

Programs Wrap-up
& Year Ahead
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Month
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The Chain

LINKED TO
Connect, Create, Collaborate

APRIL 2024



Launching Careers In The Medical Field

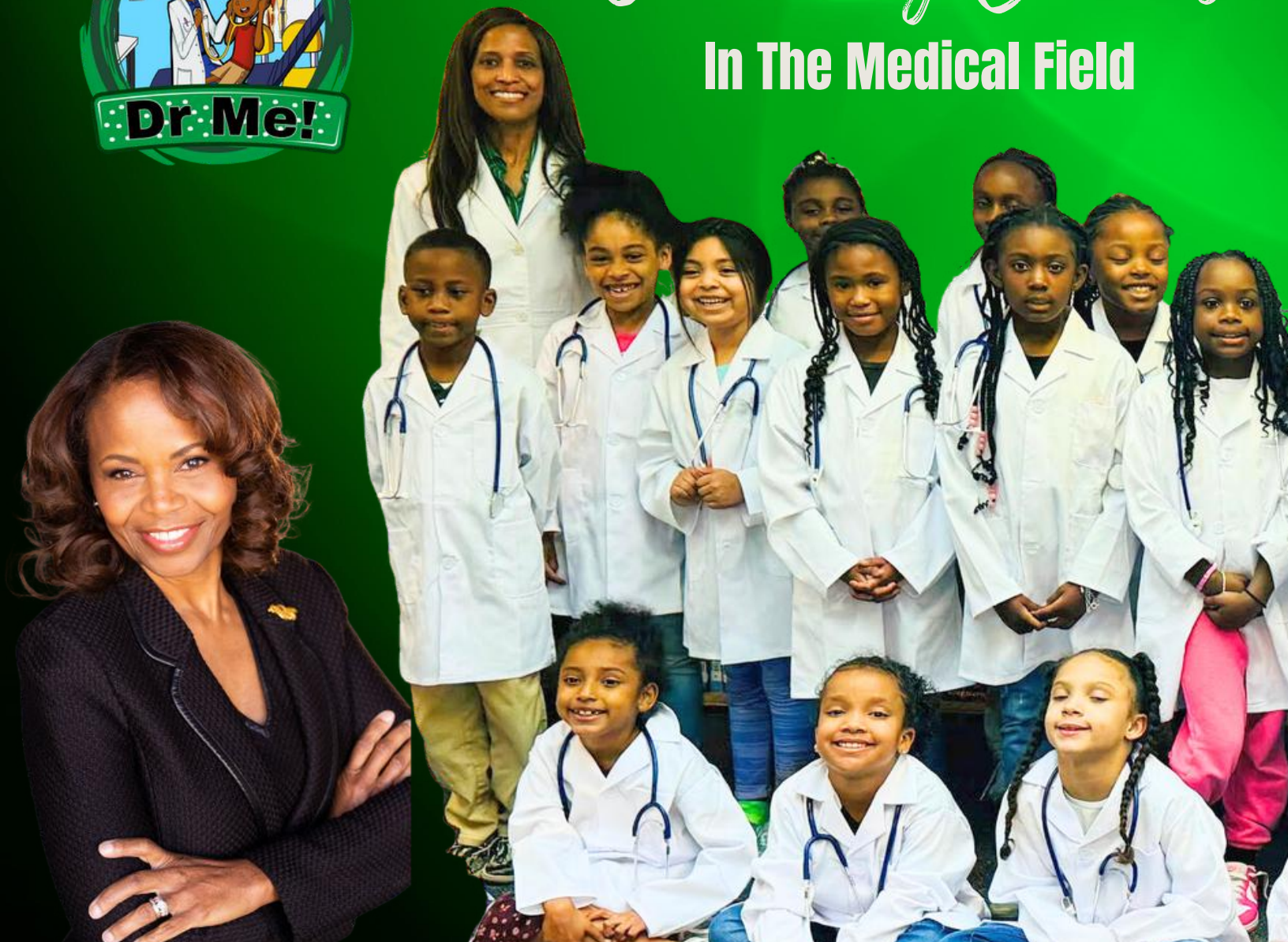




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Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service

44TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**OUR WESTERN AREA NORTH TEXAS CLUSTER CHAPTERS
ARE READY TO WELCOME YOU!**

**Dallas (TX) Chapter
Fort Worth (TX) Chapter
Mid-Cities (TX) Chapter
Plano North Metroplex (TX) Chapter
Trinity (TX) Chapter
Greater Denton County (TX) Chapter
Southern Metroplex (TX) Chapter**

JUNE 19-23, 2024

**DALLAS/
FT. WORTH AREA, TX**

Western Area Director's Message



Greetings!

Our 61 chapters have proven to be strong in our commitment and truly Linked to Connect, Create, Collaborate in impactful community service. Accolades are in order as I extend my thanks and gratitude to our board members and chapter presidents who tirelessly worked to improve Western Area operational efficiencies and programs to continue to enhance our mission of friendship and service. As we await our final numbers, we are pleased to report preliminarily from headquarters 151 new member candidates representing our efforts to extend the chain of friendship. This further represents meeting our target number for membership increase of 150 per year!

I was pleased to attend the graduation ceremonies at the MGM National Harbor Hotel in Maryland for our eleven Scott Hawkins Leadership Institute Cohort XI graduates and ten Cohort V Links Leadership Academy members. The

presentations were amazing and we look forward to their future contributions in Linkdom.

Our 44th National Assembly is just around the corner in Dallas, Texas, June 19-23rd and a great opportunity to satisfy your 1N5 in the first year of the period, 2024-2028. Again, we thank the North Texas Cluster chapters for all of their hard work in preparation for our arrival. Remember to pack your yellow attire for our yellow Rose of Texas themed Area Breakfast!

We have experienced a fabulous year in STY Facet programming with the launch of Dr. Me that heralds the Western Area's early intervention to fulfill the STEM Careers pipeline and provides African American students early access to STEM and STEM(M) medical careers. Thank you for your ongoing gifts to The Links, Incorporated Foundation which fund our HBCU campaigns and please encourage our members to continue their giving schedule.

In the Western Area, The Arts Facet remains central to our offerings of addressing creative expression outlets that include writing, storytelling, and spoken word development. Our NTS Facet's voice has been "the voice" for Human Trafficking and that voice will be multiplied soon when we kick off the coming program year with Community Trilogy which will also assist our communities to Link Up to Vote as a part of our voter education emphasis and address solutions to the epidemic of gun violence and its devastating consequences on our society. Our ITS Facet campaign to support the Mount Carey Baptist Infant School in Jamaica is sure to be successful as the preliminary totals reveal a groundswell of support for the school's improved water system.

Black Family Wellness Expo and Black KARE are key HHS Facet efforts as we must combat the overwhelming medical inequities within the African American community. HHS efforts to stem the tide of cancers related to breast, kidney, colon, rectal, and address cardiovascular disease and stroke prevention are focused and ongoing. Our mental health webinar series has been spectacular culminating with the Imposter Syndrome presentation which is sure to empower our parents and youth battling this important issue. Most recently, we participated as an event sponsor of the Stockton Chapter NAACP Teen Summit and Career Fair with over 400 high school students attending. We provided superb teen mental health workshops titled, 'Linking Teens to Wellness.'

