

Empowerment

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Reaching New Heights: Bronzeville Rising Raises the Bar Once Again!

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Smooth. Sophisticated. Enticing. Such was the atmosphere on Saturday, June 21st as attendees experienced the Metropolitan Board (MB) sponsored "Bronzeville Rising" summer fundraiser. Fittingly hosted at the Historic Parkway Ballroom (4455 South King Drive) in the heart of Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood, the gala evoked the timelessness of the Harlem Renaissance during the 1930s and 1940s.

Over 300 guests unwound to the sensual styling of the Corey Wilkes Band during the early portion of the evening. Patrons were then treated to a live salsa number performed by MB members. Throughout the evening attendees took note of period artwork, danced, and enjoyed refreshments and casual conversation as they strutted in their suspenders, fedoras, and feather boas.

During the second half of the evening, the MB recognized some of its own. President Steve Casey and Community Service Chair Josefina Aguayo jointly presented the MB Member of the Year award to Tracey Harris for her dedicated service to the MB through community service and committee participation. Chicago Urban League President & CEO James Compton also welcomed patrons, recognized past and current MB leadership, and told the audience that he "looks forward to another 20 years" of MB service and dedication to the community. Heineken USA then presented MB member and entrepreneur Lauren Lowery with their Rising Star Aware. Ms.

Lowery, the first Chicagoan to receive the award, has spent the last 10 years cultivating the Finders Plus Real Estate agency in the city.

As the evening drew to a close, attendees grooved to tracks spun by DJ Question. The evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all. When asked about her impression of the evening, MB member Arlene Hankinson said it, "was wonderful to see everyone dressed in period gear..." and that MB functions are "always a level above your typical affair." That expectation is what keeps her and many others coming back to support the organization as it raises funds to support its community service initiatives.

The MB Fundraising Committee would like to thank Alize™, Ariel Capital Management, Finders Plus Real Estate, and Motorola for their generous sponsorship of the event. Additionally, they extend a thank you to the following organizations and individuals for their donation of raffle prizes: Bally's Total Fitness; Second City; Muntu Dance Theatre; The East Bank Club; Letsjet Travel Service; Digital Sound Studio; Ken Thompson, Phaedra Leslie; Bryant Marks; Hyatt Hotel; Motorola; Reggios Pizza; Warm Spirit; Opentable.com; and Todd Gunter.

- Article by Tiffany E. Rockette
- Photos courtesy of Buzz Media



BRONZEVILLE RISING: A HARLEM NIGHT IN CHICAGO



LEADERSHIP

Professionalism is a state of mind

My tenure as president of the Metropolitan Board (MB) of the Chicago Urban League has been both fruitful and rewarding. I have met and interacted with scores of dynamic individuals coming from all walks of life and backgrounds. My interaction with young urban professional organizations in three states, over the last 12 years, has directly shaped my vision for the MB and the movement called the National Urban League Young Professionals (NULYP).

I would like to start by thanking James W. Compton, President & CEO of the Chicago Urban League (CUL), for allowing the MB to serve the greater Chicago community with cutting edge and socially responsible programming. I want to thank the CUL staff for the amount of time they contribute above and beyond their full-time positions and for being considerate of the MB volunteers. This is clearly exemplified by the CUL staff's willingness to respond to emails from MB volunteers, rather than participate in traditional phone and face-to-face meetings. This technology shift in their operational stance has allowed the MB volunteers to not disrupt anyone's workday in order to communicate with the CUL staff.

Additionally, I want to thank those hard-working, dedicated individuals who have served on the Executive Board under my tenure. I can definitely say that without them the MB would not be half of what it is today! There were occasions when the going got rough or the constructive criticism was tough, but overall we pressed forward in the spirit of collegiality, professionalism, and most importantly, our community. The shared leadership model we worked under was new ground for many, and at times we struggled, but our collective vision for what we wanted the MB to be superceded and left us all better individuals both personally and professionally.

