

Nero Delivers Keynote Address at the Fifth Annual Development Conference at Mississippi State University

David M. Nero, Jr., Chairman/CEO of Nero and Associates, Inc., a Portland, Oregon based professional services company delivered the keynote address at the January 28th Fifth Annual Development Conference at Mississippi State University, Ita Bena, Mississippi.

Nero's speech, "Education: A Vehicle to Economic and Community Development" was presented to minority and female business owners and Mississippi Delta political leaders at the Center for Economic Development on the university campus.

In his talk, Nero pointed out that the conference theme, "Education: A Vehicle to Economic and Community Development" suggests, "that economic and community development are targets we must still get to...that we are not there yet. For the phrase should state 'True Education: A Vehicle to Economic and Community Development.' I stress 'True' education because we must not make the mistake of believing that just sitting in a classroom or memorizing facts and figures is what we need to succeed in what appears to be a coming time of economic hardships and challenges. 'True' education must be a process that creates an individual who is both committed and able to bring about positive changes for the community in which they live and labor."

Nero went on to say "The very first step in utilizing 'true' education as a vehicle for progress is acknowledging that for us and for America a severe problem currently exists. Without denying the great strides that have been made in some areas of national race relations, any honest look at where we are now compared to where we used to be and where we wish to be in the future, reveals that serious problems continue to plague those caught in the grips of the economic and racial legacy of an earlier era. A part of the problem for Blacks is what non-Blacks continue to mistakenly believe about us as a group. The old stereotypes persist. A recent nationwide study conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago revealed that 78% of the country's non-Black population still believe that Blacks 'prefer to live off welfare.' Sixty-two percent said Blacks are more likely to be lazy. Such continued misinformation and ignorance is not harmless. It is manifested in many real and concrete

barriers to Black progress and advancement today. The study went on to state the minorities lack access to training and development programs. Translated out of bureaucratic jargon that means they lacked 'education.'"

Nero continued, "It is 'true' education that will be that vehicle, that mechanism, that will allow a brighter future for us all. One critical part is to instill an appreciation in our youth for their history and culture. This is very important because for many generations there was a comprehensive and systematic attempt to pretend that only Whites had contributed to the development of the modern world we live in. Of course, this pretense is nonsense. Whites have certainly contributed their share--but many other individuals and groups were just as important and integral to that development."

Therefore, an important part of 'true' education must recapture the essential truth of our shared multicultural past and infuse it into the hearts and minds and souls of our young people today. But by itself that will not be nearly enough. We should know that it is not in itself enough to solve our problems because it has never been enough to solve the problems of any group by itself. We need look no further than our fellow White Americans to see the truth of that. The White youth of America are surrounded and immersed in a sea of White cultural history and identity support systems that truly dominate every aspect of information and communication in this society. Yet, you all know the problems America's White youth face today. Identity and role models alone will not suffice in a time of economic recession and global competition.

Look for example at our welfare system. While there lingers in America's political and social mentality this absurd notion that welfare is a 'Black program' and that Black people abuse the system, when even a peek at the statistics of welfare show what we know by intuition. We know that if it were true that only Black people were on welfare--there would be no welfare--Period! And sure enough, the statistics show us to be correct. A revealing look at welfare by *Time* magazine recently showed that 61% of those receiving welfare are White while only 33% are Black. In truth, considering the history of racism and oppression in this country's history, the real shocking story is

not how many of us are on welfare but the remarkable number who are not. Conversely, in a country that so overwhelmingly projects and protects the identity of Whites and reinforces their cultural history, the amazing question is why are so many of them 'on' welfare? In one sense the answer is simple and useful for our purposes today. It is not enough to have a sense of identity or a pocketful of role models. You must have skills and training and direction as well.

"True' education looks not only behind us but ahead. In addition to identity, we must teach geometry. Our youth must know of both ancient Egypt and modern economics. They must know of our great grandfathers but they also must know the grammar of the board room. We must not let our traditions imprison our vision, keeping it locked in the past, and preventing us from seeing the way to a better future. We must look at and compete in a global economy with global competition in a world in which the worth of an unskilled individual has been seriously devalued. In today's world of technology and information--our salvation is to acquire technical skills and master information. We, as a race, must also look not only to our own past for paths to progress; we must also look at our neighbors today and borrow from the techniques that supported their success. We must look at Whites, look at Jews, look at Southeast Asians, Japanese and Koreans. The lessons are there. They are not hard to find but difficult in execution:

1. work hard.
2. work smart.
3. work toward a common goal.
4. share the success with those who shared the work.
5. put our youth in a position to benefit from progress already achieved and continue the quest for success.

We can no longer hide behind complaints and accusations--regardless of how valid--or we will pay a terrible social and economic price--becoming obsolete. Today our progress is at a point in history when the concept of 'true' education for our youth can be the vehicle that advances their quest for personal worth and fulfillments as well as contributes to the larger good of economic and community development for us all.

"Starting today, let us make the gifts of that great truth become self evident," Nero concluded.

