

T H E B L A C K

PERSPECTIVE

ISSUE ONE - 2006

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Diversity Partner

A close-up portrait of Dr. Eric Cooper, a man with a mustache and sunglasses on his head, smiling. He is wearing a dark jacket over a black shirt.

REPAIRING THE BROKEN ROAD FOR URBAN SCHOOLS

Dr. Eric Cooper Heads NUA Efforts to Improve Education in Low-Income Urban Areas

AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE INTERNET

ABRAHAM LINCOLN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY

DIVERSITY NEWS

EXECUTIVE MOVES

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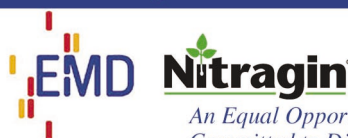
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DIVERSITY NEWS BRIEFS

Women and Minority Employees Charge Best Buy with Employment Discrimination in Federal Court; Class Action Lawsuit Filed against National Electronics Retailer that Tells Women Employees, “Girls Can’t Sell”

In the midst of last year's holiday buying season, Best Buy, a multi-billion dollar national electronics chain, is being charged with violating federal and state laws against race and sex discrimination in employment.

Claiming that women and minorities, specifically African Americans and Latinos, are paid less than white males, denied promotions, and assigned to less desirable positions, current and former employees of Best Buy today (December 8, 2005) filed a federal class action civil rights lawsuit, *Holloway et al. v. Best Buy Co, Inc.*, this morning in U. S. District Court in San Francisco. Plaintiffs are represented by attorneys from Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein, LLP and Schneider & Wallace.

“Best Buy is touting its modern, high-tech products for customers. The company’s views of women and minority employees, however, remain outdated and obsolete,” said attorney Bill Lann Lee of Lieff Cabraser. Lee is the former Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Justice.

“This company operates through a corporate culture of racial and gender stereotypes,” stated Todd Schneider of Schneider & Wallace. “Best Buy enforces a nationwide policy that results in the preference of white male employees in hiring and for desirable job assignments. The low number of women and minorities employed by Best Buy sets it apart from other large retailers.”

As an example of the corporate culture of stereotyping, the lawsuit describes how Best Buy’s

policy of “segmentation” requires managers and salespeople to target one of four composite customer types, all white, and only one female. These are: “Barry,” a male with a six-figure income who purchases what he wants regardless of cost; “Ray,” a male who likes electronic gadgets but may not always be able to afford what he wants; or “Buzz,” a young male interested in gaming and Play Stations who makes small purchases. The only female customer to whom Best Buy markets confirms gender stereotypes: “Jill” is “Barry’s” wife — a stay-at-home soccer mom.

Vallejo resident Jasmen Holloway, 22, worked at the Marin City Best Buy from January 2001 until August 2005. “After I had worked there for more than four years, I was interviewed for a promotion and requested a pay increase. The promotion was given to a white man with less experience than me. I was refused the raise because they said that I had reached the maximum salary cap for my position — but I later learned that less experienced, white male employees with fewer qualifications were paid more than I was.”

“I was angry at the way that I and other minorities in the store were treated,” added Holloway, who is African American. “When I complained to the human resources department, they did nothing — so I filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.”

Cheryl Chappel, 40, currently an Administrative Senior at the Mira Mesa Best Buy, was passed over

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DIVERSITY NEWS BRIEFS

for promotion in favor of a part-time male employee, despite Chappel's excellent performance reviews and more extensive experience. Best Buy managers told her she was not promoted to operations supervisor because it was "a man thing," and that there were few women on the sales floor because "girls can't sell."

Chappel, who has also worked at the Best Buy in Chico, was consistently paid less than male employees in comparable positions at both sites. When she realized this was a pattern for women employees, she filed a charge against Best Buy with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

Additional plaintiffs include another woman from the Chico store and three African American male employees from the Marin City store who were paid less, denied promotions, assigned fewer scheduled hours and received unequal job assignments and unequal training opportunities than white males. The men were refused sales jobs, even though they had prior experience in cell phone and electronics sales. One African American employee was awarded store MVP, yet nevertheless received lower pay than white employees in comparable jobs.

The lawsuit charges that Best Buy recruits, hires and maintains a disproportionately white and male sales force from which it then promotes a

widely disproportionate white male management force. Nationwide, more than 80% of store managers, the top job in a store, are white men, less than 10% are women, and less than 10% are African-American or Latino. "Qualified women and minority applicants are turned away," charged Lee, "and even when the company does hire them, it generally does not permit them to work on the sales floor — the pathway to promotion. Rather they are segregated to the stock room, cashier stations, and minor sales positions."

"Our plaintiffs' experiences are not isolated examples of employment practices or individual decisions," added attorney Schneider. "On the contrary, they are representative of Best Buy's systematic discrimination against women, African Americans and Latinos."

The lawsuit charges that Best Buy is violating federal and state civil rights laws prohibiting employment discrimination based on race or gender. The suit is seeking an injunction against Best Buy's discriminatory practices and the institution of company programs to ensure equal employment opportunities for women and people of color.

In addition, the suit is seeking back pay for all plaintiffs. Best Buy Company, Inc., a Minnesota-based corporation specializing in consumer electronics, operates 679 retail stores throughout the United States and has approximately 107,000 employees. Over 10% of its stores are in California. Its revenue in 2005 totaled \$27.4 billion.

People interested in joining the lawsuit should visit www.bbdiscrimination.com where they can submit information, or call 800-362-0481 to leave a message for plaintiffs' counsel. Members of the media can also obtain a copy of the complaint and this press release by contacting Stephen Cassidy or Monica Barsetti at Lieff Cabraser: 415-956-1000.

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Synovate Diversity Releases U.S. Diversity Markets Report; Kicks off a Series of Seminars Designed to Provide an in-Depth Look on Minorities in America

Synovate Diversity has announced the release of its new 2006 U.S. Diversity Markets Report - an in-depth analysis of multicultural populations across America.

"By 2050, half the U.S. population is expected to be multicultural," said Everett Hernandez, Senior Vice President and General Manager of Synovate's Diversity Group. "This will profoundly change the way companies interact with and market to consumers, and companies need to know how to talk to these various markets in order to keep up."

Synovate Diversity will present findings from the U.S. Diversity Markets Report (formerly titled "U.S. Hispanic Market Report") during a series of seminars in Miami, New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. Attendees will find new and compelling insight into the largest minority markets of the country: Hispanics, African-Americans and Asian-Americans.

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In addition to updated demographics and buying power information, the Report analyzes trends in autos, technology products, financial services, health and wellness, leisure/entertainment and shopping, as well as others. This year's report will also include an update on acculturation - how immigrants adapt to their new surroundings including their use of language and media.

Finally, new to this year's Report will be summary sections on the Young Adult market (ages 18-24) and the Mature market (ages 55+), which examine similarities and differences among these segments.

You may register to attend a seminar and receive a complimentary copy of the report at: <http://www.synovate.com/current/events>, or contact Muriel Sommers at (305) 716-6776 or: muriel.sommers@synovate.com.

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Hilton Hotels Corporation Increases Support of UNCF by Joining with Hilton HHonors to Create the “Hilton HHonors Diversity Scholarship Program”

Hilton Hotels Corporation and Hilton HHonors have joined together to increase the level of support given to the United Negro College Fund. The newly created “UNCF/Hilton HHonors Diversity Scholarship Program” is for deserving students attending one of the 39 member colleges and universities of the United Negro College Fund) or other Historical Black Colleges and Universities. This program will be administered by UNCF.

