

African American Contribution To America

By: Niya Jones

Since the beginning of the Dutch slave trade, African Americans, were destined to make contribution to America. Their hard work in the fields helped establish the economy and world market from their blood sweat and tears. Although the voice of the dead was never heard, their life was still written after their time. We should be able to learn from the different contributions that African Americans made starting with Harriet Tubman and her great escapes to the Underground Railroad displaying bravery and loyalty, and slaves in their huts making music for peace of mind which in modern day can be considered hip hop. Regardless of how some over look the contributions, think, if African Americans had never came to America what would it be like? As the timeline continues to grow African Americans still use the teachings of others to move forward, among them, W.E.B. Dubois and Booker T. Washington. Washington believed African Americans should develop a mentality of work force environment and Dubois believed that we should grow and develop higher education for the future of all Americans. When these ideas began to reach the community others began to learn and make use of their knowledge and built stepping stones for others. African Americans began to go to college, trade schools and community colleges and create opportunities for themselves. The efforts began a domino effect; African American people began to come out of the shadows and believe in themselves and the thought of freedom began to ring.

Men and women began to feel the gap and take initiative to do great things and stand up for the rights of every man. Opportunity began to knock, people wanted to be something. Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and memorable figures of the Civil rights movement began to advocate and speak out for the rights of men and women of color. There were great court cases of Plessey vs. Ferguson, and Brown vs. the Board of Education, which said separate but equal was ok but then was over turned. Before those figures there were hundreds of other voices who just weren't heard, and sometimes overlooked. There were luminaries such as George Washington Carver, who created over five hundred agricultural products and made way for other black inventors; Benjamin Banneker, who made a clock out of wood; writers like Sojourner Truth, Harriet Jacobs, and Alexander Crummel. The contributions of writers, inventors, musicians, and advocates for the African American society have created a history. Their knowledge experience and testimonies have shaped America into a diverse and unique society. Their contributions have allowed the presence of African Americans to be established and recognized as equal and capable of accomplishing the many occupations that American society has to offer. Yet, at the same time they have spoken out about how no one is greater than the next and if America is a free country then every person should be accepted and free to achieve what life has to offer.

Campus Safety Still In Question?

By: Jordan McAllister

One year ago a student was shot three times on the campus of Elizabeth City State University at 2:30 a.m. outside of Wamack Hall, an ECSU residence hall after an altercation off campus.

"This campus has gotten more violent each year," says William Balance, a graduating senior.

Jerard Patterson was arrested after turning himself into local authorities. Patterson was not a student nor affiliated with Elizabeth City State University.

The altercation started at local sports bar, Level's, in downtown Elizabeth City then moved to the campus of ECSU. The student was shot three times in the parking lot outside of a residence hall.

Since that time substantial changes have occurred on campus, especially in the wake of shooting at Virginia Tech last spring. Emergency boxes, with a blue glowing light for easy notice, were installed on campus giving students a direct line to security

personnel.

"I think they are very convenient, but I don't think there are enough of them," says Shomonic Williams, an ECSU Communications major.

The boxes use communications equipment that lets security personnel know the location of the call box you're using so they can find you.

ECSU placed a security camera system around campus and the cameras helped identify the shooter.

According to the police chief of Elizabeth City State University's police department the cameras have been very helpful in catching suspects on campus illegally.

Students are notified of incidents on campus by phone and e-mail. Other precautions are also being taken.

"I am glad to know more safety precautions are being taken," says Brian Houston, the legal guardian of an ECSU student.



ECSU Holds Traditional M.L. King, Jr. March

By: Arquirah Sharpless

On January 21, the annual Martin Luther King Jr. march started at the G.R. Little Library on the campus of Elizabeth City State University. Students, faculty, and the Elizabeth City community gathered to celebrate MLK day.

People held signs and some sang during the walk that ended at Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church. The ceremony took place at the church where several people participated and the District Court judge of the first judicial district, NC Eula E. Reid was the guest speaker.

Jasper Fleming the president, ECSU Chapter of NAACP stated that the march was very successful because this was the first year there was a woman speaker. She opened the ears of the community as well as the students.

The annual march started in 1963. According to Mary Berry, each year it grows larger and larger because it is relevant for not just the blacks but America in general. Berry said that the student activity department of ECSU strives to get the community, church, and the NAACP involved each year. It is not just for the students. This day allows the people to come together more to support the cause and that is why it has not lost its true meaning.

In addition, the leaders are involved in the March and ceremony. The city officials are involved and have supported the march in the past.

"The march was effective because when I think of the NAACP and the people that strive to keep MLK dream alive I think of the rights for all people not just African Americans," said Fleming.

The march and ceremony are to let the people know that MLK's dream is still alive and we are still struggling with some of the same issues that MLK struggled with back when he was fighting for equal opportunity.

"My purpose in participating in the march was to give the honor to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and I think it is important to stand up for something and I think it was a good cause to stand for."

Fleming encouraged all people to come and listen to the speaker because, "we do it all for a reason."

The march and ceremony are planned to be held again next year.



This year the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority is celebrating 100 years of operation. It is one of the organizations in the vanguard of bringing about change, social justice and progressive thinking on college campuses nationwide. This piece salutes the organization's outstanding achievements. We wish them well.

By: Shomonic Williams