

NAACP Branch Election Results

Over 125 NAACP members of the Howard County Branch turned out for the election of Branch officers on Monday, November 27, 2006. The following persons were elected to serve for the 2007-2008 term of office:

Officers

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|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mr. Jenkins Odoms, Jr. | President |
| Mr. Lewis Saunders | 1 st Vice President |
| Mr. David Steele | 2 nd Vice President |
| Mrs. Annette Taylor | 3 rd Vice President |
| Mrs. Elsie Coleman | Secretary |
| Mrs. Jane Stokes | Treasurer |
| Mrs. Fannie Mathias | Assistant Treasurer |

Executive Committee

- Mrs. Sandra Butler Isley
- Dr. Robert Booth
- Dr. Rhonda Jones
- Dr. Luther Mathias
- Ms. Vernell Savage

Congratulations and best wishes to all. We look forward to a banner year for civil and human rights in Howard County.

***Please Note**

Committee Chairpersons are appointed by the President for each of the two year terms. At the end of the term committee chairpersons will be appointed or re-appointed to their positions by the President pending approval by the Executive Committee.

National Board Election

At the 2006 NAACP Annual Meeting held on December 7, 2006, Donald Cash was elected to represent Region VII on the NAACP Board of Directors by a vote of 24-10. Mr. Cash has previously served as a Region VII Director and has supported many activities for youth and sickle cell anemia through his work with the UFCW Minority Coalition. Congratulations to Mr. Cash for winning the Howard County vote.

President Odoms Speaks Out

Citing the pattern of illegal arrests, illegal detentions, and illegal searches being documented against the Baltimore City Police Department and the state-run Baltimore Central Booking and Intake Facility, Jenkins Odoms Jr., president of the Maryland State Conference of the NAACP and the local Howard County Branch has joined in a federal court suit on behalf of the victims of the abusive police behavior.

The court suit alleges that the quality of life arrests by city police officers were arbitrary; performance evaluations of police officers based on arrest numbers contributed to the arbitrary arrests; the jail conducted illegal strip searches; and jail officials held suspects without filing charges beyond the twenty-four hour limit.

President Odoms claims that both city and state officials refuse to acknowledge the implications and seriousness of the complaints. Quality of life includes the safety of its citizens as they expect the protection of public safety officials.

A similar scenario involving the arrests of high school students on quality of life issues occurred in Howard County nearly ten years ago. Thanks to the intervention of then Police Chief Jim Robey, then Major Wayne Livesay, the NAACP Legal Redress Chair Lewis Saunders, President Odoms and Natalie Woodson, Education Chair, the issues were resolved with greater communication and understanding by all concerned: parents, students, and law enforcement officers. The Police Advisory Board was established with Lewis Saunders and the late Edward Dalton Young as the NAACP representatives on the Board. This model of cooperation and improvement may well be needed in Baltimore City and other communities that are experiencing difficulties with law enforcement officials.

National NAACP Plans Move

Plans are underway for the National Headquarters of the NAACP to re-locate to Washington, D.C. While the move is a loss to the Baltimore community which has a strong history of support to the NAACP through leaders such as W.E.B. Dubois, Rev. Harvey Johnson, Lillie Jackson, Juanita Jackson Mitchell, Thurgood Marshall, Enolia McMillan and countless others, the Anacostia community of southeast Washington, D.C. will experience a tremendous boost as it attempts to regain the vitality and strength of a previously vibrant Black community.

Reports indicate that Washington officials have offered 3.5 million dollars in grants to the NAACP. The new complex is schedule to be completed by the fall of 2007.

Both Board Chairman Julian Bond and President C.E.O. Bruce Gordon have expressed support for the move to Washington, D.C. citing the need to be in closer proximity to national policy makers. The NAACP National Board is scheduled to vote on the issue at its annual meeting in February

Farewell To A Fearless Freedom Fighter

The Officers and Members of the Howard County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) express profound sadness at the passing of our beloved and esteemed life member, strong supporter and friend, Edward Dalton Young. We pray for divine support and comfort and that Almighty God encompasses the family in His loving arms. In appreciation for his life long commitment to civil rights, the NAACP submitted the following resolution to the family:

Whereas, Edward Dalton Young consistently fought to make the principles of democracy, freedom and justice a reality;

Whereas, Edward Dalton Young provided services as a parliamentarian for the Howard County Branch;

Whereas, Edward Dalton Young distinguished himself as a fearless member of the Howard County NAACP Executive Committee;

Whereas; Edward Dalton Young served as a faithful member of the Education and Scholarship Committees on behalf of educational excellence;

Whereas, Edward Dalton Young provided counseling and mentoring to students to improve the quality of their lives;

Whereas, Edward Dalton Young promoted the financial stability of the Howard County Branch through his work on the Freedom Fund Banquet Committee;

Whereas, Edward Dalton Young recognized that freedom is not free through his fully paid life membership in the NAACP;