The UNCF/Hilton Hotels Corporation HHonors Diversity Scholarship Program was designed to help ensure educational access and ease the financial burden for minorities attending these institutions. Students must be accepted or enrolled, full-time, in a UNCF member college/ university, or other HBCU, have a minimum grade point average of 3.0, and be permanent Southern California residents. Hilton Hotels Corporation and Hilton HHonors have committed \$25,000 towards this effort. Award amounts for each of the selected winners will be based on financial need.

“We are always excited when presented with an opportunity to assist our youth in continuing their

“We are always excited when presented with an opportunity to assist our youth in continuing their education,” said Adam Burke, senior vice president and managing director of Hilton HHonors Worldwide. “By offering financial assistance to these deserving students, we honor the diversity of their heritage as well as the rich history of these fine institutions.”

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About UNCF

The United Negro College Fund is the nation’s largest, oldest, most successful and most comprehensive minority higher education assistance organization. UNCF provides operating funds and technology enhancement services for

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“As a minority-owned firm, we are looking to find more opportunities to invest and reposition real estate assets in predominately African-American and Hispanic communities around the country that are not performing at their highest potential and improve the quality of their shopping and entertainment experience.”

39 member historically black colleges and universities, scholarships and internships for students at about 900 institutions and faculty and administrative professional training.

Capri Capital Advisors LLC Acquires One of the Largest Urban Regional Malls in the United States; Minority-Owned Firm Believes in Investing in the Urban Community

Capri Capital Advisors LLC has announced that it has purchased, on behalf of an institutional client, the notable Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza, an 860,000 square foot mall, located in central Los Angeles for an undisclosed sum. The sellers, which are entities owned and controlled by Hager Pacific Properties and its principals, originally acquired the property in March of 2003.

Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza is not only one of the oldest shopping plazas in the country, but is one of the largest enclosed malls in greater Los Angeles. It was initially constructed in 1947 as an outdoor mall anchored by a Broadway department store and was later enclosed by Alexander Haagen & Co. in a \$120 million redevelopment project that was the first project ever financed by the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of

Los Angeles. The property features six major tenants: Sears, Robinsons-May, Magic Johnson Theaters, Albertson's, T.J. Maxx, and the first ever three-story Wal-Mart in the United States.

“Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza is at the hub of central Los Angeles, and fits perfectly within the scope of what Capri looks for when investing in urban markets,” says Quintin E. Primo III, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Capri. “As a minority-owned firm, we are looking to find more opportunities to invest and reposition real estate assets in predominately African-American and Hispanic communities around the country that are not performing at their highest potential and improve the quality of their shopping and entertainment experience.”

“Two million people live within a seven-mile radius of the mall, but a tremendous number of residents spend their money outside of the Baldwin Hills/Crenshaw neighborhood,” says Brian Fargo, Chief Financial Officer for Capri. “Our long-term goal with this property is to keep the millions of retail dollars spent annually in other parts of the city, in the Baldwin Hills/Crenshaw community.”

Capri will arrange for the Festival Companies of Los Angeles to be retained as the property's leasing and management firm. Festival manages and/or leases more than 12.8 million square feet of retail and mixed-use properties.

Capri Capital Advisors LLC, headquartered in Chicago, is one of the country's leading institutional real estate investment advisory firms, investing in and managing commercial real estate properties and portfolios since 1992. Capri offers a broad spectrum of equity and debt investment products and services to its clients — through separate account and commingled fund vehicles. Diversified assets managed on behalf of its pension fund and other institutional clients as of September 2005 total approximately \$2.7 billion. For more information, please call 312-573-5275.

The logo for The Veteran Corporation is centered on a blue background. It features the word "The" in a small, white, sans-serif font above the word "Veteran" in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. Below "Veteran" is the word "Corporation" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, followed by a superscripted "SM". The entire logo is flanked by two horizontal white lines, one on the left and one on the right. Additionally, there are two vertical white lines, one above and one below the logo, extending from the top and bottom edges of the page towards the center.

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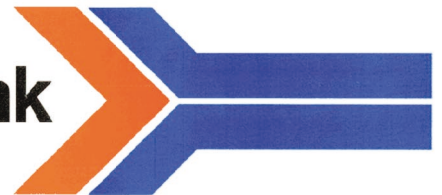
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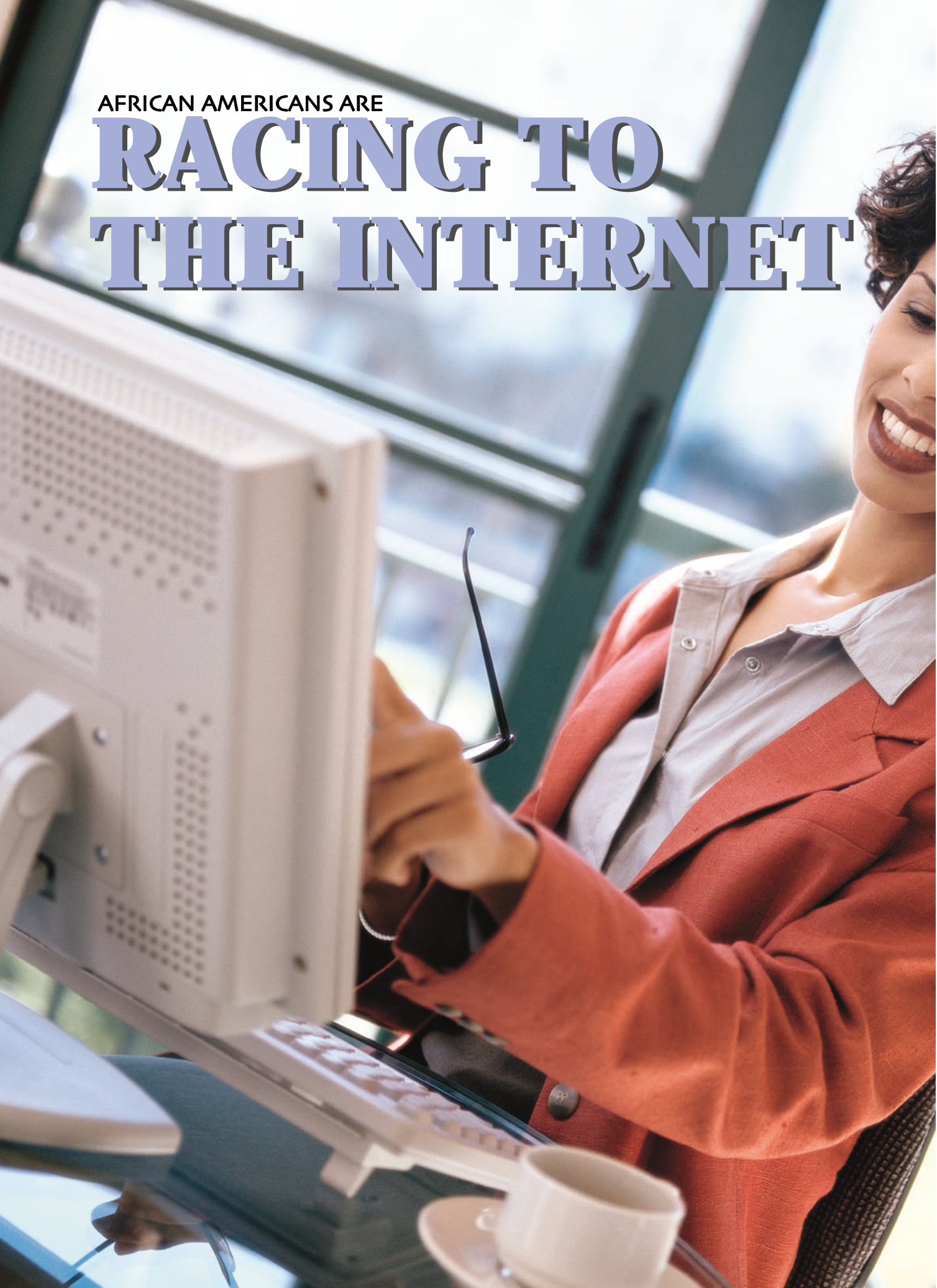


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AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE

RACING TO THE INTERNET



AOL Survey Finds African Americans Spend Nearly Double the Time Online Than the General Population

Nearly 80% of African Americans Surveyed Are on the Internet; Most on Broadband; More Likely to Use Internet for Finances, Healthcare, Entertainment and More

African Americans are racing to the Internet in record numbers, according to the 2005 AOL African American Cyberstudy, conducted for AOL by IMAGES Market Research. They report spending more time on the Internet (5 hours a day vs. 2.9 hours a day for the general online population) and are closing the gap in Internet usage with nearly 80% of African Americans having access to the Internet (vs. 88% of the general population). And two-thirds of online African American households have a high-speed connection vs. 53% of the general population. Those currently not online are more likely to get connected within the next 6 to 12 months.

