

## Tuskegee meeting for minority involvement

A national meeting to discuss ways to encourage minorities to join medical clinical trials will be held February 23-25 in Tuskegee, AL, the site of the infamous Tuskegee Syphilis Study which involved 400 impoverished African-American men.

The seminar is organized by the Radiation Therapy Oncology Group (RTOG) and sponsored by the national Cancer Institute (NCI) and the Office of Research and Women's Health, National Institutes of Health. It will be held in Tuskegee to emphasize that such studies will never be done again. RTOG is a national cancer research organization sponsored and funded by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and administered by the American College of Radiology (ACR). It is made up of more than 200 leading medical fa-

cilities across the nation and Canada.

Because of fears generated by the Tuskegee experiments, where the 400 men were left untreated by U.S. Government scientists to examine the effect of the disease, African Americans have been reluctant to take part in other clinical trials. NCI has reported that while African Americans make up 15 percent of the population, only 2-4 percent of those participating in cancer prevention trials are African Americans.

One purpose of the seminar, which will involve federal officials, African-American oncology experts and other health care professionals, is to educate the medical community about race and cancer treatment results. The other is to encourage African Americans and other minorities, including women, to partici-

pate in clinical studies.

Overall, African Americans have poorer cancer survival rates than Caucasians. But those African Americans who are treated in clinical trials have the same cancer survival rates as white, according to published studies. Therefore, it is often in the best interest of African Americans with cancer to enter clinical trials, according to RTOG investigators.

Among those speaking at the seminar will be Dr. Louis Sullivan, former secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services and Dr. Vivian Pinn, director of the Office of Research on Women's Health.

Following the seminar a report summarizing the clinical trials recruitment plans outlined at the meeting will be distributed to the public and media later this year.

## New Eye Care Center To Serve Inner-City

Portland - A new eye care center has recently opened to serve the needs of community members in North and Northeast Portland.

The Northeast Eye Center has been established by the Pacific University College of Optometry and the Multnomah County Health Department to provide a full-range of high quality and affordable eye and vision care services. The facility is located in the Multnomah County Health Center, 5329 NE MLK Jr. Blvd. (on the corner of MLK Jr. Blvd. and Killingsworth).

Services at this Center are provided by faculty optometric physi-

cians from Pacific's College of Optometry who are assisted by optometric interns and resident doctors in their final year of professional training, says Brooks Alldredge, O.D., Director of Clinic at the Northeast Eye Center and an Associate Professor of Optometry at Pacific University. Services include comprehensive examinations for eyeglasses and contact lenses, care for diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure and glaucoma as well as treatment for injuries to the eye; optical services for frames and sunglasses, free vision screenings for children and adults, and the avail-

ability of 24-hour emergency care through an on-call eye doctor.

As a service to the community, the Northeast Eye Center offers free vision screenings throughout the year for people of all ages, although screenings do not take the place of a complete examination, they do provide information about clarity of vision, eye health, and how well the eyes are working together. These screenings can be useful for people who have diabetes and high blood pressure -- conditions that can cause sight-threatening vision problems, and for those who have not had their eyes examined recently. Addition-

ally, they are very important for young children whose learning skills -- such as reading and writing -- depend on good vision and eye health.

In addition to the Northeast Eye Center, Pacific's College of Optometry operates community vision centers in downtown Portland, Southeast Portland, Forest Grove, Cornelius, McMinnville, and at the Washington State School for the Blind in Vancouver.

For appointment scheduling and more information about the Northeast Eye Center, please call 248-3821.

## Researchers hone in on genetics of glaucoma

Families throughout the Northwest are helping eye researchers at the Oregon Health Sciences University find genes implicated in the most common form of glaucoma, a blinding eye disease.

Research has shown that two to four percent of the population suffers from the type of glaucoma in which eye pressure becomes dangerously high.

The research team, led by Mary Wirtz, Ph.D., a geneticist and director of the Glaucoma Genetics Laboratory at the Casey Eye Institute, has located a specific region on chromosome 3 that is associ-

ated with high-pressure glaucoma in one, large Oregon family. The findings appear in the February 1997 issue of the American Journal of Human Genetics.

While other scientists have identified genes for low-pressure and juvenile glaucomas, which occur infrequently, this is the first report of a gene associated with the classic form of the disease which usually occurs after age 35.

Primary open-angle glaucoma is among the leading causes of blindness in the world, affecting more than 13.5 million people. Elevated pressure in the eye is the

main hallmark of this disease, which damages the optic nerve carrying visual information from the eye to the brain. Identification of the genes responsible for this disorder could lead to blood tests and earlier treatment, which should, in turn, forestall or eliminate blinding aspects of the disease.

John Samples, M.D., director of the Glaucoma Service at Casey Eye Institute and co-author of the study, points out that open-angle glaucoma is more prevalent in people with diabetes and myopia (nearsightedness). The scientists

at Casey Eye Institute believe that multiple genes are responsible for this disease.

"We know that not all glaucoma families map to this site," said Samples. "In order to determine the other sites, we are continuing to work with other families and other ophthalmologists throughout the Northwest who have sent patients to us."

The research group from the eye institute has traveled throughout the state to evaluate patients in their eye doctor's office. Indeed, this work would not have been possible without their cooperation,

team members say. "The families' enthusiasm and willingness to participate in these studies have been the key to their success," said Wirtz.

Other members of the team were Patricia Kramer, Ph.D., a population geneticist and her assistant Jennifer Yount, who used statistical analysis to demonstrate mapping of the subject family's gene to chromosome 3. Kristal Rust and Rick Topinka assisted Wirtz with the genome-wide search that led to mapping of the gene. Ted Acott, Ph.D., and Robert Koler, M.D., were also co-authors.



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## The NAACP 28th Image Awards

Joe Madison, Chairman of the Image Awards, was on hand at the reading of the nominations for the 28th Image Awards Press Conference held at the Magic Johnson Theatre in Los Angeles, CA. Joining Madison was actress and previous Image Award Winner, Erika Alexander, Living Single, who was also nominated again this year in the best actress/comedy category. Yolanda King, The Ghost of Mississippi, and LeVar Burton, Star Trek: The First Contact, who received a nomination in the Outstanding Youth or Children's Series/Special for Reading Rainbow.

Myrlie Evers-Williams, Chairman National Board of Directors, NAACP and Kweisi Mfume, President/CEO are happy to announce that Arsenio Hall and Patti LaBelle are co hosting this year's event, while Denzel Washington has been named Entertainer of the Year.

The NAACP Image Awards were created to honor those individuals who have contributed to the positive portrayal of African-Americans in the entertainment industry.



Actor/Producer LeVar Burton and actress Erika Alexander



Western Regional Director, NAACP, Ernestine Peters; humorist Dick Gregory; actress Yolanda King; and Image Awards Chairman, Joseph E. Madison

## Juvenile corrections agency terminates contractor

The Oregon Youth Authority is preparing to engage the community in an effort to re-invest resources in Northeast Portland following its termination of a contract with a provider of residential services for youth offenders.

OYA Director Rick Hill said Wednesday the state's contract with Yaun Youth Care Center has been terminated effective March 10, 1997; and that the state juvenile corrections agency is working with community leaders on how best to continue to deliver services.

"This is not something we take lightly, or do arbitrarily," Hill said of

the agency's decision to terminate the contract. "This has been a careful and lengthy process, with input and supportive information from many sources."

Yaun, a 13 bend private non-profit residential care center located at 5128 NE Rodney Avenue, is among 30 such programs across the state with which OYA contracts. These residential facilities are expected to provide services to adjudicated youth offenders who are either at risk of being placed in a secure youth correctional facility, or who are making the transition from a secure youth correctional facility to

the community. OYA expects residential centers to provide a structured living environment, skill building, and individualized treatment planning and services.

OYA's re-investment of the resources in the NE Portland community will begin immediately. OYA is committed to the resources remaining in the same community and serving African American youth offenders. Hill said OYA would enlist the involvement of community leaders, the provider community and other stakeholders in defining the need for services and working quickly to return those services to the youth.