Lastly I want to thank the scores of volunteers who have made the last four years a wonderful and enjoyable ride. Their steadfast perseverance and dedication to this organization and

their community has been unwavering. Their ability to "make things happen" flies in the face of the adage that the "young professional" is out for themselves and is not concerned with the broader community's development and prosperity.

Over my tenure the MB has done some amazing and wonderful things such as:

- Increased MB membership from approximately 10 members to a stable 175 members.
- Established a list serve for member communications that serves as our primary communication tool, nearly eliminating the need for the traditional forms of information sharing.
- Established a website that has received at least 8,000 hits.
- Provided over 1500 hours of community service primarily to the underserved populations of Chicago's South Side.
- Created a niche market in the fundraising arena in Chicago by providing cutting-edge, themed fundraisers that address the social and cultural needs and wants of young African-American professionals.
- Established financial viability for the MB as well as growing its financial contribution to the CUL and its scholarship fund.
- Created two annual junior college scholarships honoring both a past president and former member of the MB who have passed away.
- Participated in Altria Groups' national financial literacy program, "Know Your Money", with four other NULYP chapters during the fall of 2002.
- Established the MB as one of the premier chapters in the NULYP movement.

I plan to stay committed and steadfast in the development of both the MB and NULYP. I will continue to share my learnings with the current and upcoming administrations, as well as other chapters around the country that seek technical advice on how to navigate this challenging volunteer movement. I will also share the lessons of a shared and dispersed leadership model

LEADERSHIP

that I have come to rely on to manage the day-to-day operations of this organization.

Additionally, I will continue to share with members the values that bridge diverse groups, organizations, and individuals in order to bring our community a varied perspective that will ultimately connect what is familiar with the unknown. Lastly, I will assist in the development of processes that merge traditional business ac-

men with tried and true non-profit mindsets, but still allow room for creativity. All of this may seem like a difficult task to complete, but when it is done while keeping an "eye on the prize" – our community – I am certain it will be a rewarding experience.

In closing, the MB is part of a growing national young professional movement that is in the forefront of a renaissance. I believe that the tried model for suc-

cess that the MB has created will continue to grow that the MB will share its thoughts, talents, and experiences with Chicago's underserved communities for years to come.

Thanks for all of the wonderful memories.

- by Steven L. Casey
MB President, 1999-2003

M a k i n g I t H a p p e n

First, I want to give praise to God and thanks to Metropolitan Board (MB) members for bestowing upon me the privilege and honor to serve as your president and guide for fiscal year 2003-2004. It is an exciting time and we have work to do and loads to lift as we move forward.

I also want to give personal and sincere thanks to the following retiring Executive Committee members:

- Steve Casey, President
- Felicia Kline, Vice President
- LaTonya Ford, Corresponding Secretary
- Michelle Gaskill, Fundraising Co-Chair
- Patricia Watkins, Membership Chair

The aforementioned officers and committee chairs were integral to the Metropolitan Board's success over the years and I look forward to working with them in the future. Again, job well done! In the same vein, I want to also say thanks and congratulations to the Executive Committee that continues to accept the challenge of serving and welcome the incoming officers who have stepped up for the coming year.

As mentioned in my platform, one of my major goals is to ensure that you, as a MB member, have the opportunity to give back to the community and its children in a capacity that interests you. With that being said we, the Execu-

tive Committee, need to know what your passions are. For instance what:

- Captures your imagination?
- Makes you laugh?
- Motivates you?
- Makes you cry?
- Gives you energy?
- Makes you dream?

I also want all of us to give serious thought to how our passions can be channelled into community service, fundraising, membership, public relations or another avenue of service because when a task is loved, it makes the work involved sweet, purposeful, and fruitful. Again, the Executive Board is here to help you give back and have some fun while doing it.

Challenging members to become more involved with the Metropolitan Board's committees and programs is something I sincerely look forward to. Active participation in planning and execution is critical to our continued success and growth.

Let's have a lot of fun this year getting to know one another and use our past success as a catapult into the bright future of the Metropolitan Board!

- by Edgartt J. Melton
MB President, 2003-2004

PERSPECTIVE

The **Escapism** Of Reality Television

Isn't it mind numbing, the number of "reality" television shows that have seeped into America's stream of consciousness during the past few years? They've become ubiquitous. The vast and dizzying array of reality TV shows that we have to choose from makes me wonder what television was before say, MTV's *The Real World*. Was any of it real?

I am not alone in my dismay at both the concept and the "substance" of reality TV. Think of it this way: When someone asks, "Do you want me to be honest with you?" what are they really saying? Have they been dishonest before? Should you assume that everything they said previously, unless it came with a warning, was a lie? It is the same idea with reality TV. If the networks have to shock and awe their viewers into believing their programs are real, what is the underlying and unsaid message? And what are we to surmise about their other shows?

Take *The Real World*, for example. Would someone like to explain to me what is remotely real about a bunch of young, beautiful, unemployed and uniformly fit strangers with nothing better to do with half a year of their lives than to move into a art deco home while their flirting, romances and pissing matches are captured on candid camera (Remember when that phrase was popular?) for all the world to see? Don't they ever run out of food, or toilet paper, or decide to leave the bathroom a mess for a day or so? Or how about *The Bachelor*, *The Bachelorette*, or the new spin on the *Joe Millionaire* concept, *For Love Or Money*? Reality? Really? What would life be like if the average guy could be on television surrounded by a bunch of ordinarily unattainable, perfect looking women who fawn over him? Ironically, the premise of *Joe Millionaire*--that he inherited millions of dollars and a French chateau--was false to begin with.

I do not watch reality television shows. What I know about them comes from the previews I see and from overhearing people talk about them. In any case, they are *really* fake and, as such, I have no use for them. The triumphs and failures that color my own life provide enough reality to keep two of me occupied all day, every day.

I would like to forget that no matter how you slice it, America is at war both at home and abroad, but I can't. Despite my best efforts to make it so, my life isn't such that I can lie in bed all day only to wake up in the mid-afternoon and go out for fast food. I have bills to pay. No television network is going to take care of any of them for me. The people who really piss me off from day-to-day? I try to avoid them, but sometimes I can't. I don't get to sit down, look into a camera and wax philosophic about why they annoy me. For fun, I enjoy hanging out on Friday nights with a couple of friends while having a bowl of French Onion soup and a couple of Long Beaches. Is that glamorous enough? I do this in a res-

taurant, not in a hot tub you know.

My problem with shows like *American Idol*, the tired, contrived reincarnation of *Fame*, and reality television in general is their disconnect from reality. Put another way, they don't matter. Here, it is the shows that I am disparaging and not the people who watch them. But who would be any worse off if all of them were canceled once you finished reading this column? Conversely, millions of people could benefit greatly from being deprived of one more way to waste 30 minutes to an hour each night. Included in this group are the people who could write a biography on Ruben and Clay but think Donald Rumsfeld is the principal of Glenbrook North High School. The portal to fantasyland that we now know as reality television has had a dulling effect on the minds of Americans unlike anything that has ever occurred in this country's history. Simon Cowell may as well be Britain's prime minister for all millions of people know, or care, because they've been desensitized to actual reality. When will the people who watch these shows take it upon themselves to have some vegetables along with dessert?

I need to loosen up, you say? I'm already there. I am not a stick in the mud who sits around sipping port and watching *Masterpiece Theatre*. I think escapism in moderation is therapeutic. A few days after 9/11, I realized that I wouldn't be able to watch any of the major networks or cable news stations for weeks. I *needed* a break from Wolf Blitzer.

The fact that I seek an equitable balance between my need for escapism and my thirst for news and education doesn't make me any better or smarter than anyone. What worries me about MADTV (Mind Altering Delusional Television) is the cumulative effect it is having upon our society. Escapism notwithstanding, or perhaps *because* of it, America is getting fatter and dumber. More than 60 percent of the population is clinically obese and in cities like New York and Chicago, the majority of public school students are unable to read or do math at grade level. There is no way to accurately measure the intelligence of most adults, but fewer than 4 out of every 10 of them have a college degree. Americans have never carried more debt or saved less money than they do now. And while this is so, the gulf between the rich and the poor is widening.

I could go on, but I'll stop here. I would hate to interrupt a regularly scheduled broadcast of reality TV.

- By E. Christopher Brown
Vanquish@diamondsuite.net

MEMBERSHIP

The Insider's Trade on Becoming Multi-Cultural and Multi-Lingual

I used to dread going home after school, knowing that three hours of intense French studying with my dear uncle patiently awaited me at the house. "Why can't I go to Yanick's house and play princess and jump on the water bed?" was my daily moan. "I do not want to learn those stupid French verbs!" I would go on and on in the car until I made it to my uncle's house. My mother had an amazing way of just ignoring me until I gave up, feeling defeated.

Now I thank my parents and especially my uncle, for those "painful years" of learning French have paid off. It has opened my eyes, mind, and perspective to other people, other cultures, other countries, and life in general.

Since then, and thanks to a racist remark made by my Spanish teacher back in high school, I became fluent in another language. In the beginning, I actively started learning just to prove to my teacher that I was more than just another one of "tomorrow's black baby making machines" and that some of us actually "do have brains." Later in life, I loved it so much and got so much encouragement from two of my college Spanish instructors that I just kept at it.

Late last year after a business trip to Brazil, where in some areas I survived thanks to my Spanish, I told myself that fluency in Portuguese needed to be my next personal development priority. The next question was: if not now, when? My personal and professional plan now is to become completely fluent in eight languages by the time that I am 50 years old. I have a very long way to go, but time goes by so fast that an early start is certainly helpful.

Now you are probably saying, "Well that's easy for you to say—you are originally from a different country and a second language comes with that territory," right? Or, "English is the only language that I speak and read. I love Spanish, Japanese, and Mandarin, but I do not know anyone who speaks it, nor can I find anyone to teach me." My response to you is that while immersing yourself in the environment where your target language is widely spoken is an added plus, it is not a requirement. The key factors have more to do with how much you really want to learn, your commitment level, your passion for the language and culture, and last but not least, *patience*.

Becoming a multi-cultural and multi-lingual individual starts with a changed mindset. You need to fully accept that your ways of doing and seeing things are not the only way. Stop the *comparison madness* and be willing and ready to learn from others. This is done by giving them a chance to show you things from a different perspective. You will be amazed at what you can learn just from allowing yourself to view things differently.

Now, why am I focusing so much on the cultural aspect? I do so because I know that it is difficult to become fluent in another language unless you immerse yourself into that culture. You cannot have language fluency without strong cultural knowledge. Then again, why would you not want to? Language is an integral part of any culture and a good understanding of the culture helps you understand when words and phrases change meaning based on context.

Getting Started

- Before you begin, determine your objectives for learning a new language. Is it for an upcoming trip? If so, a "crash" course at your local community college or a cultural center coupled with a good travel book will solve this dilemma.
- For fulfillment of a long term, personal development goal, a greater time commitment is needed. Depending upon your language learning aptitude and how effectively you can be immersed into a new culture, it can take an average of one to five years to gain fluency. To keep costs down, start taking courses at a community college from their continuing education selection. As you progress and possibly want to speed up the learning process, private lessons are a great alternative. Limit your spending on books to a very good dictionary, a verb book, and a good workbook for exercises. Remember, you cannot magically transfer the content of the books into your head.

The Keys To Success Are Practice and Immersion

- Start by committing 10 minutes per day to listening to the radio in your target language. Your teacher is a great resource for recommending radio stations that broadcast in your new language. As you progress, increase that time commitment.
- Also take advantage of the cultural centers that exist in most major cities. Some of that are located in the heart of Chicago include: Alliance Française (France); Instituto Cervantes (Spain); Puerto Rico Cultural Center (Puerto Rico); Goethe Institut (Germany); and the Brazilian Cultural Center (Brazil). Memberships usually cost between \$50-\$75 annually and, based on personal experience, is a very good investment. Once you become a member, take full advantage of the many volunteer opportunities - you will thank yourself later.

Last but not least, have fun, let the kid in your shine, and just enjoy it. Do not get frustrated and be realistic—you will not become fluent overnight, nor will it happen in three months so pace yourself, take it easy, be consistent with your practice commitment, and be creative. Happy learning!

- by Patricia Bingue

COMMUNITY SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY METROPOLITAN BOARD STYLE:

MB SCORES BIG AT HEINEKEN TRIPLE TEAM CHALLENGE

Score one for the Metropolitan Board (MB) Dream Team - one BIG ONE! As part of the Heineken Triple Team Challenge being presented in five cities across the United States, the MB participated and volunteered in the Chicago tournament held at Navy Pier on Saturday, April 19th and received a grand donation of \$10,000.



MB Member Charles Campbell helps to coordinate events for the day

The MB team nearly governed the entire day serving as individual game scorekeepers, overall competition scorekeepers, managing the 3-point contest, and even judging the slam-dunk contest.

Working diligently, professionally, and as always with enjoyable personalities that go above and beyond the standard “volunteer”, the MB Dream Team made such a positive impression that we have been invited back in August to work the NBA Hoop-It-Up, the largest 3-on-3 basketball tournament in the world.



MB Volunteers taking a time out

The Heineken MB Dream Team was comprised of the following individuals: Salena Whitfield, Charles Campbell, Derrick Young, Doug Rodgers, Felicia Kline, Janice Farrar, Ken Thompson, Roger

Peden, Sean Kelly, Sherry Franklin, Jamilah Shakoor, Tracey Harris, Phaedra Leslie, Renee Byrd, Davene Davis, Savarra Anderson, Latonya Ford, Steve Casey, Lacetti Fowler, and Josefina Aguayo. Look out for your next starting line-up of MB Dream Team Players!

- Article by Josefina Aguayo
- Photos by Tracey Harris

Brightening a Child's Future One Paint Stroke At A Time

On Saturday, June 14th, 25 brave Metropolitan Board (MB) members contributed their time and energy to the 10th Annual Chicago Cares Serve-A-Thon with one purpose in mind - to leave a positive mark in the community. Through a partnership with IBM, our volunteers donated over 150 hours collectively to the beautification of Jean De Lafayette Elementary School, located at 2714 W. Augusta in Chicago. Jean De Lafayette Elementary School was founded in 1893 and boasts a rich heritage within its primarily Hispanic community.



MB Members Eddie Jones, Janice Farrar, Edgartt Melton, and Josefina Aguayo

The school's enrollment is also approx. 30% African-American with a staggering poverty rate in the 90th percentile. At the conclusion of the day's events, the school's principal, Efrain Orduz, thanked the MB for their efforts. He commented, “We need communities, corporations, and other organizations to contribute to our children's

future. Education is the key. Currently, ‘No Child Left Behind’ is a mandate without funding. We've simply got to do more.”

Upon seeing their finished work Sonia Waiters expressed, “It's very humbling to think that we had corporate executives, moms, dads, and kids to help in a community in which none of us reside or work, for children we will never meet. Goodness is contagious.

No one complained about their paint-splattered clothes, paint-streaked hair or paint-freckled faces...” Andrea Baker, an Elementary Education Senior at Northern Illinois University remarked, “I really enjoyed getting together with the [other] MB members to serve others. The children will definitely know that someone cares for them and wants them to succeed.” Good Work, MB!



MB Members Sonia Waiters, Greg Mathurin, and Amber Anderson help out at Lafayette Elementary

- Article by Jennifer C. Davis
- Photos by Tracey Harris

COMMUNITY SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

OVER 1700 HOURS SERVED FOR FISCAL YEAR 2002-2003

Second Annual Summit Gives Teens Plenty to Talk About

At what age is it okay to have sex? Whose decision is it - his or hers? Why is there a double standard for males regarding sex, but higher standards for females? Do kids our age in other countries face similar peer pressures?

These are just some of the questions posed by the participants at the Metropolitan Board's (MB) second annual Teen Summit program, held on Saturday, June 7th on the campus of the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Titled "Teen Summit 2: My Life My Choices - What We Don't Talk About," the day-long program featured concurrent workshops, an open panel discussion, and free lunch for all to enjoy. Participants even had an opportunity to interact directly with special guest and panel moderator, *First Lady* of 107.5FM WGCI radio.

Participants ranged in age from 13 to 17 and were drawn from area junior high and high schools. The college campus setting enabled the students to speak more freely and



WVON's Monique Caradine engages students in the "Generation Y Undressed" workshop

openly than perhaps the typical classroom environment would have allowed. MB members came out to support the program in a variety of ways by setting up and registering students, assisting presenters in breakout discussion groups and distributing MB tote bags filled with collateral materials and other "goodies".

The four workshops of the day were: "Generation Y Undressed"; "Love Don't Live Here Anymore"; "15 Years and 9 Months Later"; and "Sex Outside the City". Each workshop, led by social service and medical professionals, provided the teens with useful information that could aid them in the challenging choices that they face and - like it or not - are often pressured to make on a daily basis. Presenters furnished participants with handouts and utilized audio-visual aides to illustrate their points. The "Generation Y Undressed" workshop, led by WVON's Monique Caradine

of "Mo in the Middy", for instance, allowed students to view some of today's popular music videos and break down the many ways in which the videos dictate "what's hot" in fashion and challenged them to evaluate how those images affect the youth's perception of sexuality.

Antoinette Drayton (Bogan School), age 15, articulated that "...the day's events were good and pertained to what we are all going through right now." More specifically, some participants believed that the mass media (e.g., cable television, radio, talk shows) were largely



Teens eagerly participate in panel discussion with workshop leaders

responsible for the perceptions that have over time become realities in their lives; such as the thought that you *have* to wear the gear seen in the videos on TV in order to be perceived as "cool" - regardless of your personality.

A common reflection of many of the students was that with self-discipline, counseling from older, more experienced people "who've been there" and a positive attitude, it is less difficult to successfully deal with the many peer pressures that they face, such as sexual activity and the perpetuation of sexual stereotypes.



Participants listen intently during one of the day's break-out sessions

Additionally, a resounding theme was that surrounding yourself with people interested in achieving goals in life is the best way to correct misperceptions about them and behavior that may lead them down "the wrong path."

- Article by Issa Barrett
- Photos by Tracey Harris

COMMUNITY SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

POISED FOR SUCCESS THE SECOND TIME AROUND

“Each and every one of you has another chance!”

That statement, made by Alderman Walter Burnett during his keynote address, set the tone for the Metropolitan Board (MB) sponsored 2nd *Chance for Success* program. The event, which took place at Chicago Urban League Headquarters (4510 S. Michigan Avenue) on Saturday, June 21st combined motivational speaking, information gathering, interactive workshops, and a career fair to educate and motivate 65 ex-offenders.

At a time when publications such as the *New York Times* are reporting that prison rates among African Americans males have reached an all time high at an estimated 12 percent¹, the timeliness of initiatives such as 2nd *Chance for Success* is readily apparent. After a welcome from MB President Steve Casey, participants were treated to Alderman Burnett’s personal account of success as a leader in local politics. Burnett, himself an ex-offender, exhorted participants to position themselves for change by humbling themselves and getting involved with other positive organizations through employment or volunteerism.



Alderman Burnett addresses the group

MB members Vanessa McClinton and Aires Davis then provided attendees with information regarding their legal rights as citizens and job seekers. Finally, MB member Nicole Ezell led an interactive workshop de-

signed to equip participants with job search and interviewing skills. In fact, the mock interviews involving MB members Charles Campbell and Katrina Walton, were the highlight of the event for many. Terrance Greenwood, a workshop attendee, commented, “I have been to events like this before, but this was the best one! All of my questions were answered. The mock interview was the best part of the event.” The day ended with a career fair complete with on-site resume assistance, booths focused on industries such as healthcare and public speaking, and representation from groups such as the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) and the United States Army.



Participants gather helpful tips from employers and MB members during the 2nd Chance For Success afternoon job fair.

Alderman Burnett praised the MB for its coordination of the program. He commented, “Exposure to the possibilities and opportunities is key.” Workshop participants could not agree more – they are eagerly awaiting a follow-up program that will provide additional legal counsel and career preparation tips. Undoubtedly, the MB will deliver.

¹“Prison Rates Among Blacks Reach A Peak, Report Finds”, *New York Times*, April 7, 2003

- Article by Tiffany E. Rockette
- Photos by Tracey Harris & Edgartt Melton

Wired for Success students of all ages packed out classrooms at the Beethoven Girls and Boys Club for Technology Day on Saturday, July 28, 2003. As the grand finale of the Metropolitan Board (MB) June Serve-a-thon, Tech Day gave students an unforgettable day of learning.

The first workshop *Can you work it?* taught students how to rebuild a computer. In the second workshop, *Gossip Folks*, students were taught how to use computers to communicate globally all the while keeping it real by incorporating Black History into the lessons. Students were



Students actively participate in the day's workshops

surprised to learn that the inventor of the personal computer was a Black man named Dr. Mark Dean. They sat on the edges of their seats, eager to answer questions and receive raffle tickets in hopes of winning the end of the day grand prize, a new computer. Jessica Briscoe of Englewood High School was the lucky winner of the computer (\$999 value) that was donated by The Visions Group, but all the students took home something valuable - skills to succeed in a technologically advanced society.

Jay Matthis and instructors Kevin Henderson, Sean Kelly, Doug Rogers, and Damon Smith did an awesome job organizing this event and sharing their skills with our youth. Want to get involved? The next Tech Day will be held this fall. Contact Jay Matthis at mariavis@ameritech.net and help us continue to keep our youth “wired for success.”

- Article by Shay Owens
- Photo by Tracey Harris

F.Y.I.

SOMEONE YOU SHOULD KNOW

**GEORGE N. MILLER, PRESIDENT & CEO OF PROVENA ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL**

Provena St. Mary's Hospital, located in Kankakee, Illinois, was established in 1897 as the area's first hospital. Since then, Provena St. Mary's has been delivering quality healthcare services to the residents of the greater Kankakee River Valley for over a century.

George N. Miller, Jr., president and CEO, is dedicated to providing superior healthcare while positively impacting the surrounding community. Upon becoming CEO, Mr. Miller made it quite clear that in addition to expanding the hospital's market share, "community outreach" would be viewed as more than just a PR slogan. With this in mind, he has positioned himself and his staff to be leaders in building communities of healing and hope.

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1) What do you do?

I am responsible for the full day-to-day operations of a 210-bed community medical center, including the 200 physicians, 1,038 employees, and the full range of services we provide. I make sure [that] we have the right kind and the right number of physicians for those services [as well as] the right staff and the right services with the appropriate technology. Additionally, I am responsible for the budget of over \$210 million that it takes to run the medical center.

2) Prior to becoming CEO of Provena St. Mary's, what did you do?

I was CEO of Christus Jasper Memorial Hospital, Jasper, TX where I had the same duties and responsibilities for 95-bed small rural community hospital in south-eastern Texas.

3) Statistically, how common are African-American hospital CEOs?