The study also revealed that African Americans are embracing the Internet as an indispensable lifestyle tool and a tremendous resource.

They are far more likely to use the Web to access a variety of information: news (68% vs. 56%), entertainment (55% vs. 26%), health related issues (72% vs. 53%), financial questions/needs (60% vs. 40%) and sports (39% vs. 26%).

Other popular activities include: using a search engine (92%), communicating with family and friends (86%), using the Internet to get driving directions (85%), opening a bank account or online banking (62%) and listening to music online (62%). In addition, 62% of African Americans feel the Internet is helpful with individual career advancement and is a useful education tool (80%) for all ages.

"As we look to offer marketers the most relevant information about online behaviors of various demographics, we are excited to announce the findings of the first African American Cyberstudy," said Michael Barrett, executive vice president, AOL Media Networks. "We are committed to provide the advertising community with new data about the changing nature of online behaviors to better serve their needs."

"The study clearly demonstrates that African Americans have turned to the Internet to save time and make their lives more efficient and enjoyable," said Bret Moore, publisher of AOL Black Voices. "The Internet has truly proven to be a life enhancement tool that African Americans are using to attain their goals and



realize their dreams." However, the study also found that an overwhelming number of African Americans say there isn't enough online content that "speaks" to them as a distinct culture with its own dynamic needs and values. The survey also found that almost three-quarters (73%) of African Americans were much more receptive to culturally diverse advertising. And 68% favor companies that benefit the African American community.

Topline Findings

- Nearly Eight in ten African Americans surveyed are currently using the Internet - the remaining 21% are more likely than the general online population to jump on the Internet within the next 6-12 months.
- Already, 64% of African Americans online have broadband access- vs. 53% of the Total Online Population
- African Americans are far more likely than other online users to use the Web to access a variety of information: news (68% vs. 56%), entertainment (55% vs. 26%), music (49% vs. 21%), and sports (39% vs. 26%).
- The most popular online activities among African Americans are using a search engine (92%), communicating with friends and family (86%), and getting driving directions and maps (85%).
- Almost two-thirds (62%) of African Americans feel the Internet is helpful with individual career advancements.
- Seventy-six percent of African Americans view the Internet as a big time-saver, saying it allows them to access large amounts of information quickly and get more things done in a day.
- African Americans spend an average of 5 hours per day on the Internet while all others spend 2.9 hours a day.
- Online African Americans report they use the Internet an average of 6 days per week, compared to 5 days per week for all others.
- Researching and Buying Products and Services Online
Forty-nine percent of African Americans feel the Internet is the best source of information on consumer products.

- Almost three-quarters (70%) have researched an item online and subsequently purchased it in a store.

Finding Relevant Information Online

- Seventy-two percent of online African Americans say the need to obtain general information prompted initial use.
- Fifty-four percent feel the Internet provides more information about healthcare issues important to African Americans than any other sources. And African Americans are far more likely to turn to the Internet for healthcare-related searches than all others (64% vs. 53%).
- Sixty percent believe the Internet is the best source for financial information.
- The Ability to get entertainment information quickly is a big draw for African Americans (75%).
- Forty Two percent of African Americans go online to learn about new styles & fashion information.

Discovering Entertainment Online

- African Americans view the Internet as an entertainment medium, using it to view video clips and download music.
- Seventy-three percent of African Americans feel on-demand entertainment is an important benefit of the Internet.
- Seventy-eight percent see the Internet as a time-saver allowing them to avoid waiting in line for tickets.
- The most common movie-related reasons to go online are to look for a movie they may want to see (73%) and to search for a theater or movie time (68%).

Using the Internet to Communicate

- Eighty-six percent of African Americans use the Internet to communicate with family and friends.
- Thirty percent of respondents use instant messaging occasionally or more.

Financial Goals and Management a Priority

- Six in ten African Americans look for information about financial products online.



Buy Now

Almost two-thirds (62%) of African Americans feel the Internet is helpful with individual career advancements.

Forty-nine percent of African Americans feel the Internet is the best source of information on consumer products.

Sixty percent believe the Internet is the best source for financial information. Six in ten African Americans look for information about financial products online.

Researching different vehicle types (62%) was the most common reason for automotive-related Internet usage. Slightly more than half (52%) have used the Internet to price shop new cars.

- Online banking services are already widely used, with 71% of African Americans indicating it's their leading online financial activity.
- Forty-six percent are likely to start or increase their investment practices in the near future.
- Online African Americans earning \$100K or more are significantly more likely to track their investments or stock portfolio online.

Automotive Information and Buying

- African Americans are more likely than all others to cite the Internet as the best source of information for automotive-related issues (63% vs. 44%).
- Researching different vehicle types (62%) was the most common reason for automotive-related Internet usage.
- Slightly more than half (52%) have used the Internet to price shop new cars.
- Over one-third (37%) of African Americans plan to purchase a new or used car in the next 12 months compared to 22% of all others.

Getting Going Starts with Going Online

- African Americans are avid travelers: 2/3 of African Americans have traveled domestically in the past 12 months.
- African Americans are more likely than all others to report the Internet as the best source of travel-related information (79% vs. 73%).

Methodology

The 2005 AOL African American Cyberstudy conducted by IMAGES MARKET RESEARCH comprises three phases. In the first Qualitative Phase, focus groups were conducted among African Americans with a home ISP in three cities, Los Angeles, New York, and Atlanta. Six focus groups contributed, with participants in two age groups, 18-34 year-olds(3) and 35-54 year-olds(3).

The Quantitative Phase followed in May 2005 with a web survey of 1,016 African American Internet users. A simultaneous study of 550 phone interviews was also conducted to obtain comparative perspective (300 African American sample and 250 general

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market (GM) sample). The web survey portion was done using a national database of African American panel members. An invitation e-mail was sent to their address and respondents were given a link to access the survey. A combination of RDD (Random Digit Dialing) and African American listed sample was used for the telephone portion of the study.

A Two-Step Cluster Analysis procedure was applied to the 1,016 online completed surveys of African Americans who have online service providers. The resulting four clusters are psychographic groupings that represent respondents who participated in the web survey.

About IMAGES Market Research

IMAGES Market Research is a full service multicultural marketing communications company headquartered in Atlanta, GA. It is a leading research and consulting firm for targeted and ethnic markets, most particularly to the African American, Latino, and Asian markets.

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National Urban Alliance for Effective Education Closes In On The Achievement Gap

By Tiffany L. Reynolds

Despite many historical successes that have paved the way for educational advancement for minorities and low-income families, the issue of an achievement gap exists in many urban communities throughout America today. With more than 11 million children living below the poverty line and an estimated 16 million children living with families that cannot meet their basic needs, the education system has become one more institution failing children. This issue now faces its new challenger, the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education (NUA).