Without doubt, we will continue to deliver impactful community service and impactful membership growth and engagement. And we will be firm in our commitment to each other in friendship and service and living our core values in all that we do.

Our journey continues, Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service. Looking forward to celebrating with you soon at the Western Area Breakfast during our 44th National Assembly.

Link Kaven
Western Area Director

44TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY Western Area Breakfast

*“Education is the most powerful weapon
we can use to change the world”*
--Nelson Mandela

Education At Home & Across The Miles



HBCU Giving



Jamaica's Bright Tomorrow

Western Area Stars Recognition & More

****Wear Your Yellow Rose of Texas Attire****

A GREAT YEAR FOR PROGRAMS

TAKE A BOW!

PROGRAMS

My Dear Sisters,

First and foremost, take a well-deserved bow! It has been an honor to work with you and I applaud you for the many accomplishments made in just one year.

What a great year for programs this has been. Unveiling Dr. Me, Five Impact Days and accompanying Health Webinars, and a heartfelt remembrance of loved ones lost during the holiday season. The HBCU Campaign, The Jamaica Campaign and so much excitement around the upcoming Trilogy, and don't forget the amazing Virtual Links Legislative Day Session. Can you believe the over 90 percent of Chapters that participated in Black Family Wellness Expo and the continued progress among BLACK KARE Chapters? And to top things off, 300 plus student-attendees for Teen Mental Health Summit. But wait, that's not all, soon, we will unveil an historic movement launched across the Western Area from The Arts. Just hold on to your hats for details my sisters.

As we end this year of excellent Impactful Programs, Chapter Programs Chairs and Facet Chairs are to complete the appropriate digital file transfers as some of you transition to new positions within your Chapters. Again, it has been my pleasure to work alongside you this past year.

In accordance with the Service Delivery Model, you should be completing the necessary program evaluations. Additionally, should you not have existing Umbrella STEM/ STEAM programs, please be reminded that you have ready access to STEMReady and STEM Exposed toolkits found on the National Website and the Dr. ME toolkit is on our Western Area website. All is in place as we prepare to report 100 percent of Chapters in the Western Area are fully delivering Umbrella STEM/ STEAM programs by the 2025 Western Area Conference. Sisters the STEM Umbrella foci is a noble opportunity and undertaking. In-so-doing, we will dually align both with our National and Area Programs Priorities which is to institute the Umbrella concept that tremendously bolsters our service delivery. In addition, we contribute to the critical need to fulfill the STEM careers pipeline. Marshaling our resources under the STEM/ STEAM banner is indeed transformational change within our African American Communities across the Area that will inevitably propel generational wealth far into the future.

Please remember that Chapter Retreats should be the time to fine tune our programs. Our Programs and Facet Chairs must make the time to plan "now" so that we are up and running programmatically in September. To that end, I promised you a working draft calendar to assist in your 2024-25 Chapter programs preparations. While there may be some updates and changes this draft calendar assists as we construct our program offerings.

So, let's rest a bit before Assembly but always continue to reach out to one another to: Connect, Create, and Collaborate..

All the best to you and family,

Link Chrystle



BY CHRYSTLE SWAIN
Western Area Program Coordinator
Lone Star (TX) Chapter

TENTATIVE CALENDAR

2024-2025

PROGRAMS

September

SEPT. 8

International Literacy Day

SEPT. 8-14

National HBCU Week

SEPT. 12

Community Trilogy

Texas Southern University

Linked Up to Vote Campaign Launch

SEPT. 28

Walk For Healthy Living

November

FRIENDSHIP MONTH

NOV. 8

National STEM Day

GACE Launch (*Gaming, AI, Coding
Explosion*)

NOV. 14

National Literacy Day

NOV. TBA

Friendship Impact Day

NOV. 15

Linkages to Life Donor Sabbath

NOV. 25

International Day of

Violence Against Women

NOV. 1-30

National Alzheimer's Awareness Month

October

OCT. 1-31

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

OCT. 10

World Mental Health Day

OCT. 11

International Day of The Girl Child

OCT 19

Western Area Leadership Summit

January

JAN. 1-31

Wear Blue Campaign-
*National Human Trafficking
Prevention Month*

February

FEB. 1-28

Heart Health Awareness Month

Art in Public Spaces Launch

March

MAR. 1-31

Women's History Month

Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

MAR. 17

Black Family Wellness Expo

National Kidney Awareness Month

PROGRAMS

WELCOME TO DR. ME!



The Western Area Services to Youth Facet led by **Dr. Carla Wicks** has launched Dr. Me!, a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) enrichment program designed to expose elementary school-aged African American children, in grades Kindergarten-Fifth (K-5), to careers in healthcare, emphasizing medical science, ultimately including but not limited to dentistry, nursing, and research.

Dr. Me! incorporates the use of role-playing, fun interactive hands-on curriculum designed to actively engage young African American minds letting them know that careers in the medical field are not only exciting, but achievable.

Dr. Me! gives insight to healthcare contributions made by Black physicians, researchers, and other medical professionals and motivate them to succeed

Participating Western Area Chapters of The Links, Incorporated are encouraged to be creative and innovative in deployment of Dr. Me! Leveraging the Service Delivery Model and specific activity components assures standardization across the program mission and its anticipated outcomes that participating scholars are inspired to aspire to pursue a pathway to medicine!

The Dr. Me! program was developed by:

Carla Wicks, Western Area Services to Youth Chair

Toi Massey, Western Area STEM CHair

Tina Kidd, Western Area HBCU Chair

Western Area STY Committee members:

Kerensa Berry, Kimberley Fahey, Serena Ashley, Maisha Winn, Joy Williams, Gladys Henderson, and Racheal Hill

For more information, download the Dr. Me! Toolkit -- which contains the Dr. Me! modules. Go to the Western Area website (walinks.org), Members Only Section, Programs tab (STY).

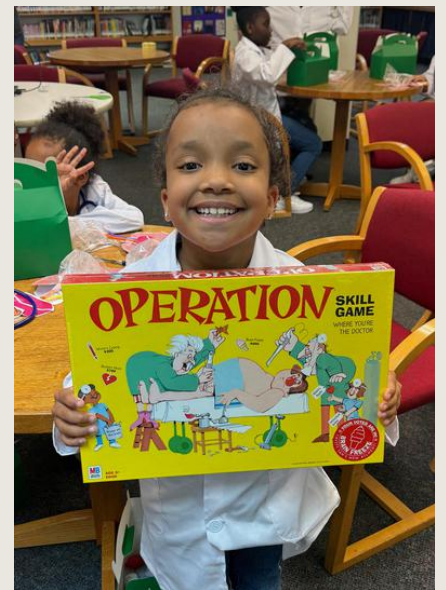
Taking The Dr. Me! Oath Watch!



On April 12 the Gulf Coast Apollo (TX) Chapter rolled out the Dr. Me program with first- and second-graders from Galveston's Ambassadors Preparatory Academy. Students received white coats and medical kits, recited the Dr. Me oath and watched a presentation on the respiratory system administered by a Black pediatrician. The program concluded with a respiratory craft activity. The youth were engaged and excited. One student said, "This is the best day of my life!"



DR. ME! TOOLKIT MODULES PROVIDE LESSONS



The Gulf Coast Apollo (TX) Chapter rolled out the first module of the Dr. Me toolkit focusing on the pulmonary system. The lesson included building a model of the lungs!



DR. ME! EXPOSES YOUTH TO STEM AT THE NORTH TEXAS CLUSTER BLACK FAMILY WELLNESS EXPO

On Sunday March 17, 2024, children and families at the North Texas Cluster Black Family Wellness Expo enjoyed engaging with physicians at the Dr. Me booth.

The chapters in the North Texas Cluster are as follows: Dallas (TX), Fort Worth (TX), Mid-Cities (TX), Plano North Metroplex (TX), Trinity (TX), Greater Denton County (TX), and Southern Metroplex (TX). The event was held at the Concord Church.

Dr. Me is a Western Area Services to Youth STEM initiative designed to expose children to careers in healthcare with an emphasis in medical science. The Trinity (TX) Services to Youth Facet sponsored the Dr. Me booth and partnered with physicians from the C.V. Roman Medical Society to help with the exposure activity. The children were able to interact with physicians from a variety of fields such as Anesthesiology, Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Dermatology.



Dr. DiAnne Davis, a dermatologist and member of the Trinity (TX) chapter, spoke to the children about the importance of sunscreen and supplied sunscreen samples. She used an anatomical skin model to educate about the different layers of the skin, show how the hair follicles are oriented in the skin, and discuss why it's important to protect your skin barrier. Drs. Donza Rodger Williams (a pediatrician and member of the Trinity (TX) chapter), Bretonya Phillips-Johnson (anesthesiologist), LaTosha Flowers (family medicine), and Latoya Nottage (psychiatrist) showed the children how to use stethoscopes, find the organs in the body, and discussed the importance of being healthy. Trinity (TX) member, Dr. Domonique Weathers (family medicine) and Dr. Chevelle Brudey (psychiatry) lead the youth through the innovative radiology station. The children were able to select a basic X-ray film to review on the screen while the Dr. Me physicians explained that part of the body and bone structures to the attentive learners.

All the children were given vitamin stress balls, colorful syringe pens, toy stethoscopes and good patient stickers from the physicians. Throughout the event, the eager learners received white laboratory coats to enrich the experience. The exposure activity was well received by the children, medical practitioners, parishioners, and the community-at-large.

TRINITY (TX) CHAPTER



MENTAL HEALTH COMMITTEE

LINKING TEENS TO WELLNESS WORKSHOPS

The Stockton Chapter of The NAACP Teen Summit was on Friday, April 26, 2024 at the San Joaquin Delta College, Stockton, CA. Over 400 teens from the surrounding area of Stockton, CA participated in the event. The event was planned by the Stockton Chapter of the NAACP and the Youth Council. The WA Mental Health Committee participated in the Summit by presenting 3 mental health workshops and providing a mental health table w/resource during the career fair and serving as a sponsor. Linking Teens to Wellness Workshops focused on Suicide Prevention, learning the warning signs, developing coping skills and connecting the teens to resources in their school and community for support.

Western Area Director, Karen Cole, MD brought special greetings during the morning program from the Western Area of The Links, Incorporated. Dr. Cole was presented w/an award for the NAACP honoring the Western Area of The Links, Incorporated for sponsoring the 2024 NAACP Youth Council.

Linking Teens To Wellness Workshops

Moderator:

Jennifer R. Kelley, WA Mental Health Committee Chair

Panelists:

Gera L. Anderson PsyD: Clinical Neuropsychologist
Jennifer Davis, PsyD: Clinical Psychologist
Dr. Jennifer Davis, is the immediate past Chair of the Western Area Mental Health Committee of The Links, Incorporated and President of the Fresno (CA) Chapter. Sandra Fobbs, M.S.: School Psychologist



CHAPTERS VOLUNTEERS

SACRAMENTO (CA) CHAPTER

SAN ANTONIO (TX) CHAPTER

SOLANO COUNTY (CA) CHAPTER

STOCKTON (CA) CHAPTER

Special Thank you to the Stockton (CA) Chapter, Stockton (CA) Chapter President, Karen Rea, LaJauana Bivens, Newly Elected National NAACP Board of Directors Youth Council, Sacramento (CA) Chapter President, Teresa Aldredge, WA Mental Health Committee, WA NexGen Committee

MENTAL HEALTH COMMITTEE

LINKING TEENS TO WELLNESS WORKSHOPS



ELEVATING BLACK STUDENT VOICES

The 3rd annual Black Voices Symposium in Spokane, WA took place at Gonzaga University's Myrtle Woldson Theater on February 1st. The symposium was also paired with the relaunch of the Black Lens, founded by the late Sandra Williams, a community activist, in 2015. The Links, Incorporated, Spokane Chapter, hosted two creative expression workshops over winter break to help students in elementary, middle, and high school cultivate artwork and writing centered around the theme "Black Joy: An Aspirational Mindset." The Services to Youth and Arts facet chairs April Eberhardt and Shalena Armstrong combined their goals to support students as they shared what brought them joy. This is the second year that the Spokane chapter has partnered with the Black Voices Symposium. Eberhardt works closely with the Spokesman Review to develop a theme, market the event to the public, and provide opportunities for students to create. Their work is featured in the Spokesman Review as a part of Black History Month and students are invited to share their work at a special event for the community. This year students in all grades submitted a total of 12 pieces of art, and there were other submissions of poetry from around the city. Artwork from the workshops were put on display at City Hall.



Watch this year's Black Voices Symposium and learn more about the event:



<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2024/feb/01/i-thought-of-my-grandmothers-students-celebrate-bl>

https://www.youtube.com/live/EQmzLCIfVYI?si=tj-5M_zAQ3Qhyt5c

BEVERLY HILLS WEST (CA) CHAPTER
LOS ANGELES (CA) CHAPTER

LET'S TALK KIDNEY CARE



The Beverly Hills West (CA) and Los Angeles (CA) Chapters, in partnership with Baxter Healthcare Corporation's Renal Business, hosted a free groundbreaking event, "Black K.A.R.E. (Kidney Awareness, Resources, and Education): Let's Talk Kidney Care," aimed at bolstering kidney health awareness and support within the Black community. This pivotal gathering marks a significant step toward addressing the critical issue of chronic kidney disease (CKD) disproportionately affecting Black Americans. The event was held on Saturday, March 9, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Holman United Methodist Church in Los Angeles, California 90018.



Statistics reveal Black Americans are nearly four times as likely to suffer from kidney failure as their White counterparts. This event highlighted the importance of prevention and provided a roadmap for effective management of kidney conditions. Although Black Americans constitute only 13% of the U.S. population, they account for 35% of those diagnosed with CKD. Particularly in California, there is a significant disparity in awareness and access to prevention and treatment. This reality amplifies the urgent call for targeted education and interventions to enhance knowledge and improve health outcomes within our community.

