Essence Editor Speaks From The Heart

By Jalyne Strong
Post Staff Writer
Essence magazine readers recognize her as the attractive woman with the wide smile and multibraided hairstyle who is seen occasionally on the pages of this monthly, black woman-oriented publication.

publication.

Each month a sketch of her profile is the artwork on Essence's editorial page: With rays surrounding her face, her trademark braids flowing out breaking into a scene of stars, light and a lone flying bird, this image is somewhat ethereal.

And each month she composes the editorial comment on 'his page under the heading, 'In the Spirit.' The tone of these writings change from being soul-stirring, to galvanizing, to reassuring or soothing, from month to month, but they are always thought-provoking and with Essence readers the messages always hit home.

These things considered, maybe Essence readers have wondered if Susan L. Taylor, Editor-in-Chief of Essence Magazine, is too good to be for real.

when she walked into Grimes bringe of the Student Union sailding of Johnson C. Smith Unionsity recently to speak to a gathereg of mostly college students, the set observation was that Taylor is beautiful, moreso really, as her otographs. Then when she began speak, everyone soon realized, hat Taylor writes in her editorials to messages from her heart and ind. Whether the topics are facing sallenges, staying healthy, or retwing the spirit, she has been there and she practices what she reaches.

She was a little late for this magagement but that was completely forgiven when Taylor made her intrance, wearing a black, tailored dirt suit, smiling with head held high. In introduction, Taylor's numerous professional affiliations were mentioned and she was described as an excellent example of a "self-supporting black woman." Then it was her turn to address the "sisters" and the "brothers."

"We are the first generation of olack people to be off our knees in this land," she began. "We have the ability to choose."

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The gist of Taylor's lecture was a call to black youth to prepare to take advantage of their opportunity of choice. She admonished, "You have to be expert. You have to be the best." And out of these declarations emerged her theme, "Be fit and focused."

Ocused."
Under such a broad theme, Taylor discussed such topics as america's economic base, education and information, the media, blacks in the corporate structure, trugs, health and love. Her style in speaking is her own unique blend of information, philosophy, intelligence, spirituality and common sense.

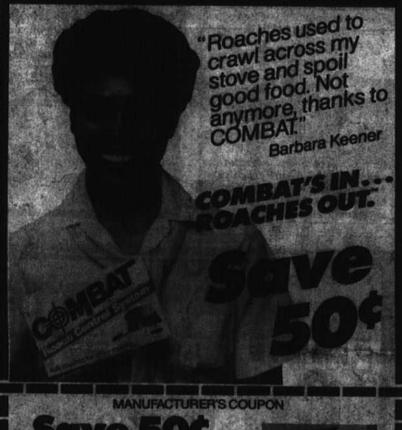
She spoke about the fact of the assing of an "industrialized based conomy." She told the students to e prepared. She said take dvantage of education learn to or" and use information systems at the same time she warned black tudents to be wary of white stablished media. "They show ne gative examples of your brother



and sisters." Taylor pointed out. She touched on the choice blacks now have of going into the corporate structure. Yet she cautioned that this white male dominated environment is in direct opposition to an African heritage. "You have to re-

tain your connection with your people and your culture,"she forewarned. "That is your base. And if you lose your base, you may lose your mind."

your mind."
Her lecture seemed not like a
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