

# EMPOWERMENT



A Quarterly News Magazine  
The Metropolitan Board of the Chicago Urban League  
www.metroboard.org

Volume VII, Issue I

2006 Year in Review Issue

4510 S. Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60653  
(773) 451-3527

**Officers**

Barton J. Taylor  
*President*

Tiffany Lee  
*Vice President*

Krystle L. Fisher  
*Treasurer*

Tiffanie West  
*Recording Secretary*

Helen Edwards  
*Corresponding Secretary*

Yetunde Ekunwe  
*Financial Secretary*

Karen S. Williams  
*Parliamentarian*

**Committee Chairs**

William J. Alston II  
Christopher M. DeVine  
*Community Service Co-Chairs*

Alkari Muhsani  
Dr. Renee' Matthews  
*Fundraising Co-Chairs*

Eugenia Orr  
*Membership Committee Chair*

Jamil A. Simmons  
Telie Woods  
*Public Relations Co-Chairs*

Jamil A. Simmons  
*Newsletter Editor*

Cheryle Jackson  
*President and CEO*  
Chicago Urban League



New Chicago Urban League CEO Cheryle Jackson and Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan at the CUL's Golden Fellowship Dinner.

**Inside this issue:**

<i>The Year of the Woman</i>	1-2
<i>Editor's Corner</i>	2
<i>Women of Influence</i>	3
<i>Another World</i>	4
<i>Upcoming Fundraising Events</i>	6
<i>Upcoming Community Service Projects</i>	7
<i>2006</i>	8
<i>The Presidents Podium</i>	11
<i>A Note of Thanks</i>	12
<i>Congratulations</i>	11

## The Year of the Woman Raised 1.3 Million

By Eugenia Orr

**T**he Chicago Urban League kicked off the Year of the Woman with its Golden Fellowship Dinner on November 12, 2006. The evening was a highlight of CUL's year of accomplishments and the historic mark it has made by naming Cheryle Jackson as its first female CEO. Mrs. Jackson took office on

October 2, 2006, and has not stopped since taking office. The dinner serves as a kickoff to the CUL's membership drive. Ticket prices included an annual membership to the organization and \$1.3M was raised.

The evening was full of fun and the Morris Ellis Orchestra and R&B recording artist Heather Headley performed

live music. This was also an evening to reflect on the accomplishments of the Chicago Urban League and celebrate the man that led this organization for three decades, Mr. James W. Compton. Mr. Compton dedicated 40 years of his life to service and the Urban League movement. He served as CEO for 35 years. Since his decision

to retire in 2006, the reins have been passed to Mrs. Jackson. Mr. Compton and Edwin C. "Bill" Berry, who led the organization from 1956-1972, were presented with Leadership and Lifetime achievement awards for their service to the Urban League Movement.

As 2007 has been deemed the Year of the Woman, the ladies of the Chicago News were the speakers and hosts of the night. Cheryl Burton, ABC, Allison Payne, WGN, Diane Burns, CBS, and Marion Brooks, NBC; were all very eloquent in their tributes and praise for the



James W. Compton

Chicago Urban League and to Mrs. Cheryl Jackson. Mrs. Jackson previously served as the Press Secretary for Governor Rod. R. Blagojevich. The speakers spoke of Mrs. Jackson's poise and commanding presence as she kept press conferences to a strict time frame. The notable news ladies introduced such prestigious

Chicagoans as Mayor Richard Daley, Senator Barack Obama, Rev Jesse Jackson Jr. Marc Morial, President and CEO, National Urban League and Thomas Patrick, CEO of People's Energy and Chair of the Chicago Urban League's Board of Directors, praised and honored the Urban League for the advancements it has provided to Chicagoans. The evening ended with Heather Headley, R&B artist and Broadway star, serenading the crowd with songs from her CDs as well as favorite Broadway musicals. The Golden Fellowship Dinner was attended by 1,700 guests.



## Editor's Notes

Ah yes.....2006!



Well, well, well.....another year has come and gone. There are so many things that we leave behind when a new year comes around. We forget about the people we met. We lose track of old friends. We clean out our closets. We cut some people off.

