to his advancements in education.

“Jamal loves to read and can be found often reading books to himself out loud. He is a curious child who loves to ask questions and seek out his own answers for things that he feels he needs to know. Even as a toddler, my mom and I noticed how bright he was and how independent he wanted to be.”

Even in Jamal’s’ favorite persons’ category, you will find something different from most children his age. When movie stars and star athletes are in the hero category for most children, in Jamal’s short list of People of Interest you will find the author, Lincoln Peirce, who wrote the book Big Nate in a Class by Himself. Jamal is different even in his choice of playtime activities. He loves to play chess and work on crossword puzzles.

Continued on page 9
Janzen Allen Baldwin is 17 years old and currently a student at Lovington High School in Lovington, New Mexico. His parents are John and Trina Baldwin. He is youngest of three children; he has an older brother, Tyrid, and an older sister, Jolie.

Janzen was the winner of the Alice Faye Hoppes Scholarship Essay Contest and was awarded a check for $1,500 in February at the Legislative session during African American Day at the Legislature. Janzen followed in the footsteps of his older sister, Jolie, who was the 2010 winner of the Alice Faye Hoppes Essay Scholarship.

Growing up as a child, Janzen loved the outdoors and was fascinated by the many creatures that roamed the earth. As he got older, his fascination included all the earth’s beautiful life that the world had to offer.

During his time in junior high school, Janzen’s time was spent playing drums in the school band and exploring different extra-curricular activities to keep him occupied. In his high school years, he participated in more organized activities such as track and cross country. He was accepted into the National Honor Society 2011-2012.

An active volunteer for his community, he has performed community service work for the National Guard Armory as well as volunteered to work for various churches. He is a certified licensed lifeguard for the Lovington City Pool, and will continue working as a lifeguard while attending college to assist with his school tuition.

Currently, he is a proud youth member of the NAACP and has participated in events for the Black community as well as mentoring at-risk elementary students. His hobbies include reading, lifting weights, jogging, and spending quality time with friends and family. He has recently been accepted into Eastern New Mexico University, and plans to attend next Fall and pursue a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology and eventually receive a Master’s.

“I look forward to a life of unselfishness, as well as helping people to understand each other as a whole, so that our society as a unit can build an attitude of tolerance, one step at a time,” says Janzen.

Janzen Allen Baldwin

Amanda shared, “My mom says that she sees some of the things in Jamal that she once saw in me when I was a child such as loving to read books. But mostly she agrees that Jamal is a unique child with a strong mindset of his own. Jamal is a kind and loving child who is always concerned about others. He amazes me daily.”

Jamal is an impressive young man who takes life at face value. He is not fazed by the things that are not present in his life; he just replaces them with the resources he can access. He is not waiting for someone to dictate his future; he is creating the future he expects to have. You may think that maybe these words are too advanced to attach to a child his age. Well, maybe you haven’t met Jamal Witter.

Jamal Witter

Jamal shows off his book about Governor Susana Martinez
The Transition of Spiritual Leadership

Bishop W. Charles Green Sr., D.D.
A Spiritual Legend Steps Down

On December 31, 2012, Bishop W. Charles Green Sr. retired from his position as the Jurisdictional Prelate of the First Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the New Mexico Church of God in Christ, Inc., where he has served as the Overseer of 23 churches from 1996-2012.

The New Mexico Church of God In Christ (COGIC) Jurisdiction, is an affiliate of the Church of God In Christ, International, headquartered in Memphis, Tennessee, over 100 years, and led by the current Presiding Bishop, Bishop Charles E. Blake.

“Bishop Green has been a humble and gracious leader who has accomplished much during his time of service.”

Bishop Green’s track record reveals his commitment to God, family and the lives and souls of individuals. He served in several appointed positions in the Church of God in Christ in the state of New Mexico. He was a treasurer, Superintendent of the Eastern District, and State Youth Director. He was appointed by the late Bishop S.V. Brooks as Second Administrative Assistant, which eventually led to Bishop Green’s appointment as the Presiding Bishop of the Church of God in Christ in 1968. After the death of Bishop W.C. Griffin in 1995, Bishop Green became the spiritual leader for the Church Of God In Christ in the state of New Mexico, as the Jurisdictional Prelate.

Bishop Green’s dedication to God and the people of God is reflected in the length of time he has been in the service of God’s work. Bishop Green was first appointed Pastor of First Church of God in Christ in Clovis, New Mexico, in 1957, by the late Bishop J. W. Taylor of Phoenix, Arizona. He has been in the ministry almost 59 years and as a pastor, 55 years. He has been married to Evangelist Ange Lou Green for 62 years, and they have three sons and three daughters.

Bishop Green believed that God’s challenge to him was to bring about togetherness among the people, and provide peaceful leadership. He also believes that it was important to provide an understanding of everyone’s perspective place within the church body. “Through it all my main purpose is to please God. As Solomon petitioned God (paraphrased) Lord help me and bless me how to go in and out before your great people. Lead them in the way that you have ordained for me to lead them, and encourage them to be faithful to you, and to the Word of God; and the Word of God that applies, is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path (KJV Psalm 115:105). So every day this is been my desire, to help men and women whomever they are.”

As Bishop Green prepares to pass the baton of Leadership to Bishop J. L’Keith Jones, who will be replacing him as the next Jurisdictional Prelate of the First Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the New Mexico Church of God in Christ, Inc., he speaks of his successor in these words: “I have observed Bishop Jones from when he was a young child about five years of age, and what has impressed me as he grew older has been the dedication to service that God has put in his heart. What I see in him is that he will be a great leader; …seen God working in his life, and I am grateful and thankful to be able to pass the baton to a capable leader as Bishop Jones. He has a heart and a leadership style that will provide great leadership and service to the body of the Church of God in Christ. His region will be greatly blessed of God.”

Bishop Green plans to continue to be a servant of God and provide any assistance for Bishop Jones as he moves forward in his role as the Jurisdictional Prelate.
The Statewide Focus Magazine

Bishop J. L’Keith Jones is the new Jurisdictional Prelate of the First Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the New Mexico Church of God in Christ, under the direction of Bishop W. C. Griffin. Bishop Griffin was his mentor and a father figure for the younger Minister Jones. “I owe so much to Bishop Griffin, who trained me for leadership. I never aspired to replace him. I just admired the leader he was and his patience with people.” At the passing of Bishop Griffin in 1995, Elder Keith Jones became the Pastor of Metropolitan Church.

