

Portland Causes Stir At Conference Part II

by Mattie Ann Callier-Spears
In this entire world, the United States is the envy of all nations. "As a nation, Americans spend more on beer and cigarettes than they do on education," as stated by Martin Luther King long years ago. The United States of America is a nation where its government seems to be more concerned about how well a missile, an instrument of destruction, is constructed than they are about how well the minds of its future, our children, are being educated.

As we continue with our interview at the conference, there were many other very talented and dedicated persons currently working in the field of Multiculturalism from many states and countries including--Canada, Africa and England.

Another very profound and dynamic speaker was Dr. James Banks of Seattle, Washington. He was one of the opening speakers using the topic "Background Perspective and Need for Multicultural Education." He suggested a curriculum design to foster multicultural literacy -- one that will help students and teachers to know, to care and to act in ways that will develop and cultivate a just society. He further stated that "It is imperative that curricula be transformed to help students view concepts, issues and problems from diverse cultural perspectives. Merely inserting ethnic and gender content into existing curricula structures, paradigms, and assumptions is not enough. Totally transformed multicultural curricula motivate students to view and interpret facts, events, concepts and theories from varying perspectives." Banks continues, "To help our nation and world become more culturally democratic, students must also develop commitment to personal, social and civic actions as well as knowledge and skills to their participation in effective civic action."

An older educator here in Portland once stated, "Motivation without opportunity equals depression and failure." -- Mrs. Roberta B. Vann

The students identified in the multicultural hype are caught up in little nets of confinement which is in-



Conference participants



Dr. James A. Banks Dr. Robert Fortenberry Mr. Proctor Houston

consistent with the purpose of the program. Are we going backwards instead of going forward? Have we made any progress? Or -- are we merely reacting to the compounded interest of our forefathers? For every action, there is a reaction. Are our reactions sound and with purpose? Are our children merely pawns being used in a vicious game geared for adults who have lost their direction? Each educator must think on these questions as they pursue and design a course of direction for their lives, in the field of education, and for the outcome of the lives of all the children they will encounter. Ask yourself this question, "Am I hurting or helping this child?" Will your students remember you as a concerned teacher or will they say that you just didn't care? As educators, you have something that every student wants and needs -- an education.

An educator isn't one who only gives tests and lectures; an educator is

someone who lights up dark places in the minds of the learner.

On Saturday, November 2, 1991, Dr. Lawrence Lezotte, recognized as the preeminent spokesperson for effective schools research, emphasized multicultural education by using *The Effective School Model*. "The effective school model is a school where a high percentage of students master the basic skills and essential elements regardless of ethnicity, socio-economic standing, or gender."

On Sunday, the final day, but far from being the end of the discussion, Dr. Robert Fortenberry concluded the conference by challenging each conference participant "We must continue to look at new ideas, strategies and information that would help us reach our goal of a quality education for all our students." He then encouraged the group to share their perspectives on multiculturalism.

Some persons expressed that their

districts were only giving lip service to Multicultural Education and were waiting for something else to take its place. Other programs, just beginning, had not yet been assigned a budget. Geraldine Hammond, of the Salem-Keizer Public Schools, expressed gratitude to the Portland, Corvallis and Eugene schools for their assistance in helping develop her program; and causing the progress to be moving more quickly than other programs in other districts which began at the same time.

Since the Salem-Keizer program started, in June of 1991, a retreat for all administrators was held in August with a national speaker, Byron Kunisawa, who spoke on "Valuing Diversity." There was also a city-wide outreach presentation and a REACH (Respecting Ethnic And Cultural Heritage) Training Workshop for teachers, counselors and principals. Hammond exuded, "None of these activities could have taken place without the contact and networking with other people who were working on Multicultural Education Program ideas for materials and staff training; and the opportunity to hear many nationally known speakers."