Black History Poetry Reading



Mr. James B. Williams

Beaumont Middle School will present for Black History month a Poetry Recital Thursday, February 13, at 1:45 pm. The recital will be presented in the school library, 4043 N. E. Fremont.

The recital will feature Mr. James B. Williams (J. B.), Black History and poetry teacher. He will recite poetry from works of famous American poets from the Cotton Revolution, 1825, to 1941, the Depression. The theme of this recital will be: Lest We Forget.

Sharon Gary-Smith Elected Branch Chair of North/Inner Northeast YMCA

The YMCA of Columbia-Willamette announces Sharon Gary-Smith has been elected Branch Chairperson of the North/Inner Northeast YMCA Branch.

The North/Inner Northeast YMCA is one of eight community branches in the Portland Metro area. Ms. Gary-Smith has served as National Program Director of the National Black Women's Health Project from 1984 to 1990. She has held positions in Public Relations, Management and as an account executive with Tri-Met, Port of Portland and Pacific Northwest Bell. Sharon is President of the Women's Foundation of Oregon, a board member of Planned Parenthood of Columbia-Willamette, the Urban League and is Vice President of the National Political Congress of Black Women.

'Crazy Hat Luncheon' At Ymca

The YWCA of Portland Northeast Center is sponsoring its first annual "Crazy Hat Luncheon" on March 7, 1992 from noon to 2 p.m. The luncheon will be held at the YWCA Northeast Center, 5630 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Tickets are \$5.00. All proceeds will benefit the Northeast Center youth programs.

For more information contact the YWCA--223-6281, Ext. 3057.

Northwest Front Avenue Urban Renewal Project Completed; Bonds To Be Paid Off 18 Years Early Saving Taxpayers More Than \$10 Million Interest Payments

Taxpayers will save more than \$10 million in interest payments with completion of the Portland Development Commission's Northwest Front Avenue Industrial Renewal Project and the retirement 18 years early of urban renewal bonds issued to finance it.

PDC Chairman Douglas McGregor announced achievement of the milestone at formal ceremonies held January 31 at Wacker Siltronic Corp., a major employer and principal property owner in the urban renewal area.

McGregor called the Northwest Front Avenue project "a model for future urban renewal programs."

"This project," McGregor said, "demonstrates how a wise public investment can come back to us many times over in jobs and in a broader property tax base. Paying off the Northwest Front bonds 18 years in advance of the due date should send one unmistakable message to the taxpayer: 'The money you entrust to us is going to be worked 'to the max' on your behalf while we have it, and it won't be tied up in a project a day longer than necessary to reach the intended result.'"

Mayor J.E. Bud Clark hailed the project as "one of PDC's most successful efforts." PDC is the City's urban renewal, housing and economic development agency.

"This was an area that was largely empty; there were a few vacant, rundown buildings and a rock quarry," Clark recalled, referring to the 360-acre area along the west bank of the Willamette River five miles north of downtown Portland. "But now, because of this project and the enormous investments made here by Wacker and an expanded Atochem facility, more than

Project Independence

What: Project Independence is designed to assist single parents and displaced homemakers to become economically self-sufficient. The program provides access to a variety of employment and training opportunities which enable participants to acquire necessary skills in order to become successfully employed. The program is a joint venture of Portland Community College, the Department of Education and Adult and Family Services. Offices are located at PCC's Cascade Campus, Women's Resource Center.

All participants attend an eleven week, Life Skills Seminar. Topics covered include: personal skills assessment and development, assertiveness training, job readiness assessment, informational interviews, transferable skill identification, career research, time, stress and money management. Job search skills for placement preparation include: cover letter, resume writing, applications and videotaped mock interviews. Placement options include: education, direct job placement, training and referrals to apprenticeship and non-traditional employment opportunities.

Ongoing activities provided by Project Independence include placement assistance, support services and counseling. Participants are continually assisted with identifying and

Packwood Again Leads Effort to Extend Unemployment Benefits

Oregon Senator Bob Packwood today encouraged his colleagues in the Senate to vote in favor of a 13-week extension of unemployment benefits. Packwood broke ranks with the Administration early last year to sponsor the first extension of these benefits. Now they are running out again, and he urged the Senate to act quickly on another extension.

"This recession has lasted longer than anyone anticipated, and it has left tracks on the backs of many workers in my state of Oregon and around the country," said Packwood. "This bill won't help us out of the recession. But it will help those who are suffering. My first priority is to get unemployed Oregonians back to work. But in the meantime, we must extend benefits for those who still struggle to find work," he continued.

"It took us six months last year to get an agreement on extending unemployment benefits. During that debate here in Washington, unemployed timber workers and others in Oregon were suffering. Let's pass this bill and get some relief to our citizens," Packwood concluded. The Senate passed the extension by a vote of 94-2, and the President is expected to sign it.

moving barriers to their success and independence.

Who: Applications to Project Independence will be accepted from individuals who are displaced homemakers or single parents with children 18 or younger. Applicants must also live in the city of Portland; be socially or economically disadvantaged and be able to benefit from participation in Project Independence.