Bishop Jones had these words to say about replacing another mentor and one of New Mexico’s legends in the ministry. “Bishop Green is to be admired for the great leadership he provided for New Mexico. He is a legend and has accomplished so much that has not been publicized. In fact, there is no way to publicize all the things that he has accomplished as a spiritual leader in the state of New Mexico. I don’t know of any pastor in the state of New Mexico, who has maintained the position of Pastor as long as Bishop Green. He has been instrumental in my life from when I was a small child. One of the things that I have always recognized about him is that he has always carried himself with distinction.”

Bishop Jones says that because Bishop Green retired voluntarily, will be a great advantage for their church body going forward, because we can still access his counsel. “We don’t have to re-invent the wheel because his wisdom of presence will be within our reach, and we can build from the directional leadership that he has provided, and he will be able to observe the seed that he has planted, grow to fruition. Bishop Green is still my leader, and God has blessed me to have him serve as my mentor and my leader for all these years.”

Currently, Bishop Jones is the third youngest Bishop within the national Church Of God in Christ. He shared, “I really want to give credit to my loving wife of 15 years, Rosalind, to all of my predecessors, and the pastors in the state who expressed confidence in me to lead this great organization. I believe the Church of God in Christ, because of their leadership and the foundation that has been built upon the shoulders of our predecessors; that our best days are ahead of us.”
This year, honored were World War II Veterans—shining the spotlight on four groups with strong ties to New Mexico: The Navajo Code Talkers, the Defenders of Bataan, and two famed New Mexico National Guard Units—the 804th Tank Destroyer Battalion (an anti-Tank Unit which saw extensive action in Europe) and the 120th Combat Engineer Battalion (assigned to assault landing teams of the 45th Infantry Division in Italy, Southern France and Germany.

Also honored was The Tuskegee Airmen—the nation’s first African-American group of Aviators—and survivors of the Pearl Harbor Attack. Lt. Gov. John Sanchez was Keynote Speaker.
The University of New Mexico has established the first Health Extension Rural Office (HERO) Coordinator in Hobbs, New Mexico.

The Health Sciences Center is proud to announce that Evelyn Rising has been chosen for that position. Evelyn has been a resident of Hobbs for more than 25 years and is well known as a community activist. Evelyn was most recently Associate Academic Dean of the University of the Southwest as well as former Lifestyles Editor of the Hobbs Daily News-Sun. In addition, she serves on the board of MyPower, Inc.

HEROs grew out of community input and recommendations as to how the UNM Health Sciences Center (HSC) can best help communities achieve greater capacity to address their needs and improve their measures of health. In the case of Hobbs, the local J.F. Maddox Foundation and three prominent leaders of the African American community, Patricia Grovey, BJ Choice, and Joe Cotton consulted on the selection process. Evelyn Rising is the 28th National President of the National Association of Colored Women’s Clubs, Inc. She recently worked with the Lovington museum to present a program on African Americans and churches. She is 1st Vice President of International Women in Emergency Management, and serves on the Board of the Frederick Douglass Museum, housed in D.C. This year she will help in co-hosting the Harriet Tubman National Holiday festivities to be held in Maryland and New York.

Rising is a member of the St. John Baptist Church. She says she enjoys being around her family, especially her mother, Johnnie M. Watkins.

This HERO position has a dual role in working with the southeast corner of the state in general and with the African American community in particular. It started February 18th and the office will be housed in the Hobbs Head Start Office at 950 E Snyder Street. Evelyn is excited to be in a unique position to help students and empower the Hobbs community in improving its health. We hope that the community will congratulate Evelyn and come together to support her in these efforts.

An open house and reception will be held in March to acquaint everyone in the county with the numerous health benefits available to them. For information, contact Tonya Covington, Program Coordinator, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Community Health,

Phone: (505) 610-5656, MSC 09 5065, 1 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131

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**Hobbs Gets Its HERO**

**Article by Tonya Covington**

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**Veteran’s Month Luncheon Hosted by the NAACP Dona Ana Branch**

On November 3, 2012, the Dona Ana Branch NAACP made history by bringing together several key individuals at a luncheon they hosted during Veteran’s Month in honor of two prestigious Tuskegee Airmen in Las Cruces, NM; Mr. J. Clayton Flowers and Dr. James Williams. The guest speaker for the event was none other than Brigadier General, Gwen Bingham. She is the first female Commander at White Sands Missile Range. This event was held at one of Las Cruces’ historical landmarks, The Alameda House. The event that was loaded with pioneers, history makers and a historical landmark, will truly be documented as an event for the ages.
Special Acknowledgments and Awards

State NAACP President, Sam Bone, Jr. Honored in Las Cruces

In presenting the Distinguished Service Award, Mayor Myagishima, had these words to say about the award recipient, Mr. Sam Bone, Jr., “When I was elected to the City Council, I met so many people who have helped to shape Las Cruces into the dynamic city that it is today. I have known Mr. Bone for a long time. Subsequently, as the years passed, and I was elected Mayor in 2007, I wanted to start an award that would be something special and distinguish itself from other awards. That is why we have the Distinguished Service Award; and today, I want to recognize one such person with that award, and that is Mr. Sam Bone Jr. I’d like to take a moment to tell you about what Mr. Bone has accomplished. He has a Bachelor’s Degree in Electrical Engineering and has worked for the White Sands Missile Range over 34 years. He served as the Project Manager (Electronic Engineer) for the Department of Defense, and he has also served as Director of the Martin Luther King Jr. State Commission in Albuquerque, for nine years. Sam was the Interim Director for Black Programs at New Mexico State University, and was a member of the Institute of Engineering and Electrical Engineering. His community involvement includes two gubernatorial appointments, one to the Public Safety Advisory Committee, and the other to the Crime Stoppers Commission. He was also appointed by the New Mexico Attorney General to the New Mexico Advisory Committee on environmental problems. Other highlights of his career include being the recipient of the NAACP Outstanding Leadership Award, and a recipient of the White Sands Missile Range Commanding General Award in support of a Black History observance. I know Mr. Bone, our Honoree today, truly has helped to shape Las Cruces into being a great city for everyone. So for all your contributions, Mr. Bone, we would like to present you with the Mayors Distinguished Service Award.”

Making State and National News

One of the best kept secrets in the state of New Mexico, is how accomplished their Senior Olympics men’s basketball teams age 55 and older has been over the past eight years. The team sponsored by Bennett Hutt and Company has been undefeated in the state of New Mexico, their record for the time span of 2004-2012, is 24 wins with no losses.