Since 1989, Dr. Eric J. Cooper, President and founder of NUA, has led his organization in an aggressive movement for urban school reform. Cooper and NUA want to make certain that no child is left behind, and the 16 year-old organization upholds a belief in the capacity of all children, in spite of the severe challenges they face, to reach high levels of learning and thinking. NUA is putting the spotlight on issues of institutional racism and poverty in a concerted effort to support students attending schools in impoverished communities who are dealing with the effects of a weak educational system. This debilitating trend continues to position many poor, minority students against the odds of achieving academic and professional success.

Racism and poverty are two very controversial topics that Cooper fearlessly addresses. As an

example, Cooper notes the large numbers of African-American males that are placed in special-education classrooms and prison and he states, "Too many teachers have low expectations for minority children from low-income families . . . all too many assume that these students are incapable of high intellectual performance because of innate cognitive inadequacies."

Julian Weissglass's contribution to Education Week, supports NUA's beliefs and position in the August 8, 2001 issue, "Racism and the Achievement Gap." Weissglass addresses racism and class bias that preserves this gap for achievement, between poor and/or minority children from those who are not facing the same issues. Weissglass gave insight on how to effectively close the achievement gap by pushing a nation beyond the idea of diversity appreciation and declare that "all" children will learn through "healing communities." There needs to be an accepting environment that welcomes individuals, both young and old, to openly discuss issues about racism. Through this process, emotional healing will begin in our nation that is burdened by racism and prejudices, and equality will immerge and students will achieve more.

"We have to change the facts, not just feelings that nurture, and are nurtured, by deep and historic social engineering that divides races and economic classes in America. It will take honest dialogue and leadership, but also much more than that to put our society and our students on equitable footing," states Eric Cooper.

A recent report from The Aspen Institute, "Family Economics: Work and Wealth in the New Economy," illustrates the affect that the education system has on economically disadvantaged high school and college students. Their numbers show that among the top test performers nationwide, more than 80 percent of the wealthiest students further their education through four-year colleges, compared to the 40 percent of equally successful students from the poorest families. Out of all the students who come from the most affluent families, seventy-two percent that received test scores in the lowest tier continue on to college. Taking a look at the most "selective" schools nationwide, seventy-four percent of students from wealthy families are enrolled; only three percent of



students from least affluent families attend college.

During a speech given to more than 1,000 high school juniors from different area schools in Providence, Rhode Island, Cooper used his own life experience as a model of success and inspiration for the students. He expressed how educators often form misconceptions about students based solely on how they dress. One student told the audience about how he felt that some teachers treated him "like an idiot," because of his dark complexion, his style of dress and the area in which he lives. Another student stated that the responsibility was not only of teachers, but also of the students, since sometimes they make choices not to apply themselves and learn.

Cooper and his organization, NUA, understands that successful inner city schools do exist, and that many of these schools just need a "facelift" on school morale. NUA's professional development program is based on a 10-point approach that

targets not only teachers, but also the school community. Their objective is to provide educators with ongoing professional training that provides the latest instructional tools and techniques, while lifting teacher morale. Ultimately, the teachers learn how to work together to unleash student's knowledge, skills and creativity in a supportive environment to ensure their achievement.

In an article titled, "It Begins with Belief: Social Demography Is Not Destiny," Cooper paints a vivid picture of the dismal side to education in America. "Most Americans tend to believe in the foundations of American traditions such as fairness, freedom, human dignity, and full equality . . . education remains the only pathway that leads people out of poverty, despair and hopelessness. But in the underdeveloped areas of our country, in our rundown neighborhoods, shadows of poverty, off the highways of prosperity, the distance from aspiration to achievement is strewn with social policies and obstacles whose number, intensity, and complexity is disheartening and debilitating."

Racism and poverty are two very controversial topics that Cooper fearlessly addresses. As an example, Cooper notes the large numbers of African-American males that are placed in special-education classrooms and prison and he states, "Too many teachers have low expectations for minority children from low-income families . . . all too many assume that these students are incapable of high intellectual performance because of innate cognitive inadequacies."

NUA currently leads ten initiatives nationwide, and their success can be seen in two recent literacy initiatives in the cities of Seattle and Indianapolis. In Seattle, black children failed standardized reading and writing test scores in 1999. These scores doubled in less than a two-year span due to an advanced tutorial by NUA literacy-trained teachers. In 1998, Indianapolis wanted a literacy-training program for the faculty and teachers to raise the scores of low-income students of both black and Hispanic backgrounds. By 2002, the students who worked with NUA trained teachers scored higher on standardized math tests than any other low-income third-grade students statewide.

The Eleanor & Brown Initiative piloted one of NUA's most recognized national initiatives in 2004. With participation from Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, the initiative was to commemorate both the 50th anniversary of the Brown Decision and the human rights legacy of Eleanor Roosevelt. Seven states, including Washington and New York, partnered with NUA on The Eleanor & Brown Initiative to address the persistent differences in student achievement associated with demographic groups.

"Our mission is to show every child that there is much hope - even for students facing family and financial challenges," says Cooper, "they can still succeed because of good schools."



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This year, Cooper will co-produce a documentary and teacher development program, called “In a Perfect world...Listen to the Children,” with Norman Klotz of N.A.K. Productions, a Maryland based production company. The wife of pop star, “Prince,” Manuela Testolini, CEO of her Minneapolis-based “In A Perfect World Foundation,” will lead this initiative. Testolini, Klotz and Cooper will direct fundraising and will facilitate the partner collaboration with organizations such as the Aspen Institute, school districts and N.A.K. Production Associates. The documentary will present compelling stories taken directly from the voices and expressions of children. The children will convey their aspirations and dreams of succeeding in life, despite their apparent disadvantages. “The goal of this film is to wake our sleeping nation to do something about the racial divide that leaves some students behind,” stresses Cooper.

The issues of institutional racism and poverty that tend to deepen the achievement gap may and may not exist for many individuals. The topic is controversial, but it is a reality for many students across the nation and worldwide. This reality needs a voice and an answer. In Eric Cooper we have both.



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EXECUTIVE NEWS

Dell's Thurmond Woodard Honored by Austin Area Urban League; Recipient of AAUL's Prestigious Whitney M. Young Jr. Award

The Austin Area Urban League has named Thurmond B. Woodard, Dell's vice president of global diversity, its 2006 Whitney M. Young Jr. Award recipient. The recognition will be at 7 p.m. today at AAUL's 28th Annual Equal Opportunities Day Banquet at the Hyatt Regency hotel.

Woodard, unanimously elected by AAUL's Board of Directors, has led Dell's global diversity and ethics efforts since 2000. He has been instrumental in the company's initiative to build diversity into its core business plan, including accessing top talent to ensure its success. Dell's partnership with the Austin Area Urban League has helped the company meet this goal.

"The contributions Thurmond has made in the community and to our organization have been key in promoting Dell to the Austin Area Urban League (AAUL) both financially and programmatically. Thurmond's contributions overall have been invaluable," said Jeffrey Richard, CEO of the AAUL.

"At Dell, we're on a mission to find, hire and develop diverse talent. Thurmond has galvanized our internal belief that to be a successful company and a great place to work, Dell must leverage the similarities and differences of employees," said Kevin Rollins, CEO of Dell. "The Austin Area Urban League could not have picked a more deserving recipient of its 2006 Whitney M. Young Junior Award."

The Whitney M. Young Jr. Award was named for the former National Urban League executive director, considered a pioneer in community organization and advocacy for oppressed people. The award is presented annually to an individual who has proven, through their deeds, to exemplify the principals for which Young stood. Recipients must have assisted in building bridges between the establishment and the disenfranchised. These bridges must have helped to create opportunities for minorities in, for example, employment, job training, and education.

"At Dell, we're on a mission to find, hire and develop diverse talent. Thurmond has galvanized our internal belief that to be a successful company and a great place to work, Dell must leverage the similarities and differences of employees," said Kevin Rollins, CEO of Dell. "The Austin Area Urban League could not have picked a more deserving recipient of its 2006 Whitney M. Young Junior Award."

"The Austin Area Urban League's mission is to build a community in which all citizens are free from barriers to education, economic and social success. I'm humbled to have been selected for this honor and I share it with the entire Dell team, which embodies the spirit of Mr. Young and the Urban League's mission daily," Mr. Woodard said.

For more information about the Whitney M. Young Jr. Award and the AAUL's 28th Annual Equal Opportunities Day Banquet, please visit www.aaul.org.

About AAUL

The mission of the Austin Area Urban League is "to assist African Americans and disadvantaged citizens in the achievement of social and economic equality." Through direct service delivery and advocacy the Austin Area Urban League provides programs in the areas of education, youth development, workforce training and career technology, ex-offender reentry, and emergency home repair.

About Dell

Dell Inc. (NASDAQ:DELL) is a trusted and diversified information-technology supplier and partner, and sells a comprehensive portfolio of products and services directly to customers worldwide. Dell, recognized by Fortune magazine as America's most admired company and number three globally, designs, builds and delivers innovative, tailored systems that provide customers with exceptional value. Company revenue for the last four quarters was \$54.2 billion. For more information about Dell and its products and services, visit www.dell.com.

EXECUTIVE NEWS



GE announces new chief marketing officer for rail services. Eric LaBat will be responsible for developing strategic marketing plans and driving growth and innovation breakthroughs for the business. (Photo: Business Wire)

GE Announces New Chief Marketing Officer for Rail Services; Eric LaBat to Lead Growth and Innovation Breakthroughs

GE announced that Eric LaBat has been named Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) for the company's Rail Services unit. Mr. LaBat will be responsible for developing strategic marketing plans and driving growth and innovation breakthroughs for the business. The position - new to Rail Services - reflects the development of a cross-business Equipment Services marketing team that will focus its efforts in 2006 on new growth initiatives, including services, asset intelligence and geographic expansion.

Mr. LaBat's organization will be performing in-depth studies of customers and markets, that will ensure a successful launch of the company's new services, Maintenance Max and RailWise, and develop multi-

generation product plans. The Rail Services marketing organization will manage activities that include strategic marketing, channel marketing, enterprise marketing, brand strategy, and marketing research and analytics.

"We are delighted that Eric has taken on this role within Rail Services," said Ted Torbeck, President & CEO for GE Equipment Services, Rail Services. "This new role is consistent with GE's push to develop a stronger marketing competency across all businesses where innovation is driven by customer needs and industry demands."

Prior to accepting the CMO role, Mr. LaBat held key positions for Rail Services in the Food, Agriculture and Minerals and Intermodal business units as a Vice President of Sales. Prior to joining GE, Mr. LaBat spent 15 years with Union Pacific Railroad and CSX Transportation, holding various roles in marketing, business development and sales leadership. He graduated from Iowa State University in 1987 where he earned a B.A. Degree in Journalism.

About GE Equipment Services, Rail Services
A unit of the General Electric Company (NYSE:GE) and GE Equipment Services, Rail Services, headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, leases approximately 170,000 railroad cars—including grain hoppers, coal hoppers, tank cars, boxcars, plastics and other specialty hoppers, mill gondola, intermodal flat cars that carry highway semi trailers and intermodal containers. Additionally, the company leases 150,000 intermodal trailers, containers and chassis to shippers and railroads.

For further information, visit <http://www.ge.com/railservices>.

Mary Beth Stone West Joins JCPenney Board of Directors; Accomplished Kraft Foods Executive Brings Talent and Innovative Focus in Consumer Marketing to JCPenney Board

J. C. Penney Company, Inc. has announced that Mary Beth Stone West, a highly accomplished consumer marketing executive, has joined the Company's Board

of Directors, effective today. Ms. Stone West is group vice president and president, Kraft Foods North America Grocery segment.

Myron E. (Mike) Ullman, III, chairman and chief executive officer, said, "Ms. Stone West has distinguished herself as a leader in consumer marketing. Her experience in developing innovative programs to support and expand some of the best known American brands will be of significant value to our Board. We look forward to Ms. Stone West's advice while we work to build an emotional connection with our customer, continually enhance the presence and strength of our brands, and reinforce that 'it's all inside' at JCPenney."

Ms. Stone West added, "I am delighted to join the Board of JCPenney as the company carries out its plan to be one of the top retailers in the country in terms of performance and execution. The JCPenney brand, the merchandise it offers and the shopping experience have made the company a leader in the department store business. The company's commitment to its customers, employees, stockholders and the communities in which it operates has established it as a great corporate citizen. I am honored to be involved in the next phase of JCPenney's growth and success."

Ms. Stone West, 43, began her career in consumer marketing in 1986 at the Maxwell House coffee business of General Foods Corporation, which later came together with Kraft. At Kraft, the largest food and beverage company in North America and second largest in the world, she has served in numerous positions of increasing seniority, including vice president, Business Development, and senior vice president and general manager of the Meals Division. In late 2004, she was named to her current position, group vice president and president, Kraft Foods North America Grocery segment, with revenue of approximately \$2.4 billion and responsibility for leading brands including Jell-O, Kraft salad dressing, Miracle Whip, A.1. and Cool Whip.

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In 2005, Ms. Stone West was named to Black MBA magazine's "50 under 50." Previously, in 2002, she was listed as one of the "Next Generation of Minority Business Leaders" in Minority MBA magazine and was named the Distinguished Executive" of the year by the Lake Forest Graduate School of Management. One year earlier, she appeared on the list of "40 under 40" in Crain's Chicago Business.

Ms. Stone West has a B.S. degree in management from Nazareth College and an MBA in marketing from Columbia University. She is active in several charitable organizations in the Chicago area.

NOVARTIS ANNOUNCES FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN APPOINTED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation (NPC) recently announced the appointment of its first African American Executive Director, Diversity & Inclusion, Michelle Gadsden-Williams. In this position, Gadsden-Williams provides strategic direction, leadership and development of an inclusive environment by integrating diversity practices into all aspects of the business.

In addition, she is Co-Chair of the internal Executive Diversity Council, initiated several affinity and networking groups and developed Diversity Training Curriculum for the company.

Prior to joining Novartis, Gadsden-Williams was most recently at Merck, where she held various positions in diversity, talent development and staffing. She also held several positions in Human Resources and Product Management in consumer goods.

Gadsden-Williams holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Marketing and Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications from Kean College in New Jersey. She also received several community service awards and accolades for her work in Diversity, as well as was featured as a Rising Star in Black Enterprise Magazine and one of 75 women honored at the 2005 Tribute to Women in Industry (TWIN) Gala. Gadsden-Williams is currently completing her Master of Science degree in Organizational Dynamics from the University of Pennsylvania.



Novartis Executive Director, Diversity & Inclusion, Michelle Gadsden-Williams

About Novartis

Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation researches, develops, manufactures and markets leading innovative prescription drugs used to treat a number of diseases and conditions, including central nervous system disorders, organ transplantation, cardiovascular diseases, dermatological diseases, respiratory disorders, cancer and arthritis. The company's mission is to improve people's lives by pioneering novel healthcare solutions.

Located in East Hanover, New Jersey, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation is an affiliate of Novartis AG (NYSE: NVS) - a world leader in pharmaceuticals and consumer health. In 2004, the Novartis Group's businesses achieved sales of USD 28.2 billion and pro forma net income of USD 5.6 billion. The Group invested approximately USD 4.2 billion in R&D. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis Group companies employ approximately 81,400 people and operate in over 140 countries around the world. For further information please consult <http://www.novartis.com>.

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HBO Executive Cheryl Procter-Rogers, APR, Fellow PRSA, Takes Helm As PRSA President and CEO

With an eye towards “creating a new normal and breaking new ground”, public relations executive Cheryl Procter-Rogers, APR, Fellow PRSA, takes office as the 2006 president and CEO of the Public Relations Society of America). Procter-Rogers, regional corporate affairs director for Home Box Office in Rosemont, Ill., brings more than 25 years of public relations experience to PRSA, the world’s largest organization for public relations professionals.

“My desire is to leverage the collective experience and resources of our local, regional and national leadership to increase member value, and to inspire those who have considered membership to join us,” said Procter-Rogers, recipient of PRSA’s 2005 D. Parke Gibson Pioneer Award for multicultural public relations and the youngest member ever to be inducted into the PRSA College of Fellows. “As a Board, we will build on the success of the core tenets of our profession and the Society.”

During her presidency, Procter-Rogers will lead the charge in making cultural shifts that will have a long-term impact on the viability, growth and success of PRSA and the profession. To accomplish this, the 2006 Board of Directors has prioritized five initiatives:

Technology: Investing in the Society’s technology to deliver member services and professional development in formats that meet member’s needs.

Financial Accountability: Reviewing the Society’s current business model, as well as financial policies and procedures, to find new revenue sources and ways to reduce expenses.

Issues Management: Enhancing PRSA’s continued effort to serve as an advocate for the profession and the leading voice for the industry on ethical and industry issues.

Measurement: Establishing measurement tools that will help the Society’s leadership be more accountable and provide members with a return on their investment.



Corporate communications executive Cheryl Procter-Rogers, APR, Fellow PRSA, looks to break new ground as 2006 president and CEO of PRSA - the world’s largest organization for public relations professionals. (Photo: Business Wire)

Branding and Marketing: Following a brand management strategy that ensures PRSA continues its work to advance the profession and the professional.

Since joining PRSA in 1983, Procter-Rogers has been an active leader both locally and nationally. In addition to being the second African American elected to serve as the Society’s president and CEO (Debra A. Miller, Ed.D., APR, Fellow PRSA, was the first in 1997), she was the first African American elected president of the Chicago Chapter of PRSA. She has also served on numerous committees and task forces, and is a member of PRSA’s Corporate, Multicultural Communications, and Entertainment and Sports Professional Interest Sections.

Procter-Rogers’ professional career includes serving as director of public relations and advertising for Nielsen Marketing Research, Northbrook, Ill., manager of public relations and advertising for Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company, Los Angeles, Calif., and establishing her own LA-based

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public relations firm, Step Ahead Public Relations. She received her MBA from the Keller Graduate School of Management in Chicago and a bachelor's in English and Journalism at Bradley University, Peoria, Ill.

As an advocate of education, Procter-Rogers has contributed to many books and spent time lecturing to students, professionals and organizations across the United States. Most recently, University of Northern Iowa professor Gayle Pohl, APR, invited Procter-Rogers to contribute a chapter to a communications textbook, "No Mulligans Allowed: Strategically Plotting Your Public Relations Course," published by Kenall/Hunt Publishing Company. She was one of 11 public relations practitioners interviewed for the CD companion to "Public Relations: The Profession and the Practice," published by McGraw Hill Higher Education, and was the 2005 Vernon C. Schranz Distinguished Lecturer in Public Relations at Ball State University.

About the Public Relations Society of America
The Public Relations Society of America (www.prsa.org), based in New York City, is the world's largest organization for public relations professionals. The Society has more than 29,000 professional and student members. PRSA is organized into 112 Chapters nationwide, 19 Professional Interest Sections, along with Affinity Groups, which represent business and industry, counseling firms, independent practitioners, military, government, associations, hospitals, schools, professional services firms and nonprofit organizations. The Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) has 270 Chapters at colleges and universities throughout the United States.

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African Americans Are Moving Into the Digital Age With Speed

The Internet was first popularized in the eighties and has grown at an unparalleled pace over the past two decades. It has infiltrated the lives of its users to the point where wireless devices are now necessary so that access to the Internet isn't interrupted. Imagine when being "connected" meant having a wire running from the wall to the phone. As the World Wide Web and Internet connection continues to advance and grow, the African American community, once far behind in technology, is now increasingly progressing in what has now become known as the Digital Age.

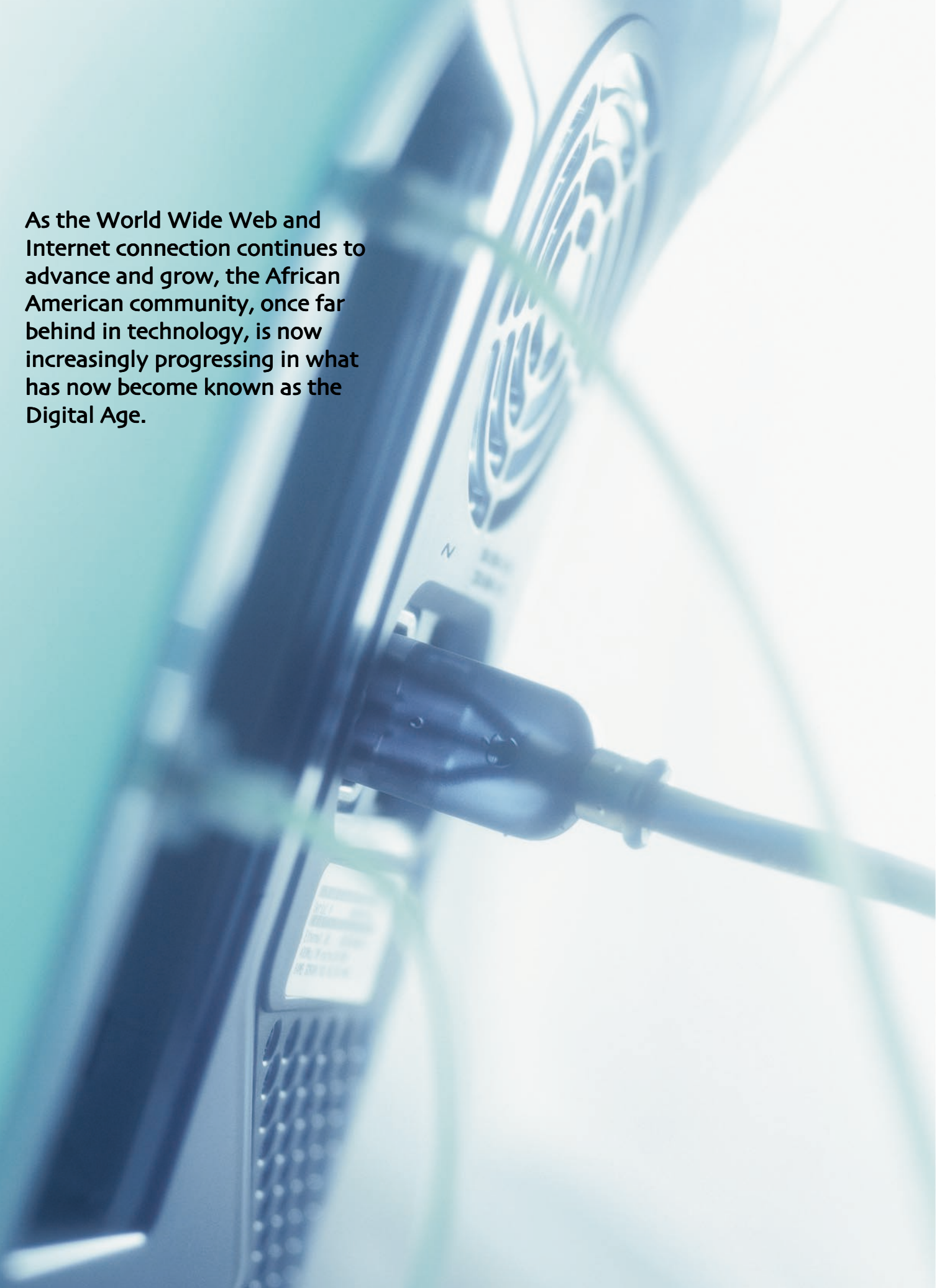
During the onset of rapid computer growth in the late eighties and early nineties, many studies pointed to the fact that African Americans were less likely than other races to have access to a computer and the Internet. In 1998, a study at Vanderbilt University found that whites were significantly more likely than African Americans to have a computer and use the Internet at home. In addition, the study also found the overall difference in computer ownership between whites and African Americans to be income. In other words, the more money a family makes the more likely they own a computer. However, according to the same study, as of January 1997, more than 5 million African Americans in the United States used the Internet.