Another very vocal woman educator, from the state of Texas, was very adamant concerning the misdirection on the emphasis on multiculturalism. As she stood, she dynamically verbalized her fervent and emotional assessment, by saying "We have sent education back centuries in time. It was during the time of segregation, when our children were all in black schools, being taught by black teachers -- our children excelled; from that generation came our doctors, lawyers, judges and politicians. People of color, though deprived and depressed, received a better quality of education. It was following integration -- when white teachers were forced to teach our Black children and our Hispanic children and our Japanese children and our Jewish children. Maybe too many color-lines were crossed. Maybe the rules of the game were not clearly defined. All that I know, is that, every since integration, our Black kids, especially, have gotten a raw deal in education.

And I don't foresee any improvement in the near future.

Washington, D.C. sent a representative from the Department of Education. Mrs. Cornelius didn't make a very big hit with the conference participants, as a whole, with the content of her presentation. Her speech was inundated with statistics and carefully placed statements, such as: "The buzzword for the 90's is 'Reform for Education'. Some 23 million adults are functionally illiterate. The school aptitude test showing decline since 27 years. The statistics show that 1/5th of the total education population can write a comprehensive essay and only 1/3rd has excelled in math. The mediocre can stand as an act of war. We have disassembled or disarmed the present education system. The 1960 performance level is not acceptable. Children today know as much science and math as their parents three decades ago. Statistics have increased in interracial diversity." She also said the statistics bear repeating the "why" we need multicultural education.

It was stated that from 1985 to 1995 the Hispanic and Asians will increase over 50% in the high schools. Washington is encouraging textbook publishers to reflect the multicultural diversity in their printed materials. There must be a complete reconstruction of the American System.

According to the material Mrs. Cornelius was reading from, "The breakdown on the value system falls on our schools. We must work together to free all schools of drugs and crime. Businesses are presently paying for the design of the schools. Each community should get involved with the designs of their schools. Find out what it will take. Also, we need better job skills. Encourage the corporate community to create skill clinics to upgrade skills of employment."

Mrs. Cornelius concluded her presentation by saying "President Bush is calling on each educator to assist at the community level..."

Conference facilitator, Dr. Robert Fortenberry, final words still ring in my ears, "During this conference, I've heard participants speak about the atti-

tudes of the teachers. We don't have time for these people to get their attitudes together. It's later than you think it is. You are the administrator. Use your authority! If a teacher can't properly execute your program -- get rid of them. We don't have time to be babysitting teachers. Teachers are being paid to teach. So -- they should do just that. These children are coming to us with a myriad of serious concerns and we, as educators, have to be prepared to meet the needs of these children."

Just the other day I heard a comment on Christian radio that is so appropriate. The speaker said "The old cliché says 'If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen'. But I say stay in the kitchen and take the heat, because it is only through trials and struggles are we made strong."

How many times have you heard an educator say these famous last words, "I can't take any more. I'm getting out of this business." Well maybe, just maybe, that person was just a paid employee and not a dedicated employee. We need more dedicated school district and classroom employees. Persons who are dedicated to the proposition that all children, no matter what their cultural or socio-economic backgrounds are, shall and will receive an adequate education that will help create high levels of self esteem, good citizenship, good community influences and an excellent appreciation for the cultural differences of others. There are too many educators who are just drawing their paychecks and wouldn't give a hill of beans for the education of our children. These people don't need to be in the classrooms. A concerned teacher is a good teacher. Parents should also take an active part in the education of their children. Don't just leave it all to the schools.

For more information concerning this conference and upcoming conferences, contact Carolyn M. Leonard's office at 249-2000.

At the time of this publication, Carolyn M. Leonard was not available for comment on the Baseline Essays. The Portland Observer will bring you further detailed information and in-depth interviews with local educators in a follow up issue.

'What Black Women Should Know About Lupus'

Portland Section National Council Of Negro Women has joined a nationwide campaign to raise awareness of Lupus and its symptoms among black women.