In the national championship competition, that is held every two years, New Mexico’s 55 years and older Men’s Basketball team has advanced well in the tournaments, and in 2011, they advanced to the national championship game in Houston, Texas, before falling short to Arkansas 56 to 51. They will be chasing the gold medal in Cleveland, Ohio, in July of 2013. Congratulations to the Bennett Hutt and Company senior Olympics Men’s Basketball team 55 years and older, and good luck in this year’s national championship competition!
Leading by Example

Mrs. Johnnie Scott, long time member of the Otero County NAACP in Alamogordo, New Mexico, was recently honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award. Mrs. Scott is dedicated to ensuring that Otero County NAACP gives back to the local community. The Otero Branch provides scholarship opportunities to its local students, open its education sessions to the public, and honors an educator each year within Otero County. Because of her long time devotion to education, the award is named in Mrs. Scott’s honor. We thank Mrs. Scott for her leadership, commitment and support.

Mr. Bill Brooks, Otero County NAACP Legal Dress Committee Chairman, was recently honored for his dedicated service to the community. Mr. Brooks has tirelessly worked over 50 cases to aid those who were affected by civil rights violations. Mr. Brooks also announced his resignation as Legal Dress Committee Chair. However, he will remain an active member of the Branch. The NAACP salutes Mr. Brooks and wishes him well in his future endeavors.

Kyene “Kye” Hale is a 2010 graduate of Alamogordo High School and is currently a sophomore at San Jose State University in California, where he is pursuing a career in Civil Engineering. He is also a member of the Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC) and will pursue a career in the United States Air Force upon graduation.

Being an ROTC Cadet has allowed Kye to develop his leadership skills, learn about the military profession of arms and maintain a healthy and fit lifestyle. Kye has also volunteered his time in the local community with the Special Olympics and the Soup Kitchen. Kye feels that through these experiences he has had the ability to self-reflect and to fully understand the importance of giving back to the community. Kye’s future plans are to become an officer in the United States Air Force, obtain a Master’s Degree in Architecture design and to one day own his own design company that will create buildings and structures around the world.

The Otero County NAACP extends best wishes to Kye in achieving his future goals.
The New Mexico Martin Luther King Jr. State Commission, continues to sponsor one of the largest multicultural celebrations in the state of New Mexico. The march that began in 1984, continues to bring together cultures from all walks of life for the birthday celebration of one of the most effective civil rights leaders in our nation’s history. The Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Parade blends together all races, ages, and professions, in a march down Martin Luther King Boulevard, to a commemorative ceremony on the Civic Plaza. Kimberly Shelby, the Executive Director of the Martin Luther King Jr. State Commission, stated that there were in excess of 4,000 people participating in the march and ceremony this year.
State of New Mexico
African American Elected Officials

State Treasurer
James B. Lewis
2055 South Pacheco Street
Post Office Box 5135
Santa Fe NM 87505-5135
Office Phone (505) 955-1120

Representative
Jane E. Powdrell-Culbert - (R)
District: 44
County: Sandoval
Representative Since: 2003
Address: Box 2819
Corrales, NM 87048
Office Phone: (505) 721-9021
jpandp@comcast.net

Representative
Sheryl Williams Stapleton - (D)
District: 19
County: Bernalillo
Representative Since: 1995
Address: Box 25385
Albuquerque, NM 87108
Home Phone: (505) 265-6089
sheryl.stapleton@nmlegis.gov

Hobbs City
Commissioner
Crystal Hodge-Mullins
Commissioner, District 3
401 South Elm Pl.
Hobbs, NM 88240
Office Phone (575) 318-3673
cmullins@hobbsnm.org

Clovis City
Commissioner
Sandra Taylor-Sawyer
Commissioner, District 2
PO Box 760
Clovis, NM 88101-0760
Office Phone (575)-769-4136
staylor-sawyer@cityofclovis.org
Dr. Sandra Taylor-Sawyer is one of the most remarkable women in the state of New Mexico. She is a true trailblazer whose accomplishments are difference makers for the lives of many people.

In February, she was one of the honorees of the 2013 Women of Influence in the state, an event sponsored by Albuquerque Business First. She was honored as one of the women leaders in the state’s industries, profession and organizations - women who excelled in the areas of business and community.

Her life is an icon for those whose desire is to be accomplished during their lifetime, because she lives by a formula that continues to inspire her next steps. These words contained in her mission statement say a lot about her commitments, “I am a child of God and I live well to help others live well.” She lives a life dedicated to the encouragement of others. From her areas of service in her business ventures to her community involvement, others continue to benefit from her accomplishments.

Dr. Taylor-Sawyer shared something she considers key. “I didn’t just start this journey yesterday. I am 52, and things in my life did not just happen for me all of a sudden. The one tangible thing I can point to that has been consistent in my life is that I never gave up on my dreams. Many times I find that people give up too early on the dreams that drive them. Often times as we get older, we abandon our dreams. But I want you to know that no matter what happens or when it was put in front of you, keep reaching for that goal and don’t let anyone stop or discourage you. It is never too late to reach your dreams or your goals. God sets the only timeline for your life that matters.”

Dr. Taylor-Sawyer truly lives the life that she speaks about. She was just recently appointed President of the Clovis Curry County Chamber of Commerce, becoming the first African American to that position. She and her husband, Retired Master Sergeant Donald T. Sawyer, Jr., co-own Dream Givers, LLC., which is the parent company of Marriage and Family Mediation and Independent Associates of LegalShield. Dr. Taylor-Sawyer stated that their businesses reflect their desire to advance the aspirations of individuals to live better. “One part of our business is to help couples and help families stay together, and the other part is that people need to know what their rights are. Both of those divisions of our business are designed to help people improve their resources. I’m talking about finance resources as well as to protect their business and their personal assets; and in the end, we believe we are helping people to maintain their dreams.”

The impact of Dr. Taylor-Sawyer’s commitment and compassion to serve has paid great dividends for the Clovis community. The following information highlights a summary of her impressive resume of community and business involvement. She served as Business Specialist for the Small Business Development Center at Clovis Community College, and in 1996, she was promoted to Director of the SBDC, which today translates into 21 years of service. During Dr. Taylor-Sawyer’s tenure as Director of the SBDC, she and her staff have assisted several businesses to obtain millions of dollars in capital formation. Under her leadership, the Center has increased business advising services to the minority business community and sponsored summer youth entrepreneurship workshops for elementary age students.