Event Highlights:

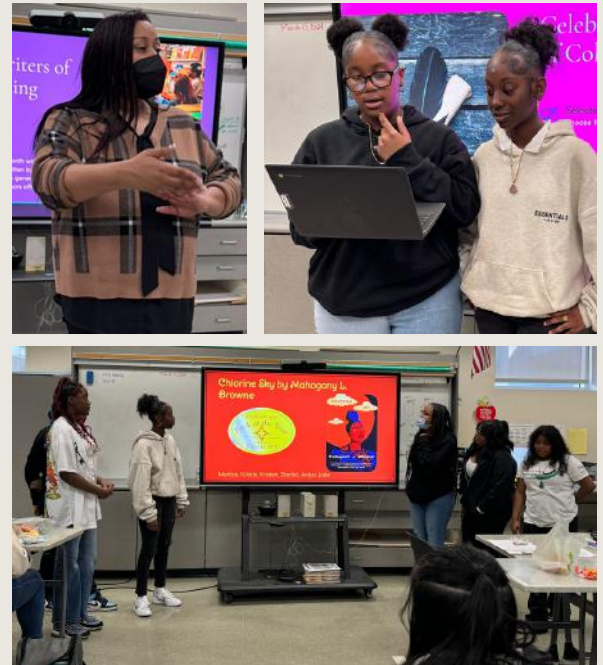
- Expert Discussions: Engage with esteemed medical professionals who will share their insights on kidney health, mental health, prevention strategies, and the latest treatments.
- Free Screenings: Take advantage of complimentary on-site kidney health screenings – a critical step towards early detection and prevention.
- Nutritional Wellness: Enjoy a light breakfast and lunch, meticulously planned to reflect healthy dietary practices for kidney care.
- Interactive Sessions: Participate in raffles and win prizes throughout the event, adding an element of fun to this informative day.

BEVERLY HILLS WEST (CA) CHAPTER

LITERACY MATTERS

By Maygan Orr
Services to Youth Chair

Literacy matters! Seventh and eighth graders in the G.E.M.S. (Girls Empowered Motivated and Strong) integrated program, sponsored by The Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter presented their Novel Projects and Women Author Projects at the Women's History Month Literacy Workshop. Led by Dr. Winton McNeel of the WriteHER's Circle, the girls learned about the history of Black and Brown authors, the barriers they faced, and how they broke down those barriers. Some of the authors celebrated were Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, Mahogany L. Browne, Angie Thomas, Renee Watson, and Elizabeth Acevedo. Additionally, after the project presentations, all girls received Inglewood Public Library cards. The Novel Projects were assigned after Dr. McNeel facilitated a "Book Tasting" Workshop in November 2023, where the girls sampled various books by Black and Brown female authors, and selected a novel to read. Data shows that the G.E.M.S. program is meeting its goal of increasing literacy in our youth. Per iReady diagnostic assessment data from January 10, 2024, 19 out of 30 girls have shown improvement in their reading skills since joining the G.E.M.S. program, and 15 out of 30 girls are now reading at or above grade level!



FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT TAKES CENTER STAGE

By Jasmine C. Houston
Press Secretary & Communications Chair

In a dynamic celebration of Black History Month, Chase Bank, alongside presentations by J.P. Morgan Chase & Company and in collaboration with The Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter (BHW), hosted a pivotal evening focused on financial literacy and inclusion. This event, taking place at Chase Bank's premiere Downtown Los Angeles location, attracted a diverse group keen on advancing their financial knowledge and community connections. BHW President, Zna Portlock Houston, emphasized the event's role in spreading essential financial literacy, while Dr. Lovene Knight, who leads the Chapter's financial literacy efforts, highlighted the power of informed investing to create lasting legacies.

The evening kicked off with a networking reception, setting the stage for a highly anticipated workshop. Experts from J.P. Morgan Chase & Company delivered an engaging presentation on the essentials of investing, tailored to empower attendees across all financial literacy levels with the message, "Investing is for Everyone."

The event's success underscored the community's commitment to financial literacy as a cornerstone of empowerment and resilience. It marked a significant milestone in ongoing efforts to weave financial education into the fabric of community life, with the enthusiastic response highlighting the demand for such enriching educational opportunities. Spearheaded by BHW and its partners, this initiative is a testament to the vital role financial literacy plays in fostering economic empowerment and independence.



PALOS VERDES (CA) CHAPTER
BEVERLY HILLS WEST (CA) CHAPTER

WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP THOSE IN NEED

According to the American Red Cross, every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood – and approximately 29,000 units of red blood cells are needed every day.

In an effort to serve our community and fill the gaps in the blood supply especially for those managing sickle cell anemia, HIV/AIDS, organ donations and other health challenges, the Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated recently hosted a blood donation drive at Faithful Central Bible Church in Inglewood. Members from the Palos Verdes (CA) Chapter joined them at this important community event.

To learn more about why blood donation is important or how you can donate visit the American Red Cross Donation website at www.redcross.org. #WALINKS #pvlinks



PALOS VERDES (CA) CHAPTER

SPOONFUL OF GOODNESS CONTINUES TO NOURISH OTHERS

In 2021, The Palos Verdes (CA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated launched a Spoonful of Goodness meal-in-a-bag program to address the ongoing food insecurities faced by the unhoused and low-income families.

Thanks to the generosity of our chapter members, on March 15 we donated 20 bags filled with a bounty of ingredients for a meatless spaghetti dinner to Harbor Interfaith Services (HIS). Located in San Pedro, we began our partnership with HIS 12 years ago, with the goal of supporting their mission of empowering the homeless and working poor to achieve self-sufficiency.

AUSTIN (TX) CHAPTER

A SPRING BREAK READING CHALLENGE

The Service to Youth Facet of The Links, Incorporated implemented a “Spring Break Reading Challenge” to 2nd- 5th grade students at Barbara Jordan Early College Prep. The primary goals of the Service to Youth Facet is to promote early literacy and cultivate mentoring programs from kindergarten through college. The literacy challenge involves a wide span of elementary students in the school. It represents an academic activity that supports the cognitive development of students, and it is harmony with the goals of The Links.

The administration, instructional coach and teachers worked collaboratively, with members of the Austin (TX) Chapter Of The Links, to encourage and motivate students to participate in the Spring reading challenge. They supported the opportunity for students to select books from varied literary genres and reviewed the reading and writing guidelines with students. The perseverance of students, in reading the most books and submitting a brief narrative of each book, will result in the awarding of prizes for first, second or third place at each grade level participating in the reading challenge. The encouraging of continuous reading at home, especially during periods of breaks from schooling, serves to strengthen literacy skills.