It is my understanding that there are three African-American CEOs in Illinois. In Texas, I was the only one.

4) Despite the small number of African-American CEOs, why would you say you have been so successful?

I believe in hard work, determination and always look-

ing at every challenge as an opportunity. Additionally, having good mentors in life and certainly faith in God and believing that I am fully capable of doing anything with God's help.

5) What new programs and initiatives have you implemented since joining Provena St. Mary's?

Thus far, we have implemented The Customer Centered Focus service program; an expansion of our cath lab; an increase in our market share; and development of a joint venture medical mall that will include diagnostic imaging and oncology services. We are enjoying a financial turnaround and our quality has improved.

6) In your opinion, do you feel that minorities are capitalizing on the opportunities available in the healthcare industry? If yes, why? If no, what should we do about it?

I feel the opportunities are there to be capitalized on. The healthcare industry is a growing segment of our economy and we as the healthcare industry must take our message about careers in healthcare to the junior high and elementary schools to talk about what a great profession healthcare is. It is very noble and I believe it is second only to ministers who save people's souls. We help people get well. We help them when they need us the most. We are in the people business and that certainly would drive anyone into this field that has compassion for people to include minorities. Telling our message is what we need to do.

7) What advice can you give those who are interested in becoming top administrators/professionals in the healthcare field or any other field for that matter?

I believe, as I have indicated before, for those interested in becoming top administrators professionally, healthcare field or any other field, the first is faith in God and understanding who you are and that God has given us all of our abilities. Then [they should] take action to do something about it by being prepared, getting the best education, working hard, having determination and persistence, never taking no for an answer, never giving up, and always striving to improve one's self.

- Interview conducted by Jennifer C. Davis

F.Y.I.

BITS & Windows Tip: Get Free MS Office Templates**BYTES**

Microsoft Office (97, 2000, XP) comes with some boring templates. It has templates for resumes and faxes to name a few. Did you know you can download new, exciting, and, best of all, *free* templates from Microsoft.com's template gallery at <http://search.officeupdate.microsoft.com/TemplateGallery/default.asp>? Categories include business forms, holiday cards, event planning, hobbies, and more. For example, look at the great templates provided for educators and students at the following site: <http://search.officeupdate.microsoft.com/TemplateGallery/ct145.asp>.

To take advantage of this free service, just click on the template that you want—it will automatically load into the application you are running. Once you use these templates, people will be impressed by your styling skills.

Want to make your own templates? You can learn how to make, format, and save your own templates by following the instructions below:

Creating your own Templates

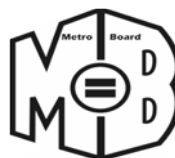
The easiest way to open new documents in Word, with your own custom settings, is to create a template design. A template design will allow you to work faster on those documents you regularly use, without wasting time with simple formatting issues. Follow this method to learn how to create a new template design.

- 1) Open MS Word.
- 2) Click on File > New in the menu bar
- 3) On the pop-up window, select the radio Template box under 'Create New.'
- 4) Hit OK (a new template window appears). This is your new template design, and anything you do to it will always be the same every time you use it. You can choose your own fonts, headings, signature blocks, etc.
- 5) Finally, save your new template (CTRL + S). Name the template and hit OK.

- by Jason Spears

Calendar of Events

- ◆ **Training Ground—A Next Generation Leadership Institute**
Friday, July 25—Sunday, July 27, 2003
Pittsburg, Pennsylvania
- ◆ **42nd Annual Golden Fellowship Dinner**
Saturday, November 8, 2003
Chicago Hilton & Towers
720 S. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, IL 60605
- ◆ **9th Annual Golf Outing**
Monday, September 8, 2003
Olympia Fields Country Club
Olympia Fields, Ill.
Chairman: Jim Winestock
Vice President of Operations and North Central
Region Manager
United Parcel Service, Inc.



Questions? Comments? Story Ideas? Please contact Tiffany E. Rockette (boogey4u@yahoo.com)