

ICDHR



Newsletter

(March 2008-July 2008)

COMMISSION FULFILLS ALL 2007 GOALS

The Commission's Program Planning and Assessment Committee conducted an exhaustive review of the strengths and weaknesses of its' 2007 planned initiatives. The document cited major achievements in the areas of conflict resolution, training, resource mobilization and advocacy of key concerns of the Commission. Included in the review was progress made in relationship to its five year Strategic Plan and an assessment of religious and human relations focus groups in addressing critical issues across race, gender and cultural boundaries.

COMMISSION JOINS ISRAEL CONSUL GENERAL BARUKH BINAH AT OPENING OF THE MIDWEST REGION ISRAEL GOVERNMENT TOURIST OFFICE

Reverend Clyde Brooks, ICDHR President and CEO was invited to join Israel Consul General Binah and Mrs. Shulamit Binan at a reception welcoming Israel Tourism Consul Uri Steinberg and his wife Osnat Siryus in celebrating the re- opening of the Midwest Region of the Israel Government Tourist Office. A goal of the office is to provide Americans with the opportunity to visit Israel Holy Land sites. In 2007, more than 150,000 from the Midwest visited Israel. The Commission welcomes Consul Steinberg and his family.

ICDHR AND WHEELING HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TO LAUNCH SACRED DIALOGUE

Over the last few months, the air waves have flooded our homes with debate suggesting disharmony along racial lines throughout America. While the debate is not new, the cry for harmony has become more pronounced. Across the nation, people of good will have been urged to engage in "sacred dialogue" on this long and unsolved challenge. The term "sacred" has been added because we want people to be open, frank and honest without being labeled. As our communities

become more and more diverse, we believe that it is important to share issues, concerns and promote trust, all leading to unity.

The Illinois Commission on Diversity and Human Relations (ICDHR) and the Wheeling Human Rights Commission have joined together in sponsoring “An Evening for Sacred Dialogue: Race Relations.” The goal is to bring together representatives across racial, gender, cultural, and geographical lines for an analysis of this on-going challenge. Planning is underway.

COMMISSION PRESIDENT HONORED



The Sisters of the Living Word and the Mission Fund Benefit Committee honored Rev. Brooks, ICDHR President and Chief Executive Officer with their Partners in Mission Award. The presentation was made at their 20th Annual Benefit on February 1, 2008. In presenting the honor to Rev. Brooks, Sister Marie McKenna, Team Leader of the Sisters of the Living Word stated: “In 2002, our religious community made a unanimous commitment to dismantling racism in our institution. Our sisters saw how congruent this commitment was to our mission. We met Rev. Brooks in 2003 when we were looking for resources to help us in this work. Since that time, he has served as advisor, friend, educator, activist and minister to us. As the President and CEO of the Illinois Commission on Diversity and Human Relations, Rev. Brooks was and is a valued partner with us in our commitment to dismantling those things that perpetuate racism in our own community and society. He worked with Dr. Martin Luther King in 1966 and in the Chicago Civil Rights Movement and served on the Board of Directors of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (the only organization led by Dr. King during his civil rights advocacy). He participated in the Selma to Montgomery March led by Dr. King and took that fire of purpose to found 35 years ago the parent group of the organization that he now heads. Leaders all over the state and country have come to value the Illinois Commission on Diversity and Human Relations. He knows well the need to balance economic disparity when we are talking about dismantling racism and realizing the reign of God in our midst. Rev. Brooks often highlights the Apostle Paul’s words to his spiritual Son Titus: “It is not the condition that we find ourselves that is important.

What is important is our response to the conditions that we find ourselves in” We as a religious congregation join with Rev. Brooks in making a difference in the conditions many in our world face every day when there is discrimination of any sort”.

COMMISSION REMEMBERS JOHNNIE CARR, THE MOTHER OF CIVIL RIGHTS



On Friday, February 22, 2008, Johnnie Carr who followed Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as head of the Montgomery Improvement Organization died in Montgomery. She was 96 years of age. It was this organization that convinced Dr. King to lead the Montgomery Bus Boycott. In those days, African Americans were forced to sit in the back of buses and in segregated transportation systems throughout the South. Under Ms. Carr’s leadership, the City of Montgomery was forced to stop the racist practice of treating Americans with dark complexions differently. Ms. Carr now joins other great women in the civil rights arena. Others who have departed this life during the last two years were Coretta Scott King and Rosa Parks. Reverend Brooks, ICDHR President was honored to serve with Ms. Carr on the National Board of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia for more than 25 years. She will be missed.