Cost: Project Independence is currently funded through June, 1993, with new sessions each term. The day time class is free, and the evening class has a charge of \$50 to the student. If a student needs scholarship assistance, they should tell the staff during the intake interview.

How: An applicant should personally call our office to be included in an orientation session. After the orientation, there will be an opportunity to schedule an individual intake interview for final admittance into the program. Orientation sessions occur each term.

Time: Beginning Fall of '91, there will be an evening and day session of Project Independence. Day classes are 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; and evening classes are Monday and Wednesday 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Note: AFDC recipients should notify their caseworker if they apply.

Ed Washington Endorsed by BLC for Vacant Position of Metropolitan Service District Councilor for District 11

The Black Leadership Conference (BLC) is pleased to announce its endorsement of Ed Washington to fill the vacant position of Metropolitan Service District Councilor for District 11.

"Mr. Washington was recommended to fill the position because of his record of service and long-time commitment to the community," said Carl Talton, a member of the Endorsement Committee.

Washington is president of the Portland Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and also serves on the State Unemployment Compensation Board, the United Way Board of Directors, and a special committee that reviewed funding for the Mid-County Sewer Project.

During the endorsement process, Washington expressed a keen interest in urban growth, land use, solid waste, water policy, and maintenance of regional facilities.

Billy White, who recently returned to Portland after graduation from Morehouse College was among several other candidates under consideration by the BLC.

Prophet Approves Access To Condoms In Portland High Schools

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authorities feel would provide improved protection to our students from sexually transmitted diseases, I felt I needed the input and opinion on these matters from our parents, our community and our students, to help me form my own opinions and to make a decision as to whether to support or not support the request from Multnomah county.

"Also, because of the various moral and ethical considerations, and other very challenging complications that arise when one deals with issues of this kind, I felt it was important to conduct a reliable and scientific survey of parents, citizens and students with the survey to be conducted by an independent research firm.

"The times in which we live require responsible decision making and, I believe that the process we have undertaken is fair and it is objective. Everyone must know that in addition to the research findings, my decision also reflects and takes into consideration, other input coming from clinic advisory committees at the schools, county and state health departments, phone calls and letters to the district, input from the

religious community, editorial views expressed by our local media, processes and outcomes in other cities who are dealing with this issue, and certainly, my own knowledge of what is really happening with our children.

"I have decided to support the health officials' request to provide condoms in the six high school health clinics to students under medical supervision.

"The six schools where I support the request are: Roosevelt, Jefferson, Grant, Marshall, Cleveland and Madison.

"My agreement with their request is with the understanding that condoms will be provided and dispensed only after comprehensive abstinence counseling has occurred, -- along with other strict medical protocol and procedures.

"My agreement with health officials is also given with the understanding that medical personnel in the six teen health centers will urge and assist all students to obtain parental involvement in all student health decision. This, of course, is a practice which is currently being followed. Our efforts must remain very vigorous in this area.

"It is also of great importance to remind our parents and our community that in our classrooms, as well as the clinics, abstinence is the overriding and consistent message we teach to our students, and that our program in health instruction will be closely monitored and supervised to assure that our students learn and understand that there is no such thing as safe sex.

"The provisions of the new agreement between the county and the school district will become effective as soon as Multnomah County finds it practicable to implement same. The agreement currently applies only to those high schools where teen clinics are located and operating with licensed health care providers.

"At the four (4) high schools where there are no teen health centers, health officials and the school district will work toward the implementation of this service.

"I am sincere in my belief that we have adopted a reasonable public health policy and responded to the expressed wishes of our parents and our community."

Metropolitan Human Relations Commission Task Force Report Issued

Members of Portland's City Council met with the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners in an informal joint session on February 10, 1992. Called by Mayor Clark and County Chair McCoy, the discussion centered on recommendations made by the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission Task Force appointed in October of 1991 by the Mayor and County Chair to review the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission.

City Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury said, "We are now ready to discuss the Task Force's recommendations. Reaching agreement will probably not be easy but it is in the best interest of Portland and Multnomah County residents that we work this out together. I thank all of the Task Force

members who have given so willingly of their time and talents over the past few months."

"We are most grateful that so many busy and committed people were willing to spend so much time on a review which affects issues we all care so much about, diversity and inclusiveness," said County Commissioner Sharron Kelley. "The work session is certain to present us with challenges, but I expect that working together we can arrive at solutions beneficial to both Portland and Multnomah County."

Commissioners Kelley and Kafoury are liaisons to the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission for the County and City. As liaisons, they have provided the staff support to the Task Force which has met almost every week since

being formed in October. "Clearly this review was important. The City's Future Focus Plan has as one of its six primary goals, 'To embrace and celebrate diversity and eliminate bigotry, enhancing our sense of community'. We needed some help identifying what it might take to have the MHRC take a leadership role in working toward that goal," said Gretchen Kafoury, chair of the committee charged with implementing the City's Future Focus Plan.

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