BAKERSFIELD (CA) CHAPTER

"THINK LIKE AN ENGINEER" AND "HUMAN TRAFFICKING"

By Jennifer C. Floyd & Olivia Perkins Washington
Communication Committee

The Bakersfield (CA) Chapter's Links Leadership STEAM Academy Left Brain-Right Brain Program launched its third session of "Reimagining My Future With STEAM." The in-person learning sessions are designed for grades 5 to 8 with returning High School Students. The third session, "Empowering Students and Parents," was held on Saturday, January 27, 2024. Under its National Trends & Services Facet, the Chapter partnered with the Bakersfield City School District, the Bakersfield Police Department, business leaders, and the community to address systemic issues surrounding human trafficking, bullying, and student performance. Stephany Powell, Vice President and Director of Law Enforcement Training and Survivor Services at the National Center on Sexual Exploitation, was a guest speaker. Ms. Powell also leads the Western Area National Trends and Services Facet. The number of students of color in STEAM-related careers is significantly low due to a lack of access to sufficient STEAM education. The Links' Leadership STEAM Academy Left Brain Right Brain Program helps to fill this void by providing students with opportunities to be exposed to and readied for STEAM-related careers as well as learn about issues affecting the quality of life in our community. Students were excited and motivated as they conducted a hands-on STEAM activity entitled "Think Like an Engineer." Ashley Davis, an engineer and supervisor at Aera Energy LLC, conducted the activity. The students were given index cards and tape to design a structure strong enough to hold a gallon of water. Students ended the day with a Chick-fil-A box lunch.



CLAREMONT AREA (CA) CHAPTER

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



March 8 was International Women's Day. The International Trends and Services Facet of The Claremont Area Chapter of The Links,

Incorporated celebrated International Women's Day. with two guests at the March 9, Chapter Meeting. The guests were Maisie Dawes, a native of Jamaica, and Kro Won, a native of Liberia.

Maisie used a power point to tell the story of Nanny of the Marrons, the only woman of the seven national Jamaican heroes, as well as recite a poem, written by her sister-in-law regarding freedom fighters.

Kro demonstrated various methods of head wrapping.

Chapter members dressed in ethnic clothing.

In addition to the presentations, the chapter members were treated to Jamaican Red Beans and Rice, Jerk Chicken Wings, Veggie Patties, and Ginger Beer.

It was a very exciting day for the chapter!



PORTLAND (OR) CHAPTER

***International Women's Month Activity
at the Schnitzer Gallery***

On February 25, 2024 members of the Portland (OR) Chapter of The Links went on a tour of the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation art collection at the Schnitzer Gallery in Portland, OR. The tour featured world-renowned artists. Wine, sparking cider and light refreshments were provided. The space was offered exclusively to the chapter for the afternoon.



AUSTIN (TX) CHAPTER

OUR ADORABLE ALUMNA AND PRECIOUS PLATINUM LINK SISTERS



By LaMonica Lewis, Vice President and Jeanne Spencer, Communications Committee
(Cheryl Graham Platinum and Alumna Committee Chairman)

The Austin (TX) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated recognizes that the inclusiveness of Link Sisters in our gatherings and activities strengthens the bonds of friendship; it makes our members feel valued, welcomed and respected. "Inclusion makes the Difference," the theme of our Alumna and Platinum Affairs Committee, focused on the implementation of three initiatives. The initiatives are Connection, Love and Appreciation. Our goals include the maintenance of meaningful connections with our Alumna and Platinum members by demonstrating, through overt actions, that they have not been forgotten; the provisions of outward expressions of our love for them and demonstrations of appreciation for their memorable years of faithful dedication and magnanimous service to the organization and our chapter.

Link Cheryl Graham, the chairperson for the Platinum Links, developed a process for the structuring, implementing and evaluating of the initiatives. The basis of the structure is to nurture a relationship with our Alumna and Platinum members through a variety of individual and group activities. Links sisters, who are Alumna, Platinum and those eligible to become Alumna or Platinum members, received a designated "friend." Additionally, the chairperson collaborates and plans with members of the committee to ensure that the Alumna and Platinum members are kept abreast of activities, events and projects in both Linkdom and the chapter.

The committee produced a list of suggested activities and the "Friends" have opportunities to select one of them to be implemented weekly or monthly. The activities range from having conversation on the telephone, acknowledging significant events in their lives, participating in home visits, arranging social outings to supporting them in attending chapter events. Each "friend" creates an activity report for sharing with the chairman and the membership committee chairman. The "friends" are encouraged to memorialize the activities with photos, when appropriate.



Home visit and gifts for Platinum Link Lavon Marshall and Special designed "Link Cookies" for Alumna and Platinum Members and group photo for Friendship Month

Our Alumna and Platinum members have participated in many meaningful and memorable connections with the chapter. With much enthusiasm and gratitude for their friendship and service, we relish opportunities to demonstrate love and appreciation to them throughout the program year.



Recently, our Alumna and Platinum members were recognized during our Harlem Nights Gala. Their arrival and departure, from the gala, was orchestrated by our chapter; we provided our members with a chauffeur driven limousine. During our Friendship Month, they receive printed invitations to our chapter meeting scheduled for November. Prior to the business meeting, we hosted a pre-social hour for them. Alumna and Platinum members were recipients of grandeur seating that was lavishly and lovingly decorated for them. They received several tokens of appreciation and acknowledgements from the chapter and individuals as well. They were able to participate in the Founders' Day Ceremony and various friendship activities. Alumna and Platinum members are invited to major chapter events occurring in the Fall, at Christmas, and in the Spring.

Our Alumna and Platinum committee stands ready, willing and able to continuously provide purposeful and engaging opportunities to exhibit joy, love and appreciation to our Adorable Alumna and Precious Platinum members. We acknowledge and respect their legacy and years of service and friendship as "Our Adorable Alumna and Precious Platinum Links."

MEMBERSHIP

WESTERN AREA 2023-2024
Scott Hawkins Leadership Institute
Cohort XI Graduates



Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service



***Erica
Cheria Bohler***
Alameda Contra
Costa (CA)



***Rebecca
Vallier Burke***
Port City (TX)



Kadria N. Derrick
Greater Pearland
Area (TX)



Chanique Ecby
Katy-Richmond
Area (TX)



***Kamiaka D.
Hairston***
Sacramento (CA)



***Racheal
Michelle Hill***
Trinity (TX)



***Jasmine C.
Houston***
Beverly Hills
West (CA)



***Zakiyah
Johnson***
Dallas (TX)



***Gayla
Robbins Mair***
Houston (TX)



***Nzinga "Zing"
Shaw, DHumLitt***
Los Angeles (CA)



***Anjeanette R.
Watkins***
Town Lake (TX)

WESTERN AREA 2023-2024
Links Leadership Academy
Cohort V Graduates



Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service

Crystal Donatto Brown

Gulf Coast Apollo (TX)

Irene Bryant Snead

San Bernardino Valley, CA)

Deshonna Collier-Goubil

San Bernardino Valley (CA)

Monica Fontenot-Poindexter

Missouri City (TX)

Stacey Nicole Jones-Reed

Port City (TX)

Veronica Jordan Matlock

Town Lake (TX)

Kizzy M. LeJay

Town Lake (TX)

Crystal Denise Lewis

East Texas (TX)

Paula B. Major

Hawaii (HI)

LeCresha Antoinette Peters

Fort Bend County (TX)

So Glad She's My Sister!

Cluster Participation and Collaboration Award



Congratulations!