The campaign "What Black Women Should Know About Lupus" began in National Lupus Awareness Month in October and is intended to raise awareness of Lupus and its symptoms among black women, and encourage them to see their doctor if they have signs of the disease.

The National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Disease (NIAMS), a component of the National Institute of Health, believes that women who think they have Lupus should be examined by a doctor and be tested for the disease. Lupus is a serious health problem that mainly effects young women. Although people of all races may get lupus, it has a three times higher incidence, prevalence, and mortality in black women than in white women.

"Many in the black community have never heard of Lupus, and it goes undiagnosed until serious complications arise. If left untreated, the disease may damage the joints, skin, kidneys, heart, or brain. With the correct medicine and taking care of themselves, most Lupus patients can hold a job, have children, and lead a full life.

Common signs of Lupus are red rash or color change in the face, painful or swollen joints, unexplained fever, chest pain with breathing, unusual loss of hair, sensitivity to the sun, and a low blood count. If you think you have signs of Lupus, see a doctor. For a free copy of the booklet, "What Black Women Should Know About Lupus," write Portland Section National Council Negro Women, Ms. Edna Pitman, President, PO Box 11705, Portland, Oregon 97211.

Did you know that lupus is a disease that occurs more frequently in young black women than in any other group? Lupus can be serious, but with early detection and good treatment, most people with lupus can lead a normal life.

Considering these facts, it is im-

portant that Black Americans, particularly young, black women know about lupus, its symptoms, and its treatment.

Lupus is a disease that can affect many parts of the body. In lupus, something goes wrong with the body's immune system, and this powerful protective system is no longer able to defend the body against illness. Instead, the immune system attacks healthy tissues.

There are three types of lupus. The most serious of these is systemic lupus erythematosus which may harm the skin, joints, kidneys, brain, lungs, and heart. Discoid or cutaneous lupus mainly affects the skin. Lupus caused by medications, or drug-induced lupus, goes away when the medication is stopped.

How can you tell if you or someone you know has lupus? The signs of lupus differ from one person to another. Some people have many signs of the disease. Others have just a few. The common signs of lupus are:

- *Red rash or color change on the face, often in the shape of a butterfly across the bridge of the nose.
- *Painful or swollen joints
- *Unexplained fever
- *Chest pain with breathing
- *Unusual loss of hair
- *Pale or purple fingers or toes from cold or stress
- *Low blood count

These signs are more important when they occur together.

Only a doctor can diagnose lupus. If you think you or someone you know has lupus, see a doctor right away. The doctor will perform an examination and test for the disease.

The cause of lupus is unknown. However, research doctors have learned a great deal about lupus and are studying new ways to treat and, hopefully, prevent the disease.

FOR MORE INFORMATION call the Lupus Foundation of America, at (800) 558-0121 or The American Lupus Society at (800) 331-1802 or write the Task Force on Lupus in High Risk Populations, National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Disease, Box AMS, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Maryland 20892.

St. Philips Honors Maude Young



Maude Banks Young, confirmed as a member in 1938 will be honored by her church on Sunday, November 24, for her dedicated service and community commitment over the past 50 years. St. Philip the Deacon Episcopal Church, 120 NE Knott, invited friends to a special celebration for Mrs. Young at 11:15 a.m., November 24. Mrs. Young is a retired practical nurse and has served as Senior Warden and leader of many local and diocesan church groups. As a dedicated community activist, Mrs. Young has been President of the Urban League Guild, Headstart volunteer, advocate for senior services and centers, and an Oregon Merit Mother of the Year.