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Pastor Calvin Robinson is looking to change the lives of individuals by removing walls that are hindering God’s spiritual movement.

Originally from Los Angeles, California, Pastor Robinson’s path to New Mexico can be qualified as a lifelong journey to service. He feels that God has directed his path to fulfill the type of ministry work he is now undertaking. “I believe that God has been calling my life to service since I was the age of 16, but I kept running from His call. It wasn’t until I was about 45 years old that I became an ordained minister. However, now as I look back at all the things I went through - the drugs, my failures and bad decisions, these were all factors that have strengthened my commitment to God and has reinforced an understanding of the value He has for each soul in need of redemption,” shared Pastor Robinson.

Pastor Robinson is a firm believer that God doesn’t send you on a journey without providing you the resources to succeed. “God has been the pilot in my life. He not only sent me a helpmate for my journey, but he sent me one that was already battle trained. He is referring to his wife, Lilly, whom he met and married while he was living in Garden City, Kansas. Lilly is the daughter of the late Rev. V.L. Bobbs, who moved from Kansas to New Mexico, and subsequently became the Pastor of True Vine Baptist Church. Lilly had watched her mother, Dorothy, dutifully serve as the First Lady to her father for over 50 years. Pastor Robinson and his wife soon moved to Albuquerque and joined his father-in-law at True Vine Baptist Church. “The fact that my wife had an excellent mentor has been a blessing for my life. Her knowledge of the challenges and the weight of the work required of a minister have provided me an invaluable resource. Then, I was blessed to have her father serve as a mentor for me in the ministry,” said pastor Robison. (Add to that the fact that he could draw knowledge from five cousins who are also pastors across the country, and a father who was a deacon for 60 years). He felt God had blessed him with an army to draw from and he was now fully armored to begin his work for God.

The work that Pastor Robinson feels he has been in training for is as a prison Chaplain with the State Corrections Department, a position he has held for six years. However, his work doesn’t stop there. He is currently appointed in Gallup, New Mexico, where he is also serving as the new Pastor at St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church. He is replacing St. Paul’s former pastor, who resigned in 2011. These are the areas of service that Pastor Robinson feels that his life has been prepared to make a difference. He describes the walls that he is talking about with these words. “First I want to start with the prison walls, because those are walls that everyone can envision because we know prison walls serve to lock away. But those are not the walls that will redirect the lives of individuals. The lives that we are talking about changing require us to remove the walls that lockup an individual’s life values. I know inmates can be changed. I try to minister to those who are incarcerated and give them viable avenues by which their lives can change. The substance of change for inmates deals with their sense of morality. God will change and clean up a life from the inside, which will make it a change with substance.

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Embracing their Legacy

Colin Powell, former United States Secretary of State Visits Hobbs

By Evelyn Rising

General Colin Powell, USA (Ret.), the son of Jamaican immigrants, was born in Harlem and raised in the South Bronx, New York. He was the first African-American Secretary of State (2001-2005). General Powell was the Keynote Speaker, February 26th in Hobbs, NM, for the Jack Maddox Distinguished Lecture Series, hosted by the University of the Southwest. He spoke to a day audience of high-school students about exceeding expectations; and to a packed evening audience about leadership and values along with sharing some of the highlights of his second book, It Worked for Me.

Powell kept the students fascinated as he spoke about how he found his passion for life and carved a niche in the U.S. Army through the City College of NY R.O.T.C. Program. He encouraged students to go to college and to take time to enjoy it. “Drink it all in,” he said, relating how his college courses and Liberal Arts Degree helped prepare him for life. He advised to work hard and to make those who support you proud. “Find something you love and do it well,” he stated.

The retired Four-Star General emphasized that he learned not to let people judge him based on his background or color of his skin, and not to let other people’s judgment hold him back. Through humorous anecdotes about his childhood, his family and career, Powell told the audiences success was measured - not though a series of steps, but through everyday living. “Go through every day to be a success.” He strongly encouraged every person to think independently, to avoid wrongdoing and to stay out of trouble. The past is done; the present is now, and you can daily prepare for your future.

When asked by a student if he had ever been afraid, he admitted he had and stated that fear is a normal part of life, realize it is fear, not question it, but to internalize it and move on.

In closing, Powell stated the importance of keeping integrity intact. “Build upon your good reputation and let nothing tarnish it,” he admonished, telling them that “one’s reputation was at the cornerstone of success and that one life event could ruin it.” For more than 50 years, General Powell has devoted his life to his family and to public service.
Britney Danielle Grovey, M.D. was the Keynote Speaker for the Hobbs NAACP 32nd Annual Awards Banquet held in January. “Dr. Grovey’s return (to Hobbs) to speak at the NAACP Banquet is a very special occurrence because she represents everything the Awards Banquet stands for. Her accomplishments and her contributions are everything we want our youth to model,” says NAACP President, Joe Cotton.

Dr. Grovey’s trip back to speak for her hometown NAACP is filled with roads of success stories. Dr. Grovey graduated from Hobbs High School in 2002, as a Distinguished Honor Graduate ranked fourth in her class. She is the 2001–2002 J.F. Mattox Distinguished Scholar, which provided a full scholarship to the school of her choice, which was Brown University, an Ivy League school in Providence, Rhode Island. Dr. Grovey had many academic and athletic achievements while at Brown. She is a two-time All-American in track and field, two-time academic All-Ivy Honoree, Northeast Region Field Athlete of the Year, five-time Heptagonal (Ivy League Meet of Champions) Triple Jump champion, Brown University Freshmen Track Athlete of the Year, Ivy League conference championship record holder in the Triple Jump and is the current indoor and outdoor Brown University Triple Jump record holder having broken a 15-year school record. One of her proudest accomplishments is having qualified for the Olympic trials and was a finalist in the triple jump.

Dr. Grovey graduated from Brown University in 2006, with a BA in Biology. She went on to attend one of the top medical schools in the nation, University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine where she obtained a degree of Doctor of Medicine.

Joe Cotton, the Hobbs NAACP President, shared these words with us about the special guest speaker: “It is wonderful to see a young person from our community become as accomplished as Dr. Grovey. She is a great inspiration for the youth in our community because they have first-hand knowledge of who she is and witnessed her accomplishments when she was a student at Hobbs High School. She is an ideal person to speak to our young people because she has first-hand knowledge of what they are going through. When she tells them what has worked in her life, there should be no doubt in their hearts about what she is telling them about the success they can have when they make good choices in life.”

What is also amazing about Dr. Grovey’s accomplishments is that she was able to have great success in two areas while in college. She set high standards for herself and balanced an athletic career while pursuing her degree in medicine.

Her mother, Patricia Grovey, is the director of the Hobbs Head Start Child and Family Services Program.

According to Joe Cotton, this was the highest attendance at the NAACP Awards Banquet ever, with over 220 individuals in attendance. “I know the attendance was higher this year because we had Dr. Grovey as our special guest speaker. The entire community is proud of her, and she has been a symbol of excellence. This year we were able to give awards to 14 students for their accomplishments. We award students for being solid students and for their accomplishments in extracurricular activities, and in the community. Each of the 14 students is able to apply for and receive scholarships from our Branch after we receive forms documenting enrollment into college. Dr. Britney Grovey was one of the students who received a scholarship award in the past.”

Cotton says that bringing Dr. Britney Grovey back into the community to speak to young people is a direction he hopes the NAACP will continue to move toward in the future for the Awards Banquet. “Too often we think that only more seasoned people can say the right words to our young people. In essence, young people are more inspired by other young people. That is not to say that each year we will be able to find a homegrown youth with the credentials of accomplishment of a Dr. Britney Grovey to place before our young people, but we need to have greater commitments to have a young person fill the role of our guest speaker.”

This year’s theme for the Hobbs NAACP is the same as the National NAACP, “Your Power, Your Decision.” Truly, Dr. Britney Grovey is an excellent model for young people, and of the success that accompanies the power of their decisions.

Receiving awards this year were: Darrence Taylor, Davon Hulse, Javon King, Kelsi Lewis, Devin Allen, Marissa Triplett, Terrell Wright, Christina Price, Tevin Franklin, Earl Woods, Shaq Swain, Ashonti Wright and Anthony Rogers.
Former students of the Booker T. Washington School in Hobbs, New Mexico, known as the BTW Alumni Group, continues to work diligently to keep the history and the pride of the one-time legendary school, in the forefront of African American history in New Mexico.

The BTW Alumni Group has established the Booker T. Washington All School Reunion as a celebration that will assure the continuation of the exchange of information that documents the outstanding legacy of the first and only all-Black school in Hobbs, New Mexico.

The establishment of the Booker T. Washington School in Hobbs, is considered one of the most important milestones in the development of the Hobbs school system. The school was established in 1929, as a segregated Black school in Hobbs. The last graduating class of Booker T. Washington was in 1954.

Ms. Wanda Bell has been appointed as one of the historians responsible for keeping the legacy alive. She is a computer lab manager at Edison Elementary School in Hobbs, a position she has held for 37 years.

The reunion is a bi-annual event that organizers hope will be carried forward by family or community members who recognize the importance the school has played, not only in the history of the Hobbs and the African-American culture, but in the history of New Mexico. The following pictures are of some of the history making students of Booker T. Washington School, and of some of the gatekeepers of the legacy who attended their most recent reunion.
Cassandra Thomas was born at Sandia Base Hospital in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She is the middle child of 5, with 2 older brothers and 2 younger sisters. The family lived on military bases around the country before returning to Albuquerque.

Upon returning, Cassandra enrolled in Eldorado High School and graduated in 1975. She then attended New Mexico State University where, in addition to her responsibilities as a student, she joined the New Mexico Army National Guard. She graduated from New Mexico State University with a degree in Social Work.

Cassandra decided to stay in Las Cruces after graduation. She worked with a youth program for a short time prior to being hired by the New Mexico Employment Security Commission, which is now the New Mexico Work Force Connection. Cassandra was the first African American to be hired in that office and she remained with them for nearly 26 years. During those years, several issues and grievances had to be addressed and resolved. She held many positions during her years of service. She also worked very closely with the New Mexico State University Black Programs to assist students in finding jobs.

Cassandra organized a coordinated job fair in addition to matching jobs for jobseekers, assisted employers in hiring staff, and informed new businesses about the current labor market in the area. She gave money to the homeless jobseekers to buy food on several occasions and referred them to places to get clothing to wear to job interviews. Cassandra was in charge of the office when the Area Director was out of the office and she retired as Placement Supervisor.

Cassandra has also served on Las Cruces Police Athletic League Board for several years. She is a very committed member of The Latter Rain Harvest Fellowship Church; she organizes various events and acquires special guest speakers for them; assists the Pastor in ministering at the homeless shelter; is the sound technician and sometimes the cleaner. She is a member of the American Legion Post 10.

Cassandra continues to serve her country in the U.S. Army. She transferred from the New Mexico National Guard to the US Army Reserves, moved to interline, and is now a Master Sergeant and an instructor. She travels around the country to the bases to set up schools and teachers.

Cassandra comes from a family that believes in serving their community and country. Her grandfather, father, and stepfather served in the military. Her mother, Lola Lestrick, serves in her community in various capacities and is retired from the State of New Mexico as a Public Servant. Cassandra’s older brother, the late Johnny Bouldin, retired from the city of Albuquerque after 29 years as a city Bus Driver, and another older brother, Jerome Thomas, is a Transportation Supervisor for Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, in addition to being a minister.

Cassandra’s coworkers got together and gave her a fantastic retirement party. Her sisters, Vanessa and Cynthia, and her sister-in-law, Shannon, and extended family members came down from Albuquerque. Mayor Ken Miyagishima of Las Cruces also attended; he presented her with a Proclamation that proclaimed June 29, 2012 as “Cassandra Thomas Day”. Cassandra’s plans for the future are to go back to school to get her Masters Degree in Counseling and renew her Social Workers license.
Members and Friends, as we look forward to the year 2013, I wanted to take a minute or two and reflect on the many accomplishments that we experienced as a branch in 2012. First, I would like to say that our branch continues to have strong membership numbers, 70 members at this time. We will continue to seek new members to add to the richness and diversity of our branch. We will continue to recruit young adults to ensure the longevity of the branch for decades to come. The financial status of our branch is good and we will continue to seek means to minimize our branch expenses, yet fully serve the community. The solid foundation of members and finances allows us the opportunity to serve with effectiveness.

That being said, we must continue to support our youth branch which supports our goals and functions as an adult branch. They are under the new leadership of Barbara Antrom. She has shown the great ability to listen to the youth, and make goals based on their interest and need. I am excited about the work that she and our youth will accomplish this year. If you know youth who should be active in our community, invite them to the youth meetings that occur every second Saturday at 11:00 AM at Haynes Park in Rio Rancho.