Then we celebrate the new year. We conger up New Year's resolutions. With a new year we gain hope for our careers, financial goals and our personal lives. We even think about how our favorite sports team is going to make it to the championship.

Yet, I know that there are a few of us that sit back and reflect on the past year. So, let's review what the MetroBoard and the Urban League movement accomplished in 2006.

We celebrated the women that influence us. We witnessed a historic changing of the guard and watched as the Chicago's Urban League's first female President and CEO took office. We showcased African American movie directors' talents and visions on the red carpet.

We continued the renaissance in Chicago by being good sherpards and mentoring. We showed our humanity by helping others recondition old habitats. We continued to feed the hungry on Wednesdays just as if they were in our own living room. We held summits to address issues facing our teens. We provided laboratory projects for the young boys at our adopted school.

Most importantly, we left our comfort zone. We traveled hundreds of miles away to help people that we did not know clean up and starting rebuilding their lives.

After looking at all the things we did in 2006, I thought to myself "Wow! We did a lot." The year 2006 was a rewarding and fulfilling time for the MetroBoard. I can not wait to see what we can do in 2007!



## Women of Influence

By Eugenia Orr



Camille Edwards, Blanca Q. Fauble, Michelle Obama, Eileen A. Kamerick and Nikki Woods

**I**n March 2006, members of the Metropolitan Board attended the first of the Women of Influence Breakfast Series, hosted by Urban Influence Magazine and sponsored by US Cellular. Chicago was the first in a multi-city tour and the event was held at the Mid America Club in the Aon Building on Randolph Drive.

In an effort to celebrate the accomplishments of women in business, Urban Influence Magazine and US Cellular brought together five of the most influential women in Chicago as panelists: Michelle Obama, Vice President for Community and External Affairs for the University of Chicago Hospitals; Camille Edwards, News Director, NBC5 News; Blanca Q. Fauble, Director of Ford Motor Company's North American Operations Multi-Cultural Alliance and Strategy Team; Eileen A.

Kamerick, Chief Financial Officer, Heidrick & Struggles, Inc. Nikki Woods, Co-Host of The Crazy Howard McGee Morning Show, WGCI radio; moderated the event.

After brief introductions by each panelist, questions were taken from the audience. The first question was about leadership style. Michelle Obama expressed needing passion to succeed. She also noted the importance of a skill set, taking ownership and accepting accountability as a leader. Mrs. Obama articulated that your career should always be thought of as a long-term investment; a good leader always leads by example, is flexible and has balance.

Camille Edwards also spoke on the importance of passion and how a leader must always know what's going on. A leader must have the ability to inspire greatness in those they lead and that

you have to know who it is that you are managing. Blanca Fauble conveyed the importance of good listening skills for leaders. Treat people the way they want and need to be treated. According to Ms. Fauble, a good leader checks his/her ego at the door and must still be able to have fun.

Eileen Kamerick commented that a good leader is always prepared. They must have strong writing skills, communication skills and must dress the part. Ms. Kammerick stated that it would not matter what comes out your mouth. No matter how intelligent or qualified a person may be, if you don't look the part; you may not get in the door.

The ladies left us with a few key points: trust the people you work for; earn the respect of those you lead, pursue a career, not just a lifestyle; add value, be focused; remember to have a life; be a mentor, have a mentor; and don't make rush decisions.

After the discussion ended, attendees were given the opportunity to mingle with panelists, and were also given bags to commemorate the event. Also in attendance was Yuri Brown, Director of Diversity, US Cellular; Yvette Moyo, Co-founder & Producer, MOBE, advanced marketing symposiums, and several members of the Metropolitan Board.



## Another World in Our Own Back Yard

By Charles Campbell

**M**y trip to New Orleans was a first for me. I've heard many fabled stories about Bourbon Street and the French Quarters. I was eager to see what these legendary tales were made of. Upon entering the city all thoughts of festive frolicking were numbed momentarily as my road buddies and I crossed a bridge. Months before, we saw images on television of people stranded for days, refusing aid from the coast guard; from this bridge. Instantly the four of us began wondering what the rest of the trip had in store for us.