Oregon First Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction

When: December 07, 1991
Where: Shilo Inn 11707 NE Airport Way
Theme: "Women Sharing Prayers Through The Holidays"
Cost: \$15.00 (price includes Gratuity)

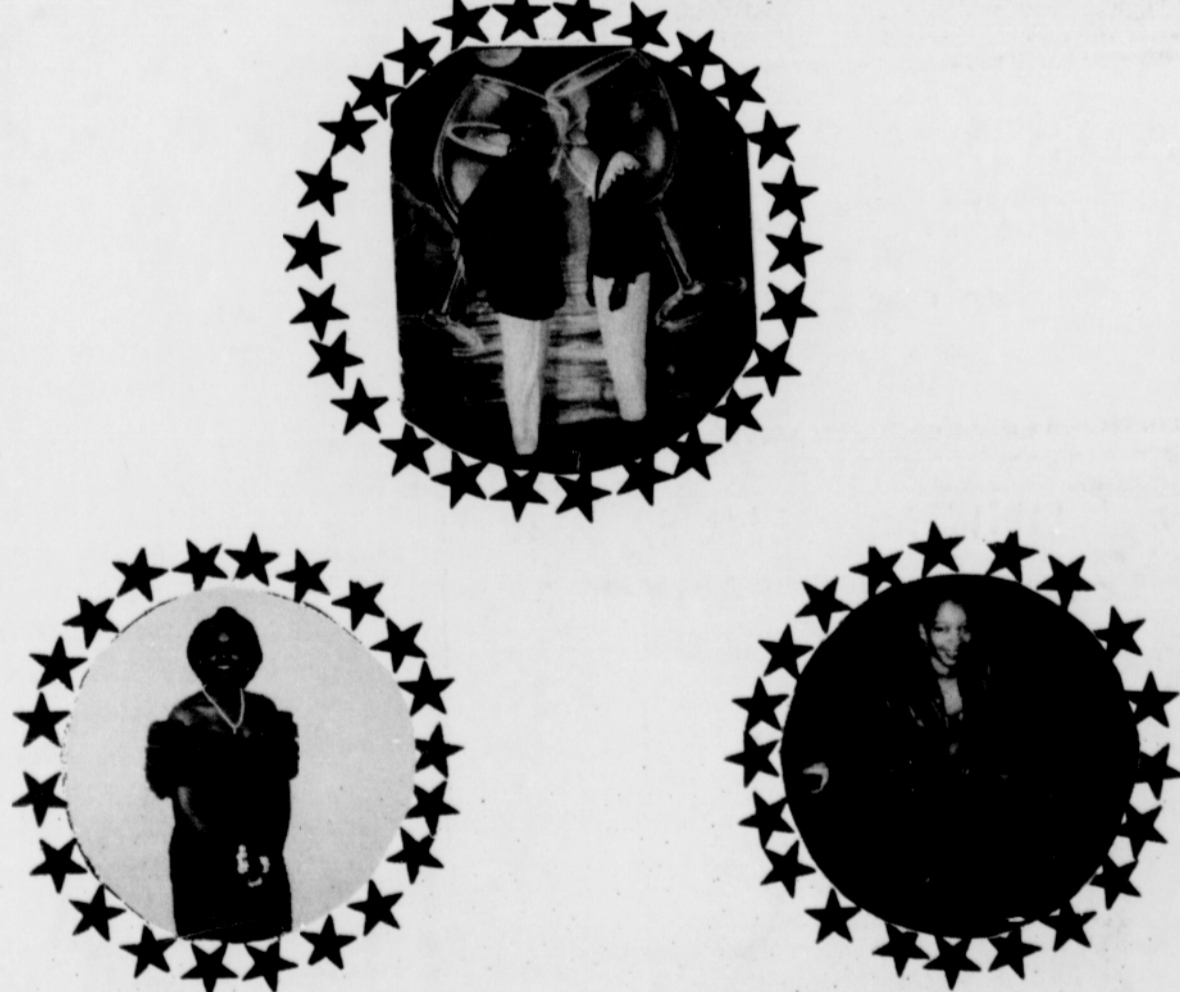
We are inviting Christians from all over the community to respond to this opportunity to help Oregon First Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Coffee Sip Auxillary continue its commitment to strengthen Christian women everywhere.

For further information, please feel free to call Normal J. Williams at 287-0624.

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