The Legal Redress team has been busy servicing our community with issues relating to jobs, housing, home retention, education and so forth. The word is out that we are here to help. As a result, we are getting request for assistance. You can see the minutes from former meetings for details about the cases we have worked on this year. Please forward my number 505-362-3479 (C) or our email address RRNAACP@yahoo.com to people who need it.

The social events such as Juneteenth and the Christmas party were not only fun, but well received by the public. During the 2013 school year, we hope to link with more organizations to increase the visibility of our events and activities. For example, during the month of February, we participated with the New Mexico Black History Month Festival and Wilhelmenia served on the volunteer committee.

Last year, our branch actively sought to get our community registered to vote, and out to vote in 2012. The NAACP across the nation was successful in getting people of color and the disenfranchised out to vote. The Gubernatorial vote is in 2014, so we must continue voter registration until then.

A big thank you to our branch VP, Billy Moore, for ensuring that we have a venue for our meetings and other events; thank you to Mae Lockett for her work as the Secretary and all of the other foot work that she does for our Branch; thank you to Barbara Aikins, our second VP; thank you to our Treasurer, Lavorn Brown, for making sure that the dollars we have make sense, and for the web design. Thank you to Yvonne Mangrum for the support she supplies as Asst. Secretary and website design; and thank you to Saundra Mason for her work as the Membership Chair; December was her last meeting in that role.

We are in need of a new Membership Chair and Legal Redress Chair. If you are interested in either role, please contact me.

Thank you to all of our members because you continue to help fight for equality access to education, housing, employment, and so forth. I hope that you are still determined to make a difference in our community. Please visit our website for the Schedule of Events for 2013.
A Shining Star in the Desert

Jasmine Karonde La’Mae Hicks is a young lady in Roswell, New Mexico, who is definitely on the move, deserving of a watchful eye, and whose presence alone can brighten your outlook! She is the eldest of three children born to Christopher and Crystal Hicks. Her father, a native of Roswell, made the decision to move back to be closer to his parents after he retired from the Army in 2001.

Jasmine is a Junior at Roswell High School, and has a 4.25 GPA. She is active in her local church, singing on the praise team and working diligently with her Sunday School class. She loves dance, choreography, reading and mathematics. She is also an active member of the Honor Society, Roswell High chorus, and volleyball and basketball teams.

In the Fall, Jasmine enrolled in her first college course at Eastern New Mexico University of Roswell. She would like to attend Ole Miss University in Oxford, Mississippi, upon graduation. Her plan is to study pre-law with hopes of getting into a magnet law school. “I guess it has been since I was four years old that I have been interested in the justice system. That is why I have a strong interest to enter law school and become a lawyer. The thought of becoming a policewoman crossed my mind, but I am a girly girl and couldn’t imagine myself trying to take down a criminal,” says Jasmine.

Jasmine attended the Presidential Inauguration this year with ‘Lead for America’ organization. She remarked, “It was an amazing opportunity for me to be able to attend the Inauguration. First, I would never have believed that I’d be standing and breathing the same air as the first African-American President of the United States. I also got to interact with people from all around the world from many different cultures, and that was an absolute breathtaking experience.”

Jasmine is a self-proclaimed role model for her younger brothers, Jaivion and Jaylan. “Sometimes it can be challenging, but for the most part, it has grounded me to know that I can serve as a role model for their maturity. My mom has been the most inspirational person in my life and my role model; and my life has been blessed because of her wisdom. She has an inner strength that has driven her to have accomplished much in her life. She is the one who pushes me to be the best I can.”

Jasmine is an exceptional teenager, who is very encouraging to her peers and to those surrounding her. “The fact that I know who I am gives me an inner peace when I know times are challenging. I always tell myself that I am a child of God who should not fear or be discouraged. At times, my friends see me smiling for no reason, and wonder why. Sometimes it’s hard to explain in words how God makes your heart smile.”

She is one of New Mexico’s brightest stars!
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Holiday & Community Service Award Ceremony

Written by George Geder;
President, Santa Fe Branch NAACP

The Santa Fe Branch of the NAACP hosts an annual event at the New Mexico State Capitol Rotunda called ‘The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Holiday & Community Service Award Ceremony’. Monday, January 21, 2013, Santa Fe ninth grader, Isaiah James Tho-Biaz Wilder, became this year’s recipient.

Young Isaiah gave of his time and considerable skills to the Santa Fe Children’s Museum, Project Tibet, Santa Fe Monthly Meeting of Friends, Hooked on Books Literacy Campaign, and as a Cesar Chavez Elementary School Volunteer. He is also scheduled to begin volunteering with the Youth Media Project on KUNM and KSFR Radio stations.

Isaiah James Tho-Biaz Wilder’s presence at our annual event was special and inspirational. He was joined by an elite group of presenters including New Mexico State Governor Susana Martinez and keynote speaker, Santa Fe Superintendent of Public Schools, Dr. Joel Boyd. To say that the event was an overwhelming success would be an understatement.

Dr. Doris Fields, the program’s perennial chief architect and coordinator couldn’t be more proud of the outcome. Dr Fields pointed out that the 2013 Commemoration of the Birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. coincided with two historical occasions for our nation: 1) Inauguration of the first
African American President, Barack Obama, into his second term as President of the United States of America, and 2) the 150th Anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, a document and movement designed to free African Americans in America from market slavery. Let the photographs and testimonies tell the rest of the story.

“… The call of the drums [by AGALU] brought in a crowd that was happy and enthusiastic and filled the Rotunda nearly to capacity and it’s always a delight to see and meet new people attending. It’s great to see the MLK event continuing to grow and become more successful each year.” -Cynthia Geder, Secretary Santa Fe Branch NAACP

“It was well attended by such a diverse group of people and demonstrated that the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is stronger than ever in our community.” -Nathaniel V. Thompkins, Esq. New Mexico Firm, LLC.

“This year’s event was special in many ways. We not only acknowledged and celebrated Dr. King; we also recognized the 150th year of the Emancipation Proclamation. It’s truly a motivational day for me!” -Karen Finney, Legal Redress, Santa Fe Branch NAACP

“The program was capped by the traditional singing of *We Shall Overcome* led with her usual gusto and skill by Christine Johnson. Thank you Santa Fe NAACP!” -Mara Taub, member Santa Fe Branch NAACP

“…the event was really energized by those two speakers and the honor given to the young student and his family.” -Wanda Padilla, VP, Santa Fe Branch NAACP

“The attendance was phenomenal; it seems it grows every year. As a teacher, I see it as essential to my daily purpose, to expose my students to as much as possible so that they can be prepared to do whatever they want to do.” -Faith Amour, member, Santa Fe Branch NAACP.