Since then, that number has grown. According to Nielsen//NetRatings,, as of 2005, more than 18 million African Americans were going online to access information. Nielsen//NetRatings also report that online sites such as BlackPerspective.com, Blackplanet.com, Zjamz.com and BET Interactive are helping to attract the African American community to the world of Internet connection. In fact, nearly one-third of African American Internet users in the United States are logging on to the Web through a high-speed connection.

Although whites continue to surpass the number of African Americans online, research shows the African American community is surely "connecting" to the Digital Age. According to a Pew Internet and American Life study, statistics show African Americans are going online to do school research and find religious and spiritual information. Additionally, African Americans are playing games, browsing for fun, catching up on sports and downloading music from the Internet. Plus, African Americans are more likely to use Internet search engines to answer questions.

Needless to say, the presence of African Americans on the World Wide Web continues to grow daily as they realize the amount of resourceful information that can be found at the click of a button in the Digital Age. From organizations such as the Black Women's Health Imperative to Black PR Wire, the Internet is practically an endless space of knowledge. It gives visitors freedom of speech, daily resources, creativity and knowledge all at the same time. So, the next time you want to find out a synonym for "octothorp," learn what is happening in the African American community or get more information about a rash on your leg, simply make your way to the Internet and log into the Digital Age.

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Immunologist, pediatrician, CEO of the EHP and Pediatric Network
 Residence: Oakland, California

"The Three Doctors" — Sampson Davis, M.D., Rameck Hunt, M.D. and George Jenkins, D.M.D.
 Inspirational Speakers
 Residence: Newark, New Jersey

Asthma
 "The most common chronic cough."

Teens at
 "Today kids dream of athletes and entertainers, not of a more realistic way to..."

Rovenia Brock, Ph.D.
 Nutrition and Fitness Expert
 Residence: Washington, D.C.

Fitness

Nutrition
 "Parents need to band together to have physical education added back into the curriculum."

FACT
 About 15 to 24 percent of African Americans have asthma.

FACT
 Among 15- to 24-year-olds, homicide is the leading cause of death for African Americans.

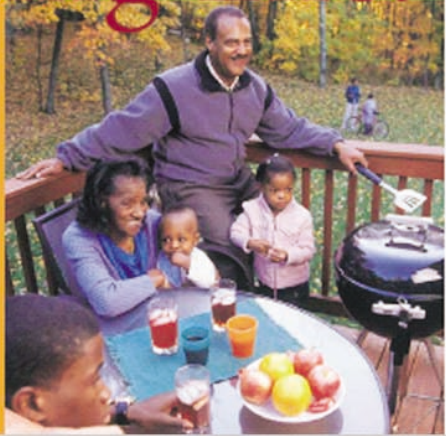
FACT
 Approximately 30.4 percent of all U.S. adolescents weigh 12 to 19.9 percent above normal weight and 10.5 percent are obese.

April 2006 STAGE OF LIFE — 50+

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 1997: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	2 1998: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	3 1999: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	4 2000: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	5 2001: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	6 2002: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	7 2003: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.
8 2004: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	9 2005: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	10 2006: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	11 2007: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	12 2008: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	13 2009: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	14 2010: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.
15 2011: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	16 2012: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	17 2013: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	18 2014: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	19 2015: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	20 2016: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	21 2017: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.
22 2018: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	23 2019: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	24 2020: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	25 2021: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	26 2022: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	27 2023: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	28 2024: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.
29 2025: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	30 2026: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.	31 2027: The year of the "Millennium Bug" (Y2K) scare.				

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2006 African American History Calendar
 25th Anniversary Edition



Aetna Releases 2006 African American History Calendar; Calendar profiles elite group of influential African American health care leaders

Aetna released the 25th Anniversary Edition of its African American History Calendar, an oversized, full-color educational tool that celebrates the stages of human life with advice, healthful messages and important perspectives from respected African American health care professionals from around the country.

The calendar, featuring commentary and inspiration from influential doctors, scientists, and noted health care leaders, has become an important educational tool utilized by schools across the country demonstrating the contributions of African Americans. The 2006 edition offers information on issues from sickle cell disease to HIV to diabetes in order to teach African Americans how best to care for themselves and their families. Each calendar month addresses a specific life stage and related health care issue.

"Aetna's commitment to helping improve health care quality and access in America includes partnering with the African American community on health care challenges that are more predominant in their community," said John W. Rowe, Chairman and CEO of Aetna. "Through the wisdom and determination of the 14 health care professionals featured in this calendar, healthier and more educated consumers are being created each day," Rowe added.

The 2006 African American History Calendar features the following African American role models:

January

Yvonne T. Maddox, Ph.D., Deputy Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland

February

Betty S. Pace, M.D., Researcher and Director, University of Texas at Dallas Sickle Cell Disease Research Center, Richardson, Texas

March

Michael A. LeNoir, M.D., Immunologist, practicing consulting allergist and pediatrician; CEO of the Ethnic Health American Network

April

Rovenia Brock, Ph.D., Nutrition and Fitness Expert in Washington, D.C.

May

"The Three Doctors" - Sampson David, M.D., Rameck Hunt, M.D. and George Jenkins, D.M.D inspirational speakers of Newark, New Jersey

June

Loretta Sweet Jemmott, Ph.D, R.N., F.A.A.N., Professor of Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania and expert on HIV prevention, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

July

Pebbles Fagan, Ph.D., M.P.H., Health Scientist in the Tobacco Control Research Branch at the National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, Maryland

August

B. Wayne Kong, Ph.D., J.D., CEO of the Association of Black Cardiologists, Atlanta, Georgia

September

LaSalle D. Leffall, Jr., M.D., F.A.C.S., Cancer surgeon, oncologist, medical educator and civic leader, Washington D.C.

October

James Whitfield Reed, M.D., M.A.C.P., F.A.C.E., Professor of Medicine, Chief of Endocrinology and Metabolism, Associate Chair of Medicine for Research and Chief of Medical Services at Grady Memorial Hospital for Morehouse School of Medicine Service, Atlanta, Georgia

November

Sharon Allison-Ottey, M.D., Director of Health and Community Initiatives, COSHAR Foundation, Lanham, Maryland

December

Dexter L. Campinha-Bacote, M.D., Aetna Medical Director and Family Physician, Cincinnati, Ohio

The calendar is available in electronic form on Aetna's diversity web site: www.aetnaafricanamericancalendar.com or by calling Aetna's calendar request line at 860-273-0509. For orders by mail, send a check for \$4.00 payable to "Aetna" to: Aetna Calendar, Corporate Communications, 151 Farmington Avenue, RWAB, Hartford, CT 06156.