Central Texas Cluster Vice Presidents

Vanessa Henry, Lone Star (TX) Chapter

LaMonica Lewis, Austin (TX) Chapter

Northern California Cluster Vice Presidents

Jakaria Stewart, Peninsula Bay (CA) Chapter

Rhonda Andrew, Eden Rose (CA) Chapter

Judy Baloney, Solano County (CA) Chapter

Pamela Freeman Fobbs, Fresno (CA) Chapter

Carolyn Veal-Hunter, Sacramento (CA) Chapter

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTERS

BLACK FAMILY WELLNESS EXPO



March was all about transforming our communities!

The Los Angeles (CA) Chapter collaborated with the Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter and six sister chapters, Angel City (CA), Channel Islands (CA), Harbor Area (CA), Inglewood Pacific (CA), Orange County (CA) and Palos Verdes (CA) to hold the Black Family Wellness Expo -- Link Ethel Issacs Williams' Impact Day -- on March 23rd at the MPR of Culver City Middle School and the High School's Robert Frost Auditorium.

Thank you to all the Sister Links for presenting on a panel, for supervising a booth, for assisting with set-up, clean-up or just attending and supporting the program. Special appreciation to our Prospective New Members that served Part One of their Service Project, handing out AARP information and for speaking about the health disparities that disproportionately affect the African American Community, the struggles our youth are encountering in 2024, and the significance of the Caregiver and the value of having a plan to care for loved ones.



NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CLUSTER BLACK FAMILY WELLNESS EXPO



HOUSTON AREA CHAPTERS BLACK FAMILY WELLNESS EXPO





BLACK FAMILY WELLNESS EXPO

GALLERY



Trinity (TX) Chapter



San Antonio (TX) Chapter



Hawaii (HI) Chapter



North Texas Cluster

BLACK FAMILY WELLNESS EXPO



Waco Central Texas (TX) Chapter



Bakersfield (CA) Chapter



Austin (TX) Chapter



El Paso (TX) Chapter



Texas Spring Cypress (TX) Chapter

GALLERY

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FUNDRAISING FOR THE WEST IS FUNDRAISING AT ITS BEST!



BY JOSIE DANIELS
 WA Fund Development Committee Chair

Our Sponsors are the Real Stars of the Western Area. It will be our Stars that help us to reach our goal to raise \$500,000 by June 2025. The Western Area Fund Development team will raise funds to support our Western Area programs. Now that the campaign to raise \$1,500 from 150 members is in full swing, you too can become a Star. Pictures go on the website with your first \$500 and remain as installments are made in March and June to complete your commitment.

Checks should be made out to the Links Foundation and mailed to the Western Area Financial Secretary **Marcia Darden: P.O. Box 5408 Chatsworth CA 91313** Star pictures should be emailed to Maria Jackson, WA Technology Chair at linkmariajackson@gmail.com as soon as your check is mailed.

PALOS VERDES (CA) CHAPTER

A LEGENDARY EVENING TO REMEMBER

More than 150 people gathered on March 17 in Rolling Hills Estates for “A Legendary Evening in The Arts: Celebrating Black Icons” fundraising event. Guests enjoyed cocktails, appetizers, live entertainment and a silent auction before being entertained by the Inner City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles. The orchestra played a variety of music from American composers William Grant Still and Duke Ellington, as well as Mozart, a prolific composer of the Classical period. An original piece from Kenechi Fortune, a 20 year-old college student and ICYOLA member, was also showcased. The community partners will use the proceeds from this extraordinary event for young people of color in pursuit of higher education. A special thank you to Tri-Chairs Anita Nelson, Kathy Norris, and Rena Nash as well as chapter member Brenda Williams for bringing this amazing fundraising opportunity to the chapter. This event was presented by the Bridge Builders Foundation, ICYOLA, The Palos Verdes (CA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated and the Viscount Foundation.



FUNDRAISING



Bakersfield (CA) Chapter

On March 5, 2024, the International Trends and Services (ITS) Facet gave a presentation celebrating International Women’s Day (IWD). IWD provides insight into gender equality, reproductive rights, and violence. The 2024 IWD theme is “Inspire Inclusion.”

Beverly Hills West (CA) Chapter



The International Trends and Services Facet celebrated International Women's Day 2024 on Sunday, March 3rd at The Galerie LaKaye in West Hollywood. We highlighted the achievements of five esteemed African American women in the Entertainment Industry, and engaged in candid conversations relating to this year’s theme, #InspireInclusion.



Blood Donor Project Honors Black History Month and Saves Lives

Links In The News

STELLAR ACHIEVEMENTS



Tammy Tumbling

Tammy Tumbling, Harbor Area (CA) Chapter, has been nominated for Nexstar's 2024's Remarkable Women Award for her work as the president of the Orange County Community Foundation, which channels nearly \$100 million to nonprofits each year.

Her path to a life of giving started in Compton.

"Growing up in the city of Compton, one of the things that shaped me into who I am today was the sense of community," Tumbling told KTLA 5 News anchor Megan Telles. "We were very, very poor, but we were rich in love. We were rich in faith. You name it we had every type of government assistance."

Tammy's mother died at 54 of a massive stroke. At the time, Tammy was just 19 with a two-year-old son.

"I became head of the household. I took care of my brothers and sisters. So, when I thought having a baby at a young age was a mistake, I was actually being prepared to take my mother's children the rest of the way," she recalls.

Years later, during the height of the unrest over the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor in 2020, Tammy felt called to start her own fund: the African American Alliance Fund.

"I stood in front of my TV as an executive running internal operations, and I said, 'What can I do as an African American to help other African Americans in a time of need?'"

Tammy took \$25,000 of her own money to establish the fund and focus on issues that would advance the Black community, which has now become her full-time role.

Find the article at <https://ktla.com/morning-news/2024-remarkable-women-nominee-tammy-tumbling/>

Diane Williams

Diane Williams of El Paso (TX) Chapter was inducted in the 2024 El Paso Women's Hall of Fame. Receiving honors in recognition of her service is not new to Williams. She has served 30 years active military service along with 15 years of Federal service. She has educated many leaders in her past role as an Associate professor, at the sergeant majors academy in Fort Bliss, Texas.

Her energy is boundless as noted by her ability to serve as President of the El Paso Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc., Vice President of the National Pan-Hellenic Council El Paso, a member of El Paso (TX) Chapter and as a member of the Disciplinary Review Board of the El Paso Police Department. Williams is also a member of the El Paso Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated and was awarded the Minerva Award in February 20, 2023 for her over 20 years of service. With a spirit for service, she continues to serve communities.



Links In The News

STELLAR ACHIEVEMENTS

Stephaine Courtney

Stephaine Courtney is a grassroots activist hailing from Spokane, WA, who champions Black Maternal Health in her fight for social justice. On March 15th, she was honored as 1 of 8 distinguished leaders for the Spokane YWCA Women of Achievement program.

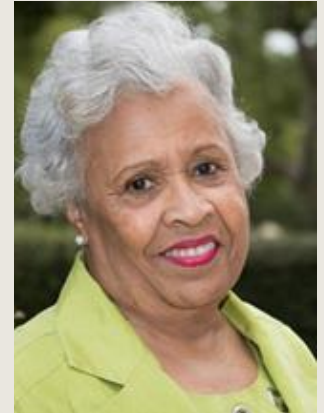


Courtney is committed to crushing the crisis of disproportionate maternal mortality for Black women by developing solutions that emphasize support, advocacy, and a doula network. In 2015, Courtney founded The Learning Project Network, a training, social justice, and art activism organization. From a Black maternal health art exhibit, an entire movement was born. She shares: “We realized that we needed to shine a light on the crisis that was taking place with Black women... [they] are 3 to 4 times more likely to die due to pregnancy related issues, and 60% of those are preventable,” she shares. Her passion led to the creation of the Shades of Motherhood Network in 2021, a non-profit that offers solutions and strategies during prenatal and post-partum care. “When you elevate peoples’ voices, you can actually hear the problems that are going on and taking place; it allows people to create real solutions that are focused on the individual and not focused on a theoretical idea.” Focusing on cultural care empowers Black women to stand in their truth and their beauty when it comes to maternal health,” she asserts.

See more about Stephaine Courtney’s passion for health equity by going to the following page:
<https://ywcaspokane.org/2024-woa-honorees/#StephaineCourtney>.

Mary Jane McCoy

Platinum member Mary Jane McCoy of the Spokane (WA) Chapter was 1 of 3 Black graduates in the first class of 59 students at what was then called the California State College at San Bernadino in 1967. She went on to earn a master’s degree and excelled in various district administration



positions within the California K-12 public education system over the past 50 years. A charter member of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Incorporated in San Bernadino, a professional organization of Black educators founded in 1923, McCoy served as a national president of the organization’s philanthropic arm. In Spokane, WA, McCoy’s leadership and volunteerism has continued to flourish over the years. For instance, she has served, by the appointment of former Governor Christine Gregoire, on a committee for community colleges to acquire funding to aid those displaced by homelessness. As one who always seeks to uplift her community, McCoy also established an endowed scholarship at CSUSB to financially assist students with the cost of attendance. On February 16 th , McCoy was honored at the inaugural Alumni Hall of Fame Awards with the Paw Prints Award, a distinguished honor for notable alumni of California State University, San Bernadino. She broke barriers for many Black students to follow in her footsteps and it is on her shoulders, and many other trailblazers like her, that we honor for their ability to turn opportunity into success.

Find out more about Mary Jane McCoy by visiting the following page:
<https://watertalks.csusb.edu/inside/article/576826/alumni-hall-fame-mary-jane-mccoy-receive-paw-prints-award>.

Links In The News

STELLAR ACHIEVEMENTS

Tristan Topps



Tristan Topps, a former Ms. Arizona and Ms. United States pageant winner, and member of the Phoenix (AZ) Chapter initially resisted a job at Penske Automotive Group's Lexus of Chandler. However, she found her niche in human resources administration, where she thrived at face-to-face engagement with employees, business development, and creative problem-solving on behalf of the company. Topps earned the Society for Human Resource Management's HR certification and was named human resource manager for Penske's North Phoenix/Scottsdale market. Last November, Topps was recognized nationally as a rising human resources administrator with her selection to Automotive News' 2023 40 Under 40. During the pandemic, Topps and the group's senior leaders worked to provide penalty-free time off for employees to care for themselves and their families. Since then, Topps has worked with the group's human resources leaders to increase the entry-level minimum wage. Penske Arizona employees can now cash out up to a week of vacation and roll over up to a week of paid time off into the next year for a five-week maximum. Topps' efforts helped lower the Phoenix/Scottsdale market's 2022 employee turnover rate from 22%, to 20%. Outside of work, Topps, is a highly engaged leader in the Phoenix (AZ) Chapter, where she serves as National Trends and Services Facet Chair and Young Leaders Academy and Cotillion Tri-Chair. Additionally, Topps is a graduate of the Scott-Hawkins Leadership Institute, Class XIII.

Beverley Elliott and Bob Elliott.

Beverley Elliott and Bob Elliott of the Tucson (AZ) Chapter are featured in TUCSON LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE (MAR 2024) -- "COUPLES OF IMPACT. The Elliotts grew up in the same neighborhood in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Forty-eight years later, they are still holding strong. Bob Elliott played basketball at the University of Arizona, in the NBA, and was a Wildcat



Basketball (and PAC 10) commentator for 29 years. He is currently the president and owner of Elliott Accounting and a published author of several books. Link Beverly was recently honored by the Educational Enrichment Foundation as Humanitarian of the Year and was the recipient of the 2023 University of Arizona Alumni Achievement Award. Together, they are making history as legends in the community. At the height of the pandemic, the Elliotts joined forces with friends, United Way of Southern Arizona, and the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona to launch Feed Tucson 2020. Raising a total of \$120,000, they served more than 5,000 people, and at one point had a line of over 1,300 cars, all waiting for a food box. In 2021 they inaugurated the African American Museum of Southern Arizona. Housed on the University of Arizona's main campus, the museum boasts a tribute to University of Arizona's first Black basketball coach, Fred Snowden, oral histories of some of Tucson's older Black residents, and has hosted pioneers in the history of Black Americans, such as Ruby Bridges and Carlotta Walls LaNier of the Little Rock Nine. The Elliott's are "TUCSON LIVING LEGENDS."

Links In The News

STELLAR ACHIEVEMENTS



In January 2024, **Ebony Calhoun** of the El Paso (TX) Chapter was promoted to the rank of colonel as a Public Affairs Specialist in the United States Army. She has served in various positions in leadership in various locations during her 22 year military career. Utilizing her background in education, finance, economics and politics, she has a wealth of knowledge and is dedicated to perfecting her craft while bringing out the best in all who are around her.



Harbor Area (CA) Chapter Corresponding Secretary **Dr. Belinda Daugherty** was named the 2024 Recipient of the Distinguished Faculty Advising Award from CSU Long Beach where she is an Associate Professor in Speech and Language Pathology.



In March 2024, **Dr. Jackeline Richard** was sworn into practice federal law in the US District Court for the Western District of Texas - El Paso Division. Richard is a member of El Paso (TX) Chapter and has a Doctor in Nursing Practice, is a Registered Nurse, a certified Nursing Educator as well as a Jurisdoctor. She recently began practicing as an immigration attorney in El Paso Texas.



Letitia T. Bradley, Ed.D. (Channel Islands, CA), a lifelong educator, has been appointed as the next Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction for the Goleta Union Elementary District. In this cabinet-level leadership position, she will be responsible for overseeing achievement, equity, and inclusion for the entire district.



Congratulations to **Karen Grant Selma** of the Harbor Area (CA) Chapter will be honored by the USC Gould School of Law's chapter of the Black Law Student Association (BLSA) as an alumni award recipient on April 7, 2024 at the SLS Hotel in Beverly Hills.



Charlotte A. Gullap-Moore, DNP, MSN, APRN, ANP-BC, RN is a board-certified Adult Nurse Practitioner, CEO of Moore On Health™ has won an elected role on the 2024 March 5th Presidential Primary Election ballot as a member of the Santa Barbara County Democratic Central Committee (SBDCC).