“The audience gave a standing ovation to Isaiah James Tho-Biaz Wilder. Santa Fe Branch President, George Geder, introduced Isaiah to Jermaine Gregory LeDoux, last year’s recipient, to assure these two young people met.” -Lynn Gary, member, Santa Fe Branch NAACP.

“The theme for this year’s celebration was “The Bold Notion of Progress: Moving Our Nation Forward.” Dr. Boyd highlighted the importance of education - the school, family and the community - in preparing for the future and a nation moving forward.” -Carol Johnson, Past President, Santa Fe Branch NAACP

“The celebration of Martin Luther King Day at the Round House has become for me a cherished ritual. The Santa Fe Branch of the NAACP has assumed the responsibility of organizing and publicizing the event every year since the inception of the holiday. My favorite part of the event is always the closing when everyone joins hands in a heart-felt rendition of *We Shall Overcome.*” -Victoria Scott, member, Santa Fe Branch NAACP

In order to determine the pulse of the African American community, and to continue their advocacy for Civil Rights and Social Justice, George Geder, a Genealogist and family historian, and his wife, Cynthia, immediately joined the Santa Fe Branch of the NAACP upon moving to Santa Fe, NM in 2006. Those shoulders belong to past presidents and officers who were giants in the battle for the civil rights of all citizens in Santa Fe and throughout New Mexico.

Mr. Geder’s first recollection of witnessing proactive advocacy was when his mother, Pearle Geder, effectively removed the racist children’s book ‘Little Black Sambo’ from his third grade classroom and the school district curriculum in Binghamton, New York. In his junior year of high school, he was Vice President of the Black Student Union. A conscientious objector to the Vietnam War, he participated in the March on Washington in 1969, and also in the Mayor’s March on Washington, DC in 1990.

Through the years, Mr. Geder has continued to keep his finger on the pulse of the respective community where he resided, from New York to California, and lent his voice to issues concerning fairness, equality, and justice for all citizens. In 2007, he was featured on the PBS program ‘History Detectives’, where they revealed that his 2nd Great Grandfather, John Stevenson, was a soldier in the USCT (United States Colored Troops) during the American Civil War. Mr. Geder pledged to grow and strengthen the Santa Fe Branch of the NAACP through an advocacy for the civil rights of all citizens. The Santa Fe Branch of the NAACP is multi-cultural, non-partisan, and celebrates diversity!

December 11, 2012, George Geder was sworn in as President of the Santa Fe Branch of the NAACP. Other elected officers include Wanda Padilla, 1st VP; Cedric Page, 2nd VP; Cynthia Geder, Secretary; Carol Johnson, Assistant Secretary; Chris Johnson, Treasurer; Daran Moon, Assistant Treasurer; Agnes Moses, Doris Fields, Karen Finney, Executive Committee At-Large. The new officers were installed at the annual meeting, for a term of two years, 2013 to 2015.
Office of African American Affairs Staff
Travels New Mexico
Events Attended

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

*AARP Fall Festival @ NM Hispanic Cultural Center – Tabling Event
*African American Summit
*Afterschool Alliance – Table Event Aging Conference – Presentation
*Aging & Long Term Services HIV/AIDS Advocacy
*APS Board Mtg.
*BET Wrap it up Campaign
*Black Alumni Association Breakfast
*CYFD
*EOC - Phoenix Regional Office Director
*Good Day NM
*Healthcare Reform Workshop
*HIV/Aids Network Mtg
*Isshin Ryu Open House
*MLK Parade Planning Mtg
*Math/Gates Foundation
*NAACP Conference in Santa Fe
*NM Black Midwifery Mtg. w/Andrea Hill
*NM First Grading System Mtg
*NM General Service Department/Risk Management Division Alternative Dispute Resolution conference/Presentation @ UNM Law School
*OAAA Black Expo NM
*Orrin Hudson of Hobbs, NM
*Sandia Labs/Intel Black Leadership Committee
*Stand Down Program
*Western NM Correctional Facility Presentation – Grants, NM

NOVEMBER

*Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce
*American Graduate Ally Task Force Mtg
*Caesar Chavez Community Center Literacy Program
*City of Albuquerque
*Con Alma convening on Health Care Reform @ Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
*Executive Advisory Committee Mtg
*Men of Color Initiative
*Office of African American Affairs Summit

DECEMBER

*2012 Spirit of NM Awards Program
*AKA Gala
*African American Day Planning Council
*African American Student Services Mtg
*Belen Public School – Gil Sanchez Elementary School – Presentation
*Department of Health Chronic Disease Prevention Council Mtg
*Department Of Health Obesity and Smoking Mtg. @ OAAA
*Healthcare Reform Dialog at the Southwest Women’s Law Center
*HIV/AIDS 2/7 Conference Planning Mtg
*Intel Corporation Mtg
*Isshin Ryu Ribbing Cutting Event
*Learning Alliance Mtg
*Links Gala
*Nationals Aids Awareness Day
*New America Media Planning Mtg for Media Literacy Works and Policy Briefing at African American Performing Arts Center
*NM Diabetes Advisory Council
*NM MESA Mtg
*NM Public Health Policy Forum at the Sheraton Airport
*Ralph J Bunche Celebration
*UNM President Meet and Greet
*Veterans Affairs Mtg
*Women’s Law Center Health Care Reform
*YWCA Meet and Greet
JANUARY

* Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce Susana Martinez Luncheon
* APS School Board Mtg
* Black History Month Kickoff - Speaker Hill Harper at UNM SUB Clovis Chamber of Commerce Banquet
* Bernalillo County Commissioner’s Mtg – Martin Luther King Proclamation Presentation Cultural Competency Training
* Department of Veterans Affairs Senior Day at the Legislature
* Grant Chapel Martin Luther King Breakfast
* Hispanic/Latino Academic Achievement Committee
* HIV/AIDS 2/7 Planning Mtg
* Introduction to Public Health Training at New Mexico State