## Put Children First New Year/New Connections

Family counselors, social scientists and other professionals are stepping up to express their growing concern regarding the state of fatherhood in our nation.

They report that while most women are quite clear about what it means to be a mother, most men do not understand what it means to be a father.

Because we as a nation don't recognize the value of fatherhood, we are unable to fully understand what a father brings to a child's life that is so important.

Most absent parents are fathers and we tend to think of them primarily in terms of being just a source of financial support. However, the father/child connection is critical in fulfilling the emotional needs of both father and

child.

Too often, we fail to understand that fathers need to offer nurturing, time, direction, guidance, and emotional support to their children--just as mother do.

### How do You Re-Connect?

If you have not seen your children, or if you are just concerned about your relationship with them, now would be an excellent time to make some positive changes. A close relationship with your children could be the most satisfying and rewarding connection in your life--and in the lives of your children. Dr. Ron Klingler, The Center for Successful Fathering, suggests the following tips for reconnecting with your kids.

1. Make time to actively play with your children; it increases the parent-child connection.

2. Cook a meal, with everyone pitching in and working together, then sit down and eat together.

3. Create traditions which will result in lifelong memories. Do things that are familiar and fun for both father and children (could also involve other family members.)

4. Take your children to your workplace and introduce them to your coworkers.

5. Pay attention to what your children like to do (other than watch television), then do it with them.

6. Go to your children's school for lunch and/or meet with their teachers.

7. Build something for or with your children, e.g., paint their rooms, fix an old car, hang a swing, or do a school project.

8. Help with homework.

## Resolution Reminder

Chicago - Now that New Year's resolutions to eat right and get fit have collected as much dust as the exercise equipment you got for Christmas, try jump starting your commitment to healthy living by picking up the telephone. The National Center for Nutrition and dietetics' (NCND) Consumer Nutrition Hot Line (800-366-1655) can help get you back on track by providing information on the latest food and nutrition issues - from amino acids to zinc. Each month, this toll free service features a new series of nutrition-related recorded messages from registered dietitians. A new Spanish-language message appears each month too.

## Melba Moore to highlight February with series of vignettes

Odyssey (formerly the Faith & Values Channel) has announced that singer/actress Melba Moore will be featured in a series of 60-second historical vignettes entitled "Persistence in Faith" tied to Black History Month.

Melba Moore narrates the "Persistence in Faith" spots which highlight the role religion and the church have played in black history. The spots, which were taped at Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City, will air on Odyssey during the month of February.

Abyssinian Baptist Church dates back to 1808 when it was organized in the Greenwich Village area of New York City by African-Americans and Africans from Abyssinia, who as members of an all-white church congregation sought to establish their own church. The church has been located in New York's Harlem since 1923.

Know for her work in the theater, Melba Moore has starred in the original Broadway production of "Hair" and won a Tony Award for her performance in the musical "Purlie." She has also appeared on television in a dramatic series, sitcom and a

musical variety show with actor Clifton Davis.

Odyssey is now available in more than 28 million households nationwide via cable and the Primestar direct-to-home satellite service. It offers a mix of religious, moral/ethical, values-based family-safe programming.

Odyssey is jointly owned by VISN Management Corp., a subsidiary of

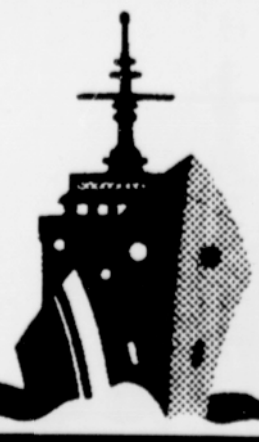
the National Interfaith Cable Coalition (NICC), and Liberty Media Corp. (LBTYA), a subsidiary of Telecommunications Inc. (TCOMA). NICC is a consortium of 64 Protestant, Jewish, Catholic and Eastern Orthodox faith groups and evangelical traditions. Viewer information: 888-390-7474.

Web site: <http://www.odysseychannel.com>

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