American Board of Radiology

New Board Appointment

Dr. Cole is a partner at MemorialCare Medical Group of Long Beach Memorial/Miller Children and Women's Hospital. Last year, she volunteered to serve on the ABR's Continuing Certification Advisory Committee for Diagnostic Radiology. The Board of Governors is responsible for ABR financial affairs and certification processes, among other oversight.



Karen Ragland Cole, MD, MBA

CONGRATULATIONS!

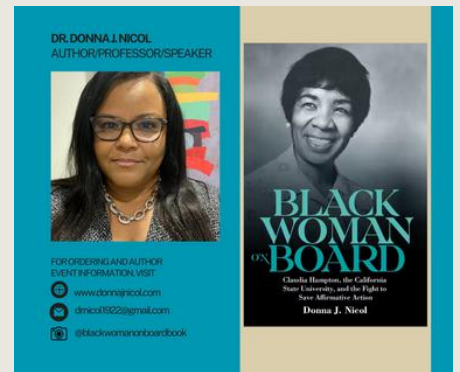
Literary Links

Sylvia Welch

Sylvia Welch of the Portland (OR) Chapter published a book of poetry titled: "This, That, and The Other; As I Age Into Understanding." It can be found on Amazon



Donna J. Nicol



Rita A. Gordon

Rita A. Gordon of the Alameda Contra Costa (CA) Chapter recently launched her second book, "Seven Days In Seattle," the first in a three-book series. This intriguing story is about Raven Nichols, an attorney who flies to Seattle looking to recoup from a breakup and reconnect with her sister the week before a career-defining meeting. What she finds instead will turn her world upside down.

For more information on where to purchase "Seven Days In Seattle," visit <https://www.ritaagordon.com/>. Available in ebook, hardcopy, and paperback.



Harbor Area (CA) Recording Secretary Dr. Donna J. Nicol began her new post as Associate Dean for Personnel and Curriculum in the College of Liberal Arts at CSU Long Beach in January 2024. She will begin a nationwide tour for her upcoming book, Black Woman on Board: Claudia Hampton, the California State University and the Fight to Save Affirmative Action (University of Rochester Press, 2024) in May.



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

By Jennifer R. Kelley, LCSW-S, ACSW, MBA
Western Area Mental Health Committee Chair
San Antonio (TX) Chapter

During the month of May, we recognize Mental Health Awareness Month. It provides us an opportunity to increase awareness and reduce the stigma about mental health issues. This year's theme for Mental Health Awareness Month is



What to Start Mental Health in a Changing World. Our mental health focus will be on teens. Being able to maintain good mental health is essential to each and every individual's overall health and well-being. Mental Health conditions are common, manageable and treatable.

One in 5 people will experience a mental condition in any given year, and everyone faces challenges in life that can impact their mental health.

Per the World Health Organization: Globally, one in seven 10-19-year-olds experiences a mental disorder, accounting for 13% of the global burden of disease in this age group.

Depression, anxiety and behavioral disorders are among the leading causes of illness and disability among adolescents.

Suicide is the fourth leading cause of death among 15-29-year-olds.

The consequences of failing to address adolescent mental health conditions extend to adulthood, impairing both physical and mental health and limiting opportunities to lead fulfilling lives as adults.

Link Sisters, please sign up for this amazing Webinar to learn more! Happy Mental Health Awareness Month!



Verywell / Theresa Chiechi

Linking Teens to Wellness Workshop

On April 26, 2024 we will participate in the Stockton Chapter of NAACP Teen Summit at the San Joaquin Delta College, Stockton, CA. There will be 400 teens in attendance. The Western Area Mental Health Committee is excited to present Linking Teens to Wellness Workshop. The workshop will raise awareness, teach coping skills and to advocate for the mental health and wellbeing of our teens.

Webinar-The Imposter Syndrome in Teens

Please join us on May 2, 2024 @ 8:00 pm CST/6:00 pm PST for our Western Area Mental Health Committee Webinar on The Imposter Syndrome in Teens. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Impostor Syndrome is a psychological condition that is characterized by persistent doubt concerning one's abilities or accomplishments accompanied by the fear of being exposed as a fraud despite evidence of one's ongoing success. The Western Area Mental Health Committee will partner with the Menninger Clinic (one of the country's top ranked psychiatric hospitals (Houston, Tx) for the webinar. Our presenter will be Ms. Keisha Moore-Medina, LCSW-S.

Article/Book Recommendations

Raypole, Crystal (2021). You're Not a Fraud. Here's How to Recognize and Overcome Imposter Syndrome [Article]. <https://www.healthline.com/health/mental-health/imposter-syndrome>

World Health Organization (2021). Mental Health of Adolescents [Article]. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health>

Young, Valerie (2011). The Secret Thoughts of Successful Women: and Men: Why capable People Suffer from Imposter Syndrome and How to Thrive In Spite of It. New York, NY: Penguin Random House.

Parliamentary Pointers

CONDUCTING EFFICIENT CHAPTER ELECTIONS: AFTER CHAPTER ELECTIONS

BY PATRICIAL J. TITUS, RP
WA Parliamentarian
Harbor Area (CA) Chapter



Once chapter elections have been held, there remain a few steps to take:

STEP 1 – Check your chapter bylaws and make sure that processes and procedures are in place to transition power for the start of their terms as specified therein.

STEP 2 – Schedule the installation ceremony as specified in your chapter bylaws.

STEP 3 – If a ballot vote was taken, retain or destroy the ballots, as specified in your bylaws. If your bylaws are silent on this point, and in the absence of a chapter vote directing otherwise, RONR (12 th ed.) 45:41 advises that, “the tellers place the ballots and tally sheets in the custody of the secretary, who keeps them under seal until the time within which a recount may be ordered expires, and then destroys them.”

STEP 4 – Make sure that the Chapter President or Chapter Recording Secretary updates the MMS with the new officers.

STEP 5 – Make sure that the minutes reflects the election results and includes the complete tellers report. RONR (12 th ed.) 45:40.

It is the goal of the Western Area to increase our members’ knowledge of parliamentary procedure. Completing these steps after chapter elections is key to the effective transition of power and the efficient chapter management.





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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Karen Cole, Western Area Director

wadirector@karencole@gmail.com

Brenda Kennedy, Vice Director

avdbrendapkennedy@gmail.com

Elizabeth Sapp James, Secretary

linkbethjames@gmail.com

Felicia Garrett Herring, Treasurer

linkfelicia23@gmail.com

Marcia Darden, Financial Secretary

mcdarden125@gmail.com

Patricia J. Titus, RP, Parliamentarian

linkpattitutus@gmail.com

Chrystle Swain, Program Coordinator

swaincom_45@msn.com

Lorna C. Hankins, Past WA Director

18thwadirector@gmail.com

THE CHAIN



Karen Cole
Western Area Director



Melissia Buckhalter-Honore
Editor-in-Chief

Contact: MelissiaBuckhalter@gmail.com

Marsha McFadden, Communications Chair

walinkscommschair@gmail.com

Mia Moody Ramirez, Social Media

miamoody@gmail.com

Maria Jackson, Technology

linkmariajackson@gmail.com

ONLINE

Website: www.walinks.org

Facebook: [walinks](https://www.facebook.com/walinks)

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