Our first night there spoiled us into believing the damage we saw on TV wasn't as bad as we thought. A friend who lives there toured us through the rich and fanciful area of New Orleans which seemed to be untouched by Katrina's wrath. I was taken aback by the beauty of the old Victorians lining the streets with cable cars dotting the avenue. I was thinking "This place wasn't hit that bad. They've done great work in restoring the city." Sensing my amazement my friend chimed "Wait till the morning when you really see New Orleans." To be honest, I wasn't ready.

As we drove through the city headed towards our destination to restore a couple of homes, we finally saw the images every media outlet in the U.S. depicted. Having the ability to see the ravage with my own eyes was nothing short of incredible. It was almost

too much to handle. As we toured the lower ninth ward, I became wrought with fear and trepidation. We pasted by miles of empty homes and death toll numbers of three and more written on doors. One church we passed was said to have had 50 people die inside whom were looking for solace. I could have sworn I saw ghostly images flickering past doorways and windows as the last beams of the sun shone. I couldn't take it.

I experienced a range of emotions: anger to sadness, hope to hopelessness, intrigue to disdain, and inspiration to discontentment. All of these emotions would be enough to drive one insane; which in my opinion a lot of residents of New Orleans are. I say this because I found many individuals doing the same things over and over again, expecting different results. It saddened me greatly to see a homeowner of one of the homes we gutted buy some rodent and roach traps to line his home with after we completely gutted the home. I wondered what the purpose was. His wife was no better, insisting that we salvage kitchen appliances and furniture that was rotted from months of three feet of standing water. Not only was it no good, but it also was environmentally unsafe as was the yard. Which she encouraged her husband to keep spraying weed killer to treat the strands of grass that remained. I wanted to tell her badly it's a lost cause but then I asked myself "Who was I to ruin her hope for a new home and life?"

This sentiment among residents, hit hardest by the hurricane, is what gives them shards of purpose. Our work there brought these shards for two families into a whole piece of hope. It gave them closure to a nightmare that has lasted longer than 365 days. For the rest of the populace of the upper and lower ninth ward, this nightmare exists even when their eyes open. They wake up to what I call "remnants of a post apocalyptic, sci-fi movie" everyday with no hope for brighter future.

What the Metroboard did in retrospect was monumental to a couple of families. How we live in Chicago is monumental to thousands of residing and displaced New Orleanans. Don't take for granted what you have now. Lake Michigan can overflow at any time and wipe out your existence. Before you take your next vacation, consider taking a trip to New Orleans. They need medical, professional and manual help desperately. It cost me \$175 for four days to make a difference. How much are you willing to spend on your next vacation? If New Orleans is your next destination, partner with an agency such as Catholic Charities, United Way or a host of others to do some good in the hood. Afterwards, grab a cold one and some crawfish in the French Quarters to escape momentarily from the harsh reality of what could happen to anyone of us; at any given time. 

\* The articles submitted for the newsletter by MetroBoard members, in no way reflects the views, opinions, thoughts or beliefs of The Metropolitan Board of Chicago, the Chicago Urban League or the National Urban League.

## An Apple a Day and Mentoring Can Keep the Doctor Away?

By Patricia Watkins

**W**e have always heard the first as a sure fire way to keep your health in check. But those who volunteer to help others are probably not surprised to learn according to a recent study in the *Annals of Behavioral Medicine* “random acts of kindness can reduce stress and lift your mood.”

In October, I embarked on my own act of kindness by becoming a mentor. There are so many negative opinions about the current pre-teens and teens not wanting to listen, being too grown, etc. It could be a generational gap, but I believe “we” who are able to give back with our time can bridge the gap for those who need our help the most.

My experience thus far has been rewarding. It is such a gift to share your life, advice, and most importantly your time. I have taken my mentee ice skating, attended theatre productions, baked cookies and a variety of other activities. We have also discussed goals in school, how to get along with others, and possible careers. But it isn't just one sided conversations and my advice to her. She has shown me to appreciate and be more grateful for the possibilities that

are out there. She is proof that the next generation has the ability to change the future for the better.

