February 2012 Volume 2, Issue 1

Empowering Columbus



CARTER G. WOODSON "FATHER OF BLACK HISTORY"



Human Rights Commission
Columbus, IN



Individual Highlights:

SPOTLIGHT

Inside Story

2

3

5

Inside Story 4

Inside Story

Last Story 6

Carter G. Woodson Historian, educator, author, and publisher was born in 1875 in New Canton, Virginia. He was the son of freed slaves, and worked as a sharecropper to help his family. He began high school in his late teens and proved to be an excellent student. Woodson went on to college and earned several degrees. He received a doctorate from Harvard University in 1912—becoming one of the first African Americans to earn a Ph.D. at the prestigious institution. After finishing his education, he dedicated himself to the field of African American history, working to make sure that this subject was taught in schools and was studied by scholars. For his efforts, Woodson is often known as the "Father of Black History."

Why do we need to learn about BLACK HISTORY?

When we learn about Black History, we can diminish polarization, discover our common ground and identify and appreciate our community assets. Black History can be a tool that assists us in moving beyond what separates us and discovering what unites us. We must understand that opinions about African Americans are more often than not shaped by a lack of understanding or experience. And many times because of the lack of understanding, there has been a tendency to render African Americans invisible – read Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man or talks to African Americans today. There has been a pattern and tendency to narrow the culture and life of African Americans in a derogatory and subservient manner. To prevent our children from adopting xenophobic attitudes, we need to stress the achievements and common humanity of all peoples.

"In the search for character and commitment, we must rid ourselves of our inherited and even cherished biases and prejudices. Character, ability and intelligence are not concentrated in one sex over the other, nor in person with certain accents or in certain races or in person holding degrees from some universities over others. When we indulge ourselves in such irrational prejudices we damage ourselves most of all, and ultimately assure ourselves of failure in competition with those more open and less *biased*." –J. Irwin Miller

Black History Month: 7 INDIANA Black History Facts

- 1. In 1881, James Sidney Hinton (above) became the first black person elected to the Indiana legislature.
- 2. Benjamin "Mickey" King was an African-American who came to Columbus in 1958 to work as a microbiologist at the Bartholomew County Hospital. He helped establish the Columbus Human Rights Commission in 1962 and was a charter member and president of the Laws Foundation. The Laws Foundation was formed in the 1960's to help develop the skills of African-American and disadvantaged youths. It has since been dissolved.
- 3. Henry Jackson Lewis, Indianapolis, was the first African-American political cartoonist. His cartoons appeared in the Indianapolis Freeman from 1889 to 1891.
- 4. The black press in Indiana dates to The Indianapolis Leader, founded in 1879. It was one of 30 such newspapers in the country.
- 5. On Sept. 3, 1918, Lt. Aaron Richard Fisher, a Lyles Station native, rallied his all-black Army 366th Infantry Regiment, 92nd Infantry Division, against German attackers during World War I in France. The Germans fled, leaving almost half their number wounded on the field.
- 6. The Rev. James L. Perry operated the only black pharmacy in South Bend. His first pharmacy was at 3503 W. Washington Ave. in the late 1940s. It moved to 704 W. Western Ave. in 1960.
- 7. Booker T. Washington School, Columbus: Columbus' lone black school served first-through seventh-graders. The black population had grown enough by 1899 to qualify for a separate school. It closed in 1922.

Sources: Indiana State Museum, The Indianapolis Star archives and the Northern Indiana Center for History

SPOTLIGHT on Welcoming Community



Gil Palmer, Chairman Human Rights Commission



What do you see as the role of the Commission in the next four years for the city of Columbus?

I cannot say it any better than our Mission Statement does:
To lead Columbus in building and maintaining an inclusive community by: Enforcing the Human Rights Ordinance Educating the Public Challenging attitudes and systems that create barriers to equality Empowering community members to advance this mission

What is the biggest challenge you see the Commission facing in the next four years?

I think one of the Commission's challenges is an ongoing challenge and that is to increase our community visibility as a valuable and integral resource. It is always surprising and disappointing when members of the community say that they were/are not aware of the Human Rights Commission. It's sobering to think that

there may be members of our community who may have suffered in silence the acts of discrimination, be it in employment, housing or otherwise. The Commission must continue to be aware and focused on our rapidly changing demographics to ensure that those new to our community are welcomed, embraced and integrated.

Inclusion, diversity, and Welcoming Community are key components to the Human Rights Commission, and many would say that Columbus has become more inclusive, diverse and a more welcoming community, but in what ways can Columbus still IMPROVE in those areas?

Although it may be true that Columbus has become a more inclusive, diverse and more welcoming community we must consider exactly to what degree "more" means and whose opinions those are. That sentiment differs depending on the demographic group answering that question. Until all groups, particularly those diverse groups who suffer at the hands of discrimination really feel a difference, the Commission's work continues. The recent welcoming community survey results indicates that we still have some work to do and that starts with outreach, education and awareness.

As the chair of the commission for 16 years, what has been your greatest accomplishment in those years?

Not sure that I have a greatest accomplishment. Probably that we continue to be a vital asset to the Community and that the work we do is meaningful and truly makes a difference in our efforts to becoming a truly "Welcoming Community". My charge from the beginning has always been to increase the Community awareness of the Columbus Human Rights Commission. We are only valuable if the Community knows that we exist and utilizes our services. I am pleased that we have continually increased our visibility through our outreach efforts, but of course we can and will do more. You know, on second thought, maybe the fact that I have been allowed to Chair the Commission for 16 years!

Biography

Gil has been elected chairperson for the past 16 years. The Chairperson is required to work very hard for the Commission, as he is responsible for reviewing all findings of fact, and requests for subpoenas, restraining orders, and he must prepare and hold any necessary hearings. Gil, a graduate of Leadership Bartholomew County, is a State Farm Insurance agent who works long hours at his office, but at the same time works tirelessly on behalf of the Commission and as a volunteer in the community, including his service in the Columbus Rotary, Centerstone of Indiana and Centerstone Research Institute boards, Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce, Audit and Review Committee, Mayor's Advisory Council, IUPUC Board of Advisors, IUPUC Diversity Council, BCSC Diversity Leadership Committee, Columbus Economic Growth Council and Senior Center Services board.

Be Aware. Be Informed. Accommodate







Depression is an illness that affects more than 17 million Americans each year. Depression is a common and serious health problem. About 12% of all men and 20% of all women are expected to have at least one significant episode of depression in their lifetime, and 5% of the general population may be depressed at any given point in time. It is an illness that affects the whole person - their thoughts, feelings, behavior, and physical health. In its mildest form, depression can keep otherwise healthy individuals from enjoying their lives to the fullest. When depressive symptoms are more serious. they cause needless suffering for the person who is depressed and needless pain for the people who love them. In its most severe form, depression can be a life-threatening condition.

From:

http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncodh/pdfs/depression.pdf

Mine Your Mind: Quiz on PPD, PTSD, and Suicide

- The Incidence of Post-Partum depression is highest in parents who are:
 - a. Older (35 to 5years
 - b. From Urban Areas
 - c. Younger (15-24)
 - d. Single
 - e. From Rural areas

- Which of the following is not associated with/ increased suicidal risk in soldiers:
 - a. A recent failed intimate relationship
 - b. History of at least one psychiatric diagnosis
 - c. Older Age
 - d. A current diagnosis of TBI, particularly frontal lobe injury
 - e. Having been enlisted in the lower ranks

- Which of the following statements is true:
 - a. Findings

 indicate that
 winter holdings
 represent a low
 point in suicide
 rates
 - b. In the majority of cases a suicide note is found after a completed
 - suicide
 - c. Suicide is always an impulsive act
 - d. A high incidents of suicide has been found amongst Cleckley psychopaths

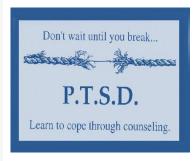
From: Psychiatric times - http://www.psychiatrictimes.com/quiz/content/article/10168/1963817

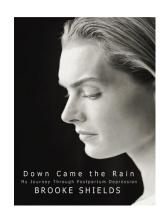
Post-Partum Syndrome

Maternal depression has been associated with a wide range of problems in offspring that include deficits in social, emotional, temperamental, and cognitive functioning in childhood that may extend into adolescence. Recent studies have focused on critical periods for maternal depression and have also examined prenatal and postpartum depression in fathers.

Following the birth of a child, it is critical for clinicians to screen for depression in both mothers and fathers. Identification and treatment of early parental depression may prevent adverse outcomes for their children.

By Karen Dineen Wagner, MD, PhD | June 27, 2011 http://www.psychiatrictimes.com/ mdd/content/article/10168/1890 601





Post – Traumatic Stress Disorder

The veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) share with their brothers and sisters in arms the high cost of war. There are unique aspects of the combat experience of these veterans that influence their psychiatric presentations in acute settings. First, far more of the troops (up to 45%) are reserve or National Guard rather than active duty compared with earlier wars Second, multiple deployments have become the expectation. Third, it is estimated that up to 15% of all soldiers deployed to Iraq are women, who re often victims of sexual assault. Fourth, the enormous progress of battlefield medicine has created an unprecedented situation in which warriors who would have died in all previous wars from their injuries now survive.

By Cynthia M. A. Geppert, MD, PhD | October 2, 2009 -

http://www.psychiatrictimes.com/display/article/10168/1468058

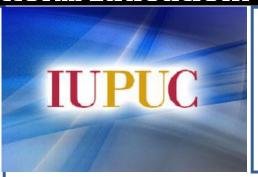
Your ISSUES matter.... Education!

IUPUC Excellence In Diversity Award 2012

Gil Palmer, chairman of the Columbus Human Rights Commission.

Rocio Rodriguez, president of Su Casa Columbus.

The awards will be presented annually to people, agencies, groups, institutions or others to honor ... outstanding efforts toward creating a diverse and inclusive community.



IUPUC Celebrates Black History Month

Tuesday, February 21st 4:30pm

"What is Soul Food? An Educational Perspective" There will be great conversation, entertainment, and of course, soul food!

Featuring IUPUC Faculty – Dr. Douglas Gardner, Dr. Kevin Jones, and Dr. Andrae Marak

Location: LC Student Commons

Tuesday, February 28th 11:30-1pm

INCLUSIVITY MATTERS!**

This interactive session will give you a glimpse into what diversity looks like in Bartholomew County.

Featuring Frances Jordan – Columbus Human Rights Commission

Location: CC 176

Students Remember The Day Rosa Parks Didn't Give Up Her Seat

By SHAMEKA NEELY

Indiana University graduate student Carl Darnell had a vision to bring people together to commemorate Rosa Parks, a social justice advocate that helped bring equal rights to African-Americans in the 1950's.

Because of his efforts, a program in the Neal Marshall Black Culture Center gave students the opportunity to reflect on the courage that Parks stood for. Afterward, more than 70 participants boarded a city bus to commemorate Parks, who refused to give up her seat to another passenger on December 1, 1955.

Darnell says he wants students to remember her motto of fairness, justice and love by bringing issues of concern to the forefront. He says IU needs to do more to encourage education for African-American students.



"If we're Indiana University, to me the flagship of Indiana, and Indiana is 9% black, I don't understand why we can't be reflective of the state we're in," he says. "I wanted to bring attention to how we're 4 percent, and we've been exactly 4 percent since 1975. So if nothing else, that can be a social justice issue that we can get behind."

The group rode the public transit bus around portions of IU's campus, and IU Sophomore Aaricka Washington says this reflective ride is a movement of change in the future. "Since we represent such a small percentage here at IU, I think it's important to show that we can stand together or sit together on a bus and be united and hopefully make a difference in the future," she says.

Once the ride was complete the group marched from the Herman B. Wells Library to the Neal Marshall Black Culture center.

http://indianapublicmedia.org/news/students-celebrate-day-rosa-parks-give-seat-24270/

Legal UPDATE

EEOC: High school diploma requirement might violate Americans with Disabilities Act

By Dave Boyer -The Washington Times-Sunday, January 1, 2012 http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/jan/1/eeoc-high-school-diploma-might-violate-americans-w/print/

Employers are facing more uncertainty in the wake of a letter from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission warning them that requiring a high school diploma from a job applicant might violate the Americans with Disabilities Act. The development also has some wondering whether the agency's advice will result in an educational backlash by creating less

of an incentive for some high school students to graduate.

The "informal discussion letter" from the EEOC said an employer's requirement of a high school diploma, long a standard criterion for screening potential employees, must be "job-related for the position in question and consistent with business necessity." The letter was posted on the commission's website on Dec. 2.Employers could run afoul of the ADA if their requirement of a high school diploma "screens out an individual who is unable to graduate because of a learning disability that meets the ADA's definition of 'disability,'" the EEOC explained. The commission's advice, which does not carry the force of law, is raising alarms among employment-law professionals, who say it could carry far-reaching implications for businesses.

Maria Greco Danaher, a lawyer with the labor and employment law firm Ogletree Deakins, said the EEOC letter means that employers must determine whether job applicants whose learning disabilities kept them from obtaining diplomas can perform the essential job functions, with or without reasonable accommodation. She said the development is "worthy of notice" for employers. "While an employer is not required to 'prefer' a learning-disabled applicant over other applicants with more extensive qualifications, it is clear that the EEOC is informing employers that disabled individuals cannot be excluded from consideration for employment based upon artificial barriers in the form of inflexible qualification standards," she wrote in a blog post. Mary Theresa Metzler, a lawyer with Ballard Spahr in Philadelphia, said there may be an "unintended and unfortunate" repercussion of the EEOC's discussion: "There will be less incentive for the general public to obtain a high school diploma if many employers eliminate that requirement for job applicants in their workplace."

Officials at the EEOC said the letter in question addressed "a particular inquiry" and disputed that it would have repercussions in secondary education. "No, we don't think the regulation would discourage people from obtaining high school diplomas," said Peggy Mastroianni, legal counsel for the EEOC. "People are aware that they need all the education they can get." She said the letter does not offer a new interpretation of the ADA.

Jeanne Goldberg, a senior lawyer/adviser at the agency, said the issue would come up only when high school graduation standards are not related to a specific job. "This would never arise when the high school diploma is in fact necessary to do a job," she said. Ms. Metzler said the policy could lead the EEOC to bring claims against employers or encourage applicants who have failed to gain employment to raise the issue.

"The EEOC may be inclined to test its view on the high school diploma requirement and its impact on the disabled in a court case," said Ms. Metzler, who is advising clients to "review their job descriptions to determine if a high school degree is truly necessary, or would aid the employee in performing the essential functions of the particular job. "While such a requirement is routinely included by many employers, a deeper analysis may demonstrate that a lesser educational requirement might suffice," she said.

Some worry that the EEOC's letter could place less emphasis on a diploma in the workplace, but the push in Congress has been in the opposite direction. House Republicans sought late last year to reform the federal unemployment-benefit system by requiring recipients of aid who do not have high school degrees to be "enrolled and making satisfactory progress in classes" toward a General Education Development certificate or equivalent.

That proposal was not part of the final deal that Congress approved to extend a payroll-tax holiday for two months, but Republicans say they intend to renew their call for the reform this year. Some corporate counsels are advising clients to adjust the way they approach the hiring process. "Employers are wise to evaluate whether a high school diploma really is necessary to perform the essential functions of any job for which it is being required," the Employer Law Report advised in a blog post by Lisa Whittaker, a lawyer with the Porter Wright firm, which has represented business clients for more than 150 years. "Even in those situations where the high school diploma requirement can be justified, employers will still need to consider" whether a "reasonable accommodation" could be provided to allow a disabled person without a diploma to perform a given job.

Mission

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- Enforcing the Human Rights Ordinance
- 2. Educating the Public
- Challenging attitudes and systems that create barriers to equality
- 4. Empowering community members to advance this mission

Director: Lorraine Smith

Deputy Director: Frances L. Jordan

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www.columbus.in.gov

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To join our distribution list, email: humanrights@columbus.in.

gov

It's TIME for our
Art & Essay Contests!
And the newly added
Video and Photography
Contest!



2012 Topic: "Breaking Down Barriers"

"Sometimes people forget today how many could not leave (the country) for years, how many sat in prisons ... before the joy of freedom came, many people suffered." — German Chancellor Angela Merkel

If you would like the packets for the contest, feel free to email humanrights@columbus.in.gov or go to our website at www. http://www.columbus.in.gov/human-rights/

Upcoming Events

Interfaith Forum Meeting: Feb 1st, 11:30am-1:30pm, Columbus Chamber of Commerce

From The Help's Point of View presented by Janet Cheatham Bell:

February 7, 7:00 p.m., Red Room. Bartholomew County Library

Cameo Membership Meeting: Feb 8th, 6:00pm, Chamber of Commerce Conference Room

3rd Annual OUT Side Film Festival: Feb. 18th, 1:00pm, YES CINEMA

NAACP Membership Meeting: Feb. 11th, 8:30am, Ground floor Conference Room at the Doug Otter United Way Center.

Pride Alliance Monthly Meeting: Feb. 27th, 7:00pm, Xenia Miller Conference Room, Commons

Human Rights Commission Meeting: Feb 29th, 4:30pm, Council Chambers