Be it resolved that the name of Edward Dalton Young be enrolled in the NAACP Hall of Honor as an exemplary freedom fighter worthy of emulation by all.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jenkins Odoms, Jr., President
December 4, 2006

Howard County NAACP Committees at Work

Legal Redress

On September 25, 2006 the Legal Redress Committee met with Police Chief William McMahon and State's Attorney Tim McCrone to resolve two serious issues. Issue #1 involved a 78-year-old female NAACP member who had been continuously harassed by neighbors on either side of her home because she had complained to Police Department about the firing of firecrackers for an entire week before, during, and after the 4th of July. Rocks had been thrown at her home through August when a restraining order was

secured. District Court Judge Kaplan ordered the parties to mediation, which did not resolve the situation. The 78-year-old female NAACP member decided that she had no choice but to sell her home and move elsewhere. The NAACP questioned the inability of the Police Department to prevent the continuing harassment and to bring the culprits to justice. Within days of the meeting, a video camera was installed and no other harassments have occurred since that time.

Issue #2: A male NAACP member was arrested for a handgun violation, trespassing, and disorderly conduct. All charges except the disorderly conduct have been dropped.

The NAACP member will face only the disorderly conduct charge, which is a misdemeanor. The communications that have been established between the legal justice system and the NAACP have provided the mechanism through which positive actions can be taken and issues can be resolved. Orchids and accolades to the Legal Redress Team: Lewis Saunders, Chair; Jeffrey Sills, Co-Chair, Jenkins Odoms, Jr., and Rev. John L. Wright.

Kudos also to the River Hill Community which has taken a pro-active stance on addressing the hate crimes and incidents that have occurred in that community. Two suspects have been arrested but they do not represent the total group of perpetrators. Vigilance by the community is the key.

Education

(1) The NAACP member complaint of unfair employment practices by the Howard County Public School System has not been resolved pending an investigation by the Maryland Human Relations Commission. Based on the complainant's concerns, it was felt that he should have been granted an interview for the position. The NAACP agreed based on a review of his credentials. Recommendations for further actions will follow the Maryland Human Relations Commission report.

(2) *Back To School Night With The Superintendent* focused on High School Assessments with a provocative presentation by Dr. Clarissa Evans, Director and staff members of the Curriculum and Instruction Division. It is critical that all parents and students focus on the ability to pass these tests by 2009 when the present students in Grade 10 will be the first to be held accountable in the state of Maryland. This requirement has been mandated based on the No Child Left Behind legislation. Zelena Morris Coordinator

Secondary Curriculum for Howard County Public Schools held a similar workshop at the Maryland State Conference Convention. School supplies were distributed at the end of the meeting to all students and parents assembled.

(3) Plans are in progress for the issuance of the 2006 NAACP Education Report Card due to be presented to the Board of Education in January 2007. Please join us as we make our concerns and our appreciation known to the newly elected School Board.

(4) A letter of support for the nomination of Lawrence Walker to serve as a member of the School Board has been sent to County Executive Kenneth Ulman on behalf of the Officers and Members of Howard County NAACP. Mr. Walker has demonstrated a strong commitment to the youth of our community through his work as Community Pastor at The Celebration Church, leadership of Parents of African American Students at Mt. Hebron High School, mentoring at Phelps Luck Elementary School and Mt. Hebron High School and outreach education services for Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity.

(5) Dr. Rhonda Jones is serving as the Acting Chair of the Education Committee in the absence of Natalie Woodson. Members include Darrah Hall, Fannie Matthias, Dr. Luther Mathias, and Annette Taylor. Thank you for a job well done.

Education Alert

All eyes are on the Supreme Court of the United States as it hears arguments against the assignment of students in public schools based on race. Parents in two school districts, Seattle Washington and Jefferson County, Kentucky have appealed lower court decisions that upheld the policies set by the school systems. In Seattle students were able to apply to their choice of 10 high schools. For those high schools that were in heavy demand school officials used the racial balance of the entire district to assign students. In Kentucky, all schools were assigned a minimum of 15% and a maximum of 50 % minority students in all public schools.

White parents are claiming racial discrimination because they were not able to enroll their children in their schools of choice. The Justice Department and the Bush Administration support the parents' position and argued on their behalf before the court. The NAACP supports the school system since their actions give all students a fair chance to receive quality education. It has been documented through the years that the over-concentration of low-income and

minority students in the same schools tends to lessen quality of education in those schools. This is a sad commentary on the willingness of school systems and the general public to ensure the delivery of quality education to all students. Being poor and Black is no reason to believe that minority students cannot excel in all schools.

General Membership Committee

Under the dynamic leadership of Florence Smith, Chairman of the General Membership Committee, the Howard County Branch is attempting to increase its membership by 1,000 persons by June 2007. New members to date number 192 for a total of 301 general members. These totals do not include life members that are handled by Cradelia Birdsong, Life Membership Chair.