When I told my mentee about this article she wrote “A mentor is someone you could share your feelings with. A mentor is like a big sister or a big brother. A mentor will take you many places and share many things.



“A mentor will help you with some of your problems. I say some because there will be some problems you need help with. They will try to help you but some mentors can't because it is not their problem. A mentor will love you like a family member.”

Before considering becoming a mentor, you have to evaluate the time you have available. Most programs ask a mentor to commit at least one hour a week or at least meet twice a month with your mentee. Just as in business, you don't

want to over promise and under deliver. Your young person may have had many disappointments and by not prioritizing your time, you may become a disappointment as well.

As a mentor, it is important to problem solve without taking over the role of a parent. It is very easy to try to be the savior

and try to solve all the problems your mentee may encounter. However, the mentee doesn't need any additional parenting. They want empathy, an ear to bend, a role model and above all a friend.

Having a young person in your life can open your heart and mind to the possibilities of the future. By being flexible and open to learn from

a mentor-mentee relationship, there are endless opportunities to learn from each other.

If you are interested in learning more about mentoring, please contact Paulette Tolliver at the Elliott Donnelly Center at [paulatolliver@hotmail.com](mailto:paulatolliver@hotmail.com). And remember, mentoring can be good for your health!



# Upcoming Fundraising Events MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Please email [fundraising@metroboard.org](mailto:fundraising@metroboard.org) for more information on the following fundraising events.

The Metropolitan Board of the Chicago Urban League  
presents

## REVIVAL: from State Street to Bourbon Street

**FRIDAY, JUNE 22, 2007**

River East Art Center  
435 E. Illinois St.  
[www.rivereastartcenter.com](http://www.rivereastartcenter.com)

8:00pm-2:00am

**Members:**

**\$40** (Mar 14-Apr 14)

**\$50** (Apr 15-May 31)

**Public:**

**\$50** (Mar 14-Apr 14)

**\$60** (Apr 15-May 31)

**General Admission-\$65** (after May 31)

**VIP-\$100** (includes private reception and gift bag)

Attire: Cocktail (No Athletic Apparel)

Admission includes food, open bar, dancing, networking  
and everything Chicago and New Orleans has to offer!

For discounted, advance tickets or more info, visit

[www.metroboard.org/events](http://www.metroboard.org/events)

\*All proceeds benefit the **Urban League of Greater New Orleans' Hurricane Katrina Resource Center** and the economic and community empowerment efforts of the **Chicago Urban League** and the **MetroBoard**.

## Upcoming Community Service Projects

Please email [service@metroboard.org](mailto:service@metroboard.org) for more info on the following community service projects:

### March

Living Room Café	7-Mar-07
Greater Chicago Food Depository	10-Mar-07
Habitat for Humanity	31-Mar-07

### April

Living Room Café	4-Apr-07
Greater Chicago Food Depository	7-Apr-07
MB Lab: Rocks and Hard Places	14-Apr-07
Teen Summit-Take a Child to Work Day	19-Apr-07
MB Lab: Chemical Reactions and Matter Phases	21-Apr-07

## MB Empowerment Card Company Spotlight

For store listings visit: [www.food4less1.com](http://www.food4less1.com)

Every time a MetroBoard member shops for groceries AND swipes their card, the MetroBoard automatically starts earning a rebate.

Food 4 Less and Foods Co will pay the MetroBoard on a quarterly basis based on the following monthly qualifying purchases per household:

Up to \$500—4%

Over \$500—5% of amount over \$500



## Here is a look back at some of our events

On September 16th, the Metropolitan Board partnered with Habitat for Humanity - Chicago South Suburbs to help provide housing for families in Harvey, IL.



Metropolitan Board members enjoying themselves at the MetroBoard Holiday Party at the G.R. N'namdi.

The Holiday Party was sponsored by City Beverages.

On November 9<sup>th</sup> the Metropolitan Board set out on a clean up project to New Orleans to assist in speeding up the recovery process.

