

NAACP Prison Program Receives Gannett Grant

NEW YORK — The Gannett Foundation has presented a \$35,000 grant to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's Special Contribution Fund (NAACP/SCF) this week to support the mobilization of a prisoner rehabilitation program, initiated six years ago, at the Elmira correctional Facility in upstate New York.

NAACP deputy executive director Rev. Charles Smith, who formally accepted the award at a Gannett-sponsored luncheon, praised the Foundation's commitment to projects geared to assist prisoners and called attention to the local newspaper, *The Star-Gazette*, "which played such an integral part in funding and providing the necessary spirit to make this project operative." Robert Collson, publisher of *The Star-Gazette*, recommended approval for the project after receiving the proposal from NAACP executive director Benjamin L. Hooks last June.

LeRoy Mobley, national director of the NAACP's Prison Program, in his remarks before the small gathering of officials in Elmira, New York, said "The program we envision will provide a tremendous rehabilitative service especially for minority inmates. Black inmates presently represent 65% of the prison population at Elmira — an overwhelming majority. We intend to prepare these ex-offenders for re-

entry into society as an asset, as opposed to a liability."

Gannett Foundation president John A. Scott, who was also on hand to take part in the presentation, said, "We are wholly committed to this kind of effort that will help black inmates lead more constructive lives after their release. At the same time this grant can be viewed as a landmark for our foundation — enabling us to pioneer new fields of endeavor."

The twelve-month program, according to Mobley, is designed to expand the NAACP prison branch at Elmira by providing a full-time prison coordinator as well as other related support services. Mobley said members of the Elmira-Corning branch, through its prison support committee, will continue to provide visible support for the inmates in their effort to establish relevant programs within the institution.

He explained that the pilot program will attempt to establish remedial classes in reading, math and other basic subject areas; conduct leadership training sessions to acquaint inmates with parliamentary procedures; sponsor classes in basic job-hunting techniques; provide effective counseling for prisoners and their families; develop a voter registration and education program to encourage eligible members of their families to register and thereby instill a sense of

civic pride; and compile records on released prisoners to examine their success or failure in the job market for a period of up to eighteen months.

Mobley also acknowledged that "the exceedingly favorable responses we received about the plan from the

superintendent of the prison, and other administration officials, will certainly work to our advantage in this endeavor."

According to Mobley, some 24 branches have been established in nine states through the NAACP national prison program with eleven of

those branches located in New York prisons. He said some 4,000 inmates participate in the nationwide program that has already produced tangible results. "Nationally, our records indicate that over 400 ex-offenders, who participated in the prison branch program, have re-

mained a year or more on the job and have not been rearrested. To accomplish this we rely heavily on the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit program where the federal government pays a substantial portion of the ex-offender's salary during the first two years of his employment."



Zafa Talent Contest Winners

Zafa Temple 176 of the Prince Hall Shriners held its Talent and Scholarship program recently at the Durham Civic Center. (L-R) Miss Deborah Atkins, second runner-up; Miss Shama Truitt, winner; Miss Beth Love, first runner-up. Miss Truitt is from Hillside High School and Misses Atkins and Love are from Jordan High School. As winner of the local contest, Miss Truitt will represent Zafa Temple in the state contest in April. Photo by Silas Mayfield

Public Meeting

You are invited to an informational public meeting on the formation of a Community Development Credit Union in East and Southeast Durham.

Anyone living in the area or employed in a small business or organization located in the area is eligible to join. Small businesses and organizations will also be eligible.

All interested individuals are urged to be at St. Joseph's Performance Center, 804 Fayetteville St., on Tuesday, February 17, at 6:30 p.m. For further information, call 688-1331.

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Birthday Greetings



Sakisha Johnson of 111 Channing Avenue, Apt. E-11, celebrated her fifth birthday anniversary on Tuesday, February 10. She is the daughter of Ms. Valerie Johnson and Tab Lunsford. She is the maternal granddaughter of Ms. Gloria Cooper and Lee Dell Johnson and the paternal granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Kelly.

Quettes Adopt Warren Family

WARRENTON — The Quettes of Zeta Alpha Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity met on Sunday at the home of Dr. and Mrs. J.P. Green in Henderson. Composed of Omega wives from Vance, Warren, Granville, Franklin and Person counties, the group gathered to discuss social programs on which it would concentrate for the coming year.

Having made a contribution to the James Hargrove family of Warren County during the Thanksgiving Season, the Quettes voted to "adopt" the family and offer conti-

nuing services to its members. Mrs. Irene Fitz of the Warren County Department of Social Services assisted the group in locating a family that would benefit from its services.

James Hargrove, age 53 of Route 1, Macon, is the head of a family of eight. The Quettes believe that many of the family's needs could be met through a coordinated effort between their organization and the department of social services. The project is scheduled to go into operation immediately.



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