As an incentive to increase memberships, the committee held a "Party With A Purpose" at the Silver Shadows nightclub in Columbia. Radio Station 95.6 with Tim Watts was there and announced that the NAACP was in the house every 20 minutes. Seven people joined on the spot. More "Parties With A Purpose" are planned for the future so that we can reach our goal of 1,000 new members. Won't you help us with this mission? Come out and bring a new member to join up. We are counting on you.

Persons who helped to make the membership drive at the Silver Shadow a success include Jeffrey Sills, Wylene Burch, Thelma Lucas, Wendy Pritchett and Carol Malveaux, the Maryland State Conference Membership Chair. We thank them for their commitment and support. Others who have been instrumental in recruiting new members are: Cradelia Birdsong, Wylene Burch, Elsie Coleman, Florence Smith, Jenkins Odoms, Annette Taylor, Clarence Toomer, and Natalie Woodson. We need everyone's help with this campaign. Please help us to make our goal.

Life Membership Committee

As of November 30, 2006 the Howard County Branch has 523 fully paid life members and 310 subscribing life members. Some fully paid life members have gone on to become Golden Heritage members and Diamond members. To date, fifty Howard County members have become fully paid Golden Heritage members, four are subscribing Gold members, and one is a subscribing Diamond life member. The total number of life members for Howard County is 833.

The Commitment ► *The Official Newsletter of the Howard County NAACP*

Save The Date!!!

The 28th Annual Freedom Fund Dinner will be held on Friday, March 2, 2007 at the Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Marriott. The major fundraising event for the Howard County Branch will begin promptly at 7 P.M. with dinner being served at 7:30 P.M. The guest speaker will be *The Honorable Kenneth Ulman, County Executive for Howard County*. Cost of the event is 75.00 dollars. Contact Florence Smith at (301) 604-0879 for tickets and additional information. Please plan to attend.,

The Howard County Youth Council

The Howard County Youth Council has continued its outstanding involvement in civic, educational health, and leadership activities. Foremost in these activities were the National Day of College Prep, Financial Aid Planning, College Fair at Altholton High School, Thanksgiving and Christmas events to provide food and toys to needy families and the Education Roundup with the distribution of school supplies and educational information to students and parents. The Youth Council is to be commended for its admirable work under the leadership of Mrs. Bessie Bordenave, Youth Advisor.

Howard County General Election Results

Howard County voters overwhelmingly voted to elect the following candidates for office in the November 7th General Election:

National:

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| Benjamin Cardin, | U.S. Senator |
| John Sarbanes, | U.S. Congressman |
| Elijah Cummings, | U.S. Congressman |

State

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|--------------------|---------------|
| Martin O'Malley, | Governor |
| Anthony Brown, | Lt. Governor |
| Edward Kasemeyer, | State Senator |
| Allan Kittleman, | State Senator |
| James Robey, | State Senator |
| Gail Bates, | Delegate |
| Elizabeth Bobo, | Delegate |
| Guy Guzzone, | Delegate |
| Warren Miller, | Delegate |
| Shane Pendergrass, | Delegate |
| Frank Turner, | Delegate |

Local

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|----------------|-------------------|
| Kenneth Ulman, | County Executive |
| Calvin Ball, | County Councilman |
| Gregg Fox, | County Councilman |

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|------------------|---------------------|
| Mary Kay Sigaty | County Councilwoman |
| Jan Terrazo, | County Councilwoman |
| Courtney Watson, | County Councilwoman |
| Frank Aquino, | School Board Member |
| Larry Cohen, | School Board Member |
| Sandra French, | School Board Member |
| Ellen Giles, | School Board Member |
| Patricia Gordon | School Board Member |

Congratulations to all of our elected officials and best wishes for a productive and successful term in office.

***Please Note**

A seventh School Board seat will be filled by County Executive Ulman to replace Mary Kay Sigaty who has been elected to the County Council. NAACP letter of support has been forwarded to the County Executive on behalf of Lawrence Walker who has petitioned for the position.

County Executive Ulman Demonstrates Inklusiveness

Newly elected County Executive Kenneth Ulman has demonstrated his commitment to serving all of the people of Howard County by including a diverse group of persons to serve on his transition team and its sub committees and in choosing his top administrative officers. President Jenkins Odoms has been invited to serve on the sub-committee on community services and Natalie Woodson was asked to serve on the sub-committee on education. Dr. Rhonda Jones was recommended to replace Mrs. Woodson due to her leave of absence.

Veteran county employee, Lonnie Robbins has been named chief administrative officer, the top appointed position in Howard County. He is the first African American to be appointed to this top position. An attorney, Mr. Robbins formerly worked as an assistant county solicitor prior to his appointment as a deputy administrative officer under Raquel Sanudo who is retiring. As chief administrative officer, Mr. Robbins will act as County Executive when the Executive is out of the county and supervises eight county offices including budget, human resources, public works, planning and zoning and public safety agencies.

Mr. Robbins credentials are exemplary and the NAACP applauds the appointment and wishes him success in his new position.