* Jobs for American Graduates Mtg
* Kappa Alpha Psi Meeting at OAAA
* Martin Luther King March
* Meeting with Leslie Gayla – NM Public Education Department – STEM
* Meeting with OPERA Southwest Executive Director Marketing Staff
* Meeting with Senator Martin Heinrich’s Aide Alex Eubank
* NAACP MLK Event at the Rotunda
* OAAA Health Implementation Team Mtg at OAAA
* President Obama Inauguration and Martin Luther King celebration at the African American Performing Arts Center
* Screening of Public Broadcasting System New Mexico Whitney M. Young “The Powerbroker” documentary - Panel Guest
* Meadolark Senior Center in Rio Rancho Black History Month Presentation
* Southern Christian Leadership Conference Martin Luther King Luncheon in Rio Rancho
* US Forest Service Presentation

Ms. Carnis Salisbury
* Gospel Best
* HIV/AIDS 2/7 workshop at the African American Performing Arts Center – Speaker Dr. Marsha Martin
* Hobbs Community Event
* Intel Black History Month - Presented
* Meeting with Joyses Oyeyeni – Health Care Proposal
* Meadowlark Senior Center in Rio Rancho Black History Month Presentation
* NM Business Weekly Women of Influence Awards
* NM Department of Veterans Service – WWII Recognition – Tuskegee Airmen
* Northern New Mexico College Black History Month Program
* Pastors and Leaders Conference - Presented
* Powerbroker Film-Whitney Young’s fight for Civil Rights
* Public Broadcasting System New Mexico Whitney M. Young “The Powerbroker” documentary - Panel Guest
* Roots Revival Play
* Senior Assistant Fair
* Soul Food Junkies Film

FEBRUARY

* African American Day at the NM Legislature
* African American Chamber of Commerce
* Albuquerque Ministerial Alliance Event
* APS Title 1 Cultural Diversity Conference - Panelist
* Bernalillo Middle School Black History Program – Presented
* Clovis Community Leaders Mtg
* Clovis Superintended of Schools Mtg
* Colin Powell presentation in Hobbs, NM
* Dream Girls Musical
* ENMU Black History Program
* Family Engagement Meeting – New Mexico Health Equity Working Group at Parents Reaching Out
* Formal Naming of City of Albuquerque Housing Bldg.

RECURRING MONTHLY EVENTS

* ABC Community Schools
* African American Chamber of Commerce
* BSU
* DOH Chronic Disease Prevention Council
* Implementation Team Meetings
* NM Diabetes Awareness Council
* NM Black History Month Planning Committee
* NM State/Tribal Liaisons
* SCLC
* Silver Horizons Board Meeting
* State Personnel Leadership Roundtable
* UNIDOS
* Governor’s Cabinet Monthly Meeting
Dr. Sandra Taylor-Sawyer

Dr. Taylor-Sawyer has conducted and developed several business seminars; and taught business classes for Clovis Community College, where she was one of the first instructors to develop an online business class. In 2012, she became a Clovis City Commissioner, another milestone as she was the first African-American female to hold that position.

Dr. Taylor-Sawyer’s community involvement continues with her having served on several local boards, including the Clovis Municipal Schools Board of Education, the Plains Regional Medical Center, the Clovis and Portales Chambers of Commerce, United Way, Presbyterian HealthCare Services, and Rotary Club of Clovis. She was the second woman and first African American to serve as President of the Rotary club. Dr. Taylor-Sawyer has served as a Youth Leader, Small Group-Zone Leader, Spiritual Parent, and currently she is a Prayer Partner and Hostess at her church, Faith Christian Family Church. She has judged many community events such as the Pioneer Day Parade and the Martin Luther King Jr. Speech Contest. She had her own monthly business column, “Everybody’s Business”, for several years.

Dr. Taylor-Sawyer is very active in the decision-making process of activities and events in Clovis, New Mexico. She continues to be a pioneer and a symbol for excellence in business and community service. Her life has been a great testament to the words that were instilled in her heart by her parents, Elder Oral and Ruth Ella Taylor, would tell her, “Listen for God’s voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; He’s the one who will keep you on track.” They would often cite the scripture (Proverbs 3:6) to her, “In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct thy path”. Additionally, as an African-American woman in New Mexico, she is a model of the strength and courage planted in the seed orchestrated by Rosa Parks and carried through in the form of the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. “To fulfill a dream, it takes a persistent spirit and a desire to be successful to reach your goals,” quoted by Dr. Taylor-Sawyer.

Pastor Calvin Robinson

It is my job to help them access to tools that would lead them to God.”

Pastor Robinson went on to say, “The walls that I’m talking about outside of the prison system are the walls that we create for ourselves as Christians and church members. “The Bible says, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done unto me (Matthew 25: 40). The primary call of a minister is to evangelize the kingdom. It is so important for the church to go out beyond its walls to work with those who are in need and compel them to find God through the work that we are doing. Then we can become an instrument of God, and one would pray that others would visualize the heart of God and his desire for their lives through our presence, and that they would then move spiritually forward. We can’t contain our service within the walls of the church when God has a greater plan for our ministries.”

Pastor Robinson doesn’t envision the problems in the community as challenges, but opportunities to do a greater work for God. He pointed out that Gallup has the highest rate of incidence of DUI (Driving Under the Influence) per Capita than anywhere in the United States. “That doesn’t tell me that we have an uncontrollable problem, it just tells me that one area of opportunity for our church to work beyond our self-contained walls.”

In summary, Pastor Robinson has now been in the ministry for 13 years and is led of God to change the lives of those who have been devalued by the world, but are of great value to God. He wants to prepare the Saints in his church to become anchored in the Word and become stronger warriors for God. He shared, “When our preparation is complete we will be breaking down the walls that serve the purpose of separation and redirect lives to redemption.”
Executive Order
The New Mexico State Office of African American Affairs was enacted by the 44th New Mexico State Legislature in 1999 under House Bill 909 and established by Executive Order under the administration of Governor Gary Johnson and continues to serve under the present administration of Governor Susana Martinez.

Mission
To study, identify, and provide solutions to issues of concern relevant to the African American community.

Vision
We will be the “Go To” authority in New Mexico on matters relating to methods that improve the quality of life for African Americans. By providing valuable resources to our constituents, our governor, legislators, educators, health care professionals, et al, we will ensure access to resources that provide for the success of all New Mexicans.
UPCOMING OAAA EVENTS:

- Education Under Arrest - Parent Forum
- Roswell Senior Awards Recognition
- Hobbs Senior Awards Recognition
- Alamogordo Senior Awards Recognition
- OAAA Outstanding Service Awards Recognition