The MetroBoard partnered with Catholic Charities to provide disaster relief to Hurricane Katrina victims by aiding in clean up and restoration efforts. The MetroBoard efforts were showcased on WTTW (Channel 11).



## and community service projects from 2006!



On February 25th, the Metropolitan Board celebrated Black History Month with the residents at Good Shepherd. The highlight of the afternoon was the Black History Jeopardy game where 40 residents, 25 MB volunteers, and 13 youth from the Fiske Boys and Girls Club of Chicago, enthusiastically played against other.

The Metropolitan Board is dedicated to bridging the gap between generations.

The Metropolitan Board partnered with the Boys' Leadership Institute to start a quarterly program entitled MB Lab.

MB Lab introduces children to a series of science and technology projects. The goal of the program is to spark the children's interest in the field of science.



The Metropolitan Board of the Chicago Urban League presented *Red Carpet Movie Premiere*, on April 28th, at the LaSalle Bank Cinema featuring *Bastards of the Party*.

The documentary was directed by Cle "Bone" Sloan and produced by famed director Antoine Fuqua.

# CONGRATULATIONS

The Metropolitan Board would like to congratulate everyone that gave their time, finances, ideas, wisdom and creativity during the 2005-2006. Your efforts helped the MetroBoard achieve the following:

## 2006 OUTSTANDING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS CHAPTER CENTRAL REGION

### Member Accomplishments

#### Member of the Month

Each month the MetroBoard selects one member who has shown an outstanding level of commitment to the organization as "Member of the Month." Congratulations to the following recipients:

December - **The New Orleans Clean Up Team**

### The Newsletter Staff Needs You

Do you like:

- Taking Pictures?
- Writing Articles?
- Editing Articles?
- Working in Publisher?



If you answered yes to any of the above questions, the newsletter staff needs you. Please contact us [pr@metroboard.org](mailto:pr@metroboard.org).

## The President's Podium

# Chicago Urban League's New HWIC (Head Woman in Charge)

*Young, focused, experienced, envisioned and in-charge!!!*

By Barton J. Taylor



I hope the title caught your attention. I also hope that this historic headline not

only reminds us of how far we have come, but how far we still have to go for total equality. In case you've been traveling, on a mental vacation or just totally ignoring the local civic scene in Chicago, this past October Mrs. Cheryle R. Jackson took the helm of the Chicago Urban League (CUL), becoming the first woman to lead this 91 year old organization.

Please do not think this is an appointment where the Chicago Urban League's Board of Directors was looking for a woman just because she was, well, a woman. In searching for the best person to receive the baton of leadership, Cheryle's credentials stood head and shoulders above the other 30+ contenders for the position.

Before accepting the CUL's baton of leadership, Cheryle had achieved another historic first by becoming the Deputy Chief of Staff and Communications Director for Illinois Governor Rod. R. Blagojevich, making her both the first woman and African American to hold this position in Illinois' history. As his communications director and chief press secretary, Cheryle oversaw the state's press operations and communications strategy and developed message strategies and policy. "This is an important and critical time in the history of the Chicago Urban League as the mantle of leadership

is passed from one generation to the next," said Gov. Rod Blagojevich. "I know that Cheryle is more than capable of rising to the challenge. I look forward to working with her to advance the mission and goals of the Chicago Urban League".

Prior to her two historic appointments, Cheryl spent two years in senior-level government affairs positions with Amtrak, first serving as Regional Vice President of Government and Public Affairs and later working as National Director of State and Local Government Affairs. She has also worked for National Public Radio in several capacities, including Vice President of Communications and Brand Management, Director of Corporate Communications and Director of Corporate Identity and Information.



**Cheryle R. Jackson**

Since her arrival, Cheryle has hit the ground running, appearing on major media outlets while utilizing her public relations skills to further promote the Chicago Urban League's mission. Her first big test as President came less than 40 days after she took office with the CUL's Golden Fellowship Dinner. Proclaiming it the "Year of the Woman", President Jackson answered this challenge in true presidential fashion. Not only did every local woman media personality answer Cheryle's call to participate

in the evening, but also a Chicago's Who's Who was in attendance welcoming the League's new President. More so, National Urban League President Marc Morial publicly welcomed Cheryle to the Urban League movement.

On a MetroBoard level, Cheryle has fostered a continued culture of open communication and inclusiveness. President Jackson introduced herself to a large MetroBoard audience at the November General Body meeting. It was here she proclaimed the vision and mission of the Chicago Urban League; to assist anyone to be what he or she dreams to be. A simple, yet powerful direction, President Jackson conveyed that the posture of the Chicago Urban League is to become a viable economic engine in the African American community. She continued to remind us that we are products of the Civil Rights movement and that we have to continue this progress we're making, but make it on an economic front. She looks to use the MetroBoard in a critical, strategic role in this direction, and I assured her with the talent, diversity and energy in the MetroBoard, that we'd be ready.

With President Jackson preparing to unveil the strategic plan for the Annual Report Luncheon in February, we can expect a new focus, a new energy and a new excitement for the Chicago Urban League movement. More so, we can look forward to the day when gender and racial first achievements will be a thing of the past. This African-American man is looking forward to that day indeed!!!

<sup>1</sup> Taken from Chicago Urban League Press Release, August 2006

## A NOTE FROM US BANK



# News Release

Contact: Jennifer Wendt  
(612) 303-0731  
jennifer.wendt@usbank.com

### **U.S. BANK DONATES \$100,000 TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO HONOR FIVE STAR VOLUNTEER AWARD WINNERS**

**MINNEAPOLIS** (January 22, 2007) — U.S. Bank has identified the latest recipients of the U.S. Bank Five Star Volunteer Award, which honors employees for their exceptional volunteer service in the community in 2006. To recognize the 131 outstanding volunteers, U.S. Bank will contribute a total of \$100,000 to nonprofit organizations in their honor.

Recipients of the U.S. Bank Five Star Volunteer Award were chosen based on criteria such as community impact and depth of volunteer service. Nominations for the Five Star Volunteer Award were submitted by employees, coworkers and the organizations where U.S. Bank employees volunteer.

“The Five Star Volunteer Award Program is a way we can honor our employees who go the extra mile to serve our communities through volunteerism,” said Deborah Burke, U.S. Bancorp Foundation and government relations director. “We’re proud of their dedication to supporting these organizations, and we’re pleased to recognize them for the work they do.”

U.S. Bancorp has a long-standing record of community leadership in the key areas of affordable housing, economic opportunity, arts and culture, education and community service. The company received the highest rating possible from the Office of the Comptroller of Currency in 2004 for its commitment to the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), meeting the credit needs of all segments of the communities that U.S. Bancorp serves.

U.S. Bancorp (NYSE: USB), with \$217 billion in assets, is the 6th largest financial holding company in the United States. The company operates 2,467 banking offices and 4,943 ATMs, and provides a comprehensive line of banking, brokerage, insurance, investment, mortgage, trust and payment services products to consumers, businesses and institutions. U.S. Bancorp is the parent company of U.S. Bank. Visit U.S. Bancorp on the web at [www.usbank.com](http://www.usbank.com).

## A NOTE OF RECOGNITION

U.S. Bank is pleased  
to present

### THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF THE CHICAGO URBAN LEAGUE

with a contribution of \$500 in honor of the outstanding community  
service provided by William J. Alston II to your organization.

William is a recipient of the 2006 U.S. Bank Five Star Volunteer Award  
which recognizes the time, dedication and commitment of  
our company's most exceptional employee volunteers.





*MB Executive Board members pose with Michelle Obama after the Women of Influence Breakfast.*



*MB members enjoying a night out watching the Chicago Bulls at the United Center.*



*MB members chat during a wine tasting MB Power Hour.*



*MB members look on as children perform an experiment during MB Lab.*



*MB members in New Orleans assist in restoring a home damaged by Hurricane Katrina.*



*MB volunteers at the Greater Chicago Food Depository.*

Everyone has an opportunity to be great because everyone has an opportunity to serve. —Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Thank you to our sponsors!