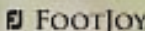
The game doesn't care what you look like. It doesn't comment on how you dress. It doesn't care who your friends are, or where you come from. Neither do we. The game cares about the things that matter. It respects you for who you are. All the game wants from you is your talent, your effort and your desire to perform. When it comes to working at the Acushnet Company – that's exactly what we're looking for.

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The Unspoken Role African-Americans Played in the Struggle for American Independence

The Revolutionary City, a Unique Interactive History Program in Colonial Williamsburg, Brings to Life Our Ancestors' Involvement in Building Our Country More Than 230 Years Ago

A 30-year-old carpenter torn between family and war, a Baptist preacher praying for equality, a runaway slave seeking freedom from his master, George Washington addressing his troops before the march to Yorktown – these are just a few of the people visitors may encounter during Colonial Williamsburg's new, interactive two-day experience, Revolutionary City – From Subjects to Citizens. The program, launched in March 2006, was developed to connect visitors to the emotional and philosophical climate of the period leading up to and during the American Revolution.

"By involving guests in this significant time period in history, we're hoping to reinvigorate their interest in our nation's past, present and future," said Rex Ellis, vice president of the Historic Area, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. "Citizen participation was as important to the Colonial Americans' fight for freedom as it is for our democratic society today."

To accurately depict the series of major events and scenes that illustrate Williamsburg's central role in revolutionary times, each day will consist of a two-hour, interactive program focused on select events that portray Colonial Americans' crucial transition from subjects to citizens.

"Black History is American History. The Revolutionary

City program reflects all aspects of the time in our history with unfiltered lenses. For example, some may think the best thing to do with slavery is to sweep it under the rug. We don't shy away from it and we don't shy away from sharing the significant contributions of African Americans in building our country," said Ellis. "We believe in exposing the diversity of everyone's experience during the American Revolution."

Colonial Williamsburg also celebrates the choices African-Americans made during the American Revolution like James Armistead Lafayette, a servant born in New Kent County who served as a double spy for George Washington and whose insights were instrumental to Washington's success at Yorktown. And William Flora's heroism at the battle of Great Bridge, Benjamin Banneker's invention of the first striking clock in America, and Phillis Wheatley's pursuit of poetry. She became the first slave to publish a book of poetry.

"There's a very rich and diverse history in Colonial Williamsburg, and we invite families, classrooms, church groups and teachers to come and really experience and discuss our history and our ancestors' contribution to our country's development," said Ellis.

REVOLUTIONARY CITY DAY ONE

Day one will feature the collapse of royal government, depicting pivotal events during 1774 to 1776, including British Royal Governor Lord Dunmore's dismissal of the House of Burgesses and the convening of the first Virginia convention. From witnessing a disagreement between a loyalist mother and her patriot daughter, to interacting with the slaves as they weigh the ironies of the freedom their masters seek, as juxtaposed to continued bondage for them, participants will have the opportunity to connect with the characters' personal stories and share the challenges they faced as they separated themselves from British rule.

REVOLUTIONARY CITY DAY TWO

Day two spans July 1776 – September 1781, beginning with the Declaration of Independence and including the British Occupation of the city. Participants will share the difficulties, turmoil and challenges the citizens of Virginia faced as they join in protests about the high price of goods, stand next to an estranged wife seeking work at a tavern and march with General Washington as he prepares to leave for Yorktown.

"Many of the challenges Colonial Americans faced are similar to the challenges we face today — families are torn by war, parents and children argue about what's right and wrong and political debates are a daily occurrence," said Ellis. "By connecting visitors to the Colonial Americans' personal struggles for freedom, we hope guests will reflect on the liberties we've been granted and develop newfound respect for the benefits of citizenship, as well as the responsibility to participate in the democratic process."

Revolutionary City activities will take place in the Colonial Williamsburg Historic Area from 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. daily. Admission to the Revolutionary City is included with the Colonial Williamsburg general admission ticket.

To enrich each guest's experience, many of the programs in the Colonial Williamsburg Historic Area will complement the Revolutionary City activities, referencing and reinforcing the events depicted. All Historic sites are connected to emphasize that citizen participation was at the heart of the matter of

democracy, as it is at the heart of America today.

For more information or reservations, call toll-free 1-800-HISTORY or visit Colonial Williamsburg's website, www.colonialwilliamsburg.com. Established in 1926, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation is the not-for-profit educational institution that operates the Historic Area. The Colonial Williamsburg Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of the foundation, operates these hotels, conference facilities, 10 restaurants and the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club. Revenue generated by the hotels and restaurants helps support the foundation's educational mission. Williamsburg is located 150 miles south of Washington, D.C., off Interstate 64.



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ABRAHAM LINCOLN PRESIDENTIAL MUSEUM COMMEMORATES AFRICAN-AMERICAN LEGENDS & HISTORY

Museum taps into growing African-American interest in cultural tourism

As Black History Month passes, families, school groups and individuals can enjoy the perfect opportunity to add a meaningful educational component to their next trip by visiting the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield, Illinois. The museum pays tribute to the author of the

Emancipation Proclamation, and also revisits the harsh reality of slavery in America while celebrating African-American freedom fighters.

"Within its 40,000 square feet of exhibits, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum provides the perfect balance of scholarship and showmanship," Illinois Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich said. "The impressive facility, technology and exhibits take visitors on a "you are there" journey they will never forget. It's a must-see Illinois attraction."

Museum visitors travel through a series of "journeys," where several facets of the president's life and political career are highlighted. One journey, The Slave Auction, is a compelling depiction of a family being divided as its members are auctioned off to slave owners.

While traveling down the Illusion Corridor, visitors experience first-hand a sea of crude whispers, bringing the harsh realities of a divided nation back to life as anti-abolitionists brashly denounce Lincoln's stance on slavery. The museum immerses guests in

the experience, reminding them that the issue of slavery was one of America's most divisive periods.

Another journey brings visitors to a replica of the White House, outside of which sit life-like figures of Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth waiting for the opportunity to speak with the president. Once inside, visitors will see Mrs. Lincoln being fitted for a dress by Elizabeth Keckley, a former slave who became her dressmaker and closest confidant during the war years.

There is even a re-creation of the White House kitchen, where visitors can listen as African-American workers whisper about the possibility of emancipation. Other journeys chronicle Lincoln's life as a young boy, to the beginning of his political career and through his assassination and funeral.

The museum is the ideal travel option for the growing number of Americans who enjoy cultural travel. According to the Travel Industry Association of America, an estimated 75 percent of travelers—or 109.8 million Americans—participate in some sort of cultural activity as part of their vacation experience. TIA also notes that cultural events and activities are a primary facet of most African-American travel itineraries.

"We are proud to have such an extraordinary addition to Illinois' cultural tourism offerings," said Jan Kostner, deputy director, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism. "The museum does a remarkable job of immersing visitors into the rich history of our country and one of its most respected leaders."

A visit to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum will provide travelers an enjoyable and educational experience ideal for Black History Month and beyond. Schools and other groups interested in specialized museum tours can contact the museum at (800) 610-2094 or visit www.alplm.org.

For more information about Illinois destinations and attractions or to order the "See What's Up in Illinois" African-American travel guide, visit www.soulfulillinois.com or call 1-800-2CONNECT.





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