TRAINING OF AURORA POLICE COMPLETED

As previously reported, the Commission was awarded a contract by the City of Aurora to conduct Cultural Enrichment Training for Aurora’s 400 member police department. The training has now been completed. Each officer was awarded a Certificate of Completion for participating in this three month initiative. The City of Aurora and its police department have been saluted for recognizing the growing diversity in and around Aurora and working to help insure that police officers are equipped to work in more diverse areas. A goal of the Commission is to have the training designed certified by various law

enforcement bodies to help insure that law enforcement personnel receive the maximum recognition for such participation. The Commission along with its partner, the Clark Consulting Group, Inc. is planning to introduce the training design to other fire and police departments.

COMMISSION HONORS OUTSTANDING WOMEN DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The Illinois Commission on Diversity and Human Relations has joined hundreds of organizations across the nation in recognizing the contributions of women. During the month of March of each year, a month designated by the Congress to celebrate contributions made by women, the Commission advocates a greater appreciation for these outstanding achievements. In honoring women, we urge greater efforts to eliminate gender discrimination. A few of the thousands of women contributors follows:

- Rosa Parks: Largely responsible for leading the Montgomery Bus Boycott that led to the elimination of racism in American's transportation system.
- Michero Washington: An advocate for building a strong educational foundation for Americans' children.
- Julie Sass: Co-founder of the Minority Information Referral Center and Co-founder of one of the largest remembrances of the life, contributions and birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the nation. Advocate and board member of Life Span and Women's Resource Center, organizations with tremendous success in promoting opportunities for women across the nation.
- Edith Wharton: First woman to receive a Pulitzer price for fiction writing.
- Florence Nightingale: Founder of modern nursing.

Ella Fitzgerald: Known as the First Lady of Song.

Pearl S. Buck: First woman to win Nobel Prize for Literature.

Mary Mitchell: Noted Columnist and orator. Known to address key “bread and butter issues” affecting millions in the nation.

Marion Anderson: Famous contralto singer.

Angela Davis: Helped to pave the way for gender and racial equality in the United States.

All women: The thousands that are struggling to raise their families, many without a responsible husband. Those who vote in every election and involved in improving our environment. The many who not only attend church but take their children with them. And, those who are in college, continuing education programs and trying hard to make today better than yesterday. And those that volunteer at hospitals and health centers and with community organizations, expecting little but giving much.

COMMISSION SALUTES JOHN HOPE BRYANT



John Bryant

John Bryant, Founder and Chairman of Operation HOPE, headquartered in Los Angeles who has inspired thousands across the world with his recognition of the need to promote financial literacy among the disadvantaged was recently appointed by President George W. Bush to the United States President's Advisory Council on Financial Literacy. On January 22, 2008, President Bush signed an Executive Order creating the Council and naming Chairman Bryant to this distinguished body. John's message is clear, that is, no one should want to be poor and every American should have a bank account. The Commission salutes John Bryant for this extraordinary achievement.

WHEELING HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Invited by Brian Smith, President of the Wheeling Human Rights Commission, Rev. Brooks, Illinois Commission on Diversity and Human Relations President attended the board meeting of the Wheeling Commission. Rev. Brooks commended the group on their work. The Commission is currently focusing on three key diversity issues: Veterans, Patriotism, and Religion.

COMMISSION PLANS TO REMEMBER ANNIVERSARY OF POOR PEOPLES CAMPAIGN

In April of 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was about to launch the renowned Poor Peoples Campaign, an initiative to urge the Federal Government to place eliminating poverty throughout the United States at the top of its agenda. Unfortunately, Dr. King was murdered a short period later and was unable to lead the campaign. April of this year will mark the 40th year anniversary of this great initiative. The Commission is planning a major event to remember Dr. King's efforts. The event will occur as a part of the "Back to School Campaign to be held in September, 2008. Please review the Commission's web-site for up-dates on this exciting initiative.

EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN AGAINST PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

The Commission would like to bring to the attention of its followers a pamphlet entitled "What to tell your child about prejudice and discrimination" The pamphlet was published by the National PTA and the Anti-Defamation League. We urge everyone to secure a copy of this document as a tool for better understanding prejudice and discrimination and acting and teaching our children about this sickness.

The pamphlet begins by stating: "the population of our nation is becoming increasingly diverse. Here are some suggestions to help your child get along with people of varied backgrounds and abilities in the United States today". The following are believed to be significant statements contained in the document:

"The Center for Immigration Studies reports that by the year 2000, one third of all U.S. citizens will be people of color". It is noted that this prediction has become real. The article also states: "one-third of the children in public schools are from what have traditionally been called "minority" groups. While many of us would like to believe that prejudice is a problem of the past, this is not the case. Incidents of prejudice and discrimination occur every day. For example, on a daily basis: some people are called hurtful names or are excluded from participating in events, some people are unfairly excluded from jobs, neighborhoods, bank loans, educational opportunities social events and clubs. Some people are attacked and beaten. Some people's home, places of worship or cemeteries are vandalized, and some people are unfairly paid less than others for doing equal work"

The pamphlet does an excellent job in illustrating how prejudice is learned. It defines terms such as prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination and scapegoating. The pamphlet also provides guidance to parents when responding to children's questions and comments about prejudice and discrimination. The pamphlet states: "It is important for children to know that they can help to overcome racism, sexism and all forms of bigotry. Show them how the choices they make can help to create a fairer world".

It concludes by letting parents know what they can do about prejudice and provides actions parents might consider:

“Let your children know that you recognize and appreciate their individual qualities. Children who feel good about themselves are less likely to be prejudiced”

“Help your children become sensitive to other people’s feelings”.

“Make sure your children understand that prejudice and discrimination are unfair”.

“Teach your children respect and an appreciation for difference by providing opportunities for interaction with people of diverse groups”

“Help children recognize instances of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination”

“Encourage your children to create positive change”.

“Take appropriate action against prejudice and discrimination”.

Interested persons can secure copies of this pamphlet by contacting either the National PTA at 312-670-6782 and/or the Anti-Defamation League at 212-490-2525

www.icdhr.com

REVEREND BROOKS KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT HOFFMAN ESTATES CELEBRATION

Reverend Brooks, ICDHR President and CEO delivered the Keynote Address at the 6th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Breakfast. This annual event is sponsored by the Village of Hoffman Estates and the Hoffman Estates Cultural Awareness Commission. The theme of the occasion was “Building on the Past and Looking Forward”.

Rev. Brooks noted the progress that the nation has made since the untimely death of Dr. King. He cautioned the hundreds of attendees not too become too satisfied with the often cited evidence of progress “we have become more tolerant as a society”. He stated that citing such as evidence raises two questions: the first, who is doing the tolerating and second, who is being tolerated? No one wishes to be tolerated. We must find better examples of progress. He also urged the attendees not to forget the many Americans, both black and white, who were jailed and died fighting for the rights of all Americans and the white ministers who lost their pulpits because of their positive stand on justice and fairness.

In his address, Rev. Brooks cited the challenges that must be addressed by those who truly believe in the dream of Dr. King. These challenges included the molestation of our children by persons who profess to be religious leaders, the plight of the elderly poor, the unfair funding of our schools that allows some schools unfair advantage over others, the on-going violence in our nation, the breakdown of the family unit, the war, the lack of racial and cultural diversity inclusion in fire and police departments and lack of adequate health care.

Rev. Brooks closed his presentation by sharing what he believed was the answer for the racial, cultural and international unrest that exists throughout the world. He pointed to the scriptural calling for repentance, forgiveness and action on both. Rev. Brooks stated that “we must find other ways of looking at things. We can’t think the old way and get different results. We must have new minds and new starting points for addressing our differences. There is hope when

recognize that all of us are from the same blood family. The fighting in the Middle East involves two groups that come from the same blood family. The Jews and Arabs alike come from Abraham. Those of us in the West who call ourselves Christians come also from Abraham by way of Jesus. We must join together to end the unnecessary flow of blood and misunderstandings that lead and foster racial conflict, hatred and war. Actions that we must take will require more than the usual response. If we only do the usual, we will continue to do what we have always done. If we do more of the unusual, we will receive the unusual from God”.

REVEREND BROOKS JOINS FORMER PRESIDENT HOPEFUL STEVE FORBES



(Left to Right, Dana Burgess – IPA Charities President; Rev. Brooks of ICDHR; John Burgess, Managing Director – IPA)

Rev. Brooks joined Steve Forbes, owner of Forbes Magazine and former candidate for United States President as speakers at the 17th Annual Celebration of Success. This annual event of the International Profit Associates brought together hundreds of achievers from across the nation.

In his presentation, Rev. Brooks reminded the attendees of the definition of success echoed by the great orator and historian Booker T. Washington who stated: “success is measured not so much by the position that one has reached but rather by the obstacles he/she has overcome while trying to succeed. He commended the achievers for overcoming the many obstacles that resulted in being labeled great achievers. Rev. Brooks commended the total IPA Family under the leadership of John Burgess, Managing Director for their spirit of “give backness” to the community. He cited many ways that this give backness has been taken by the IPA Family.

COMMISSION JOINS ELGIN HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION IN REMEMBERING

Under the leadership of Dr. W.E. Scott, President of the Elgin Human Relations Commission, the 23rd Annual Celebration of the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a tremendous success. The hundreds of attendees heard an eloquent presentation by Dr. Jerry Cain, President of Judson University. Rev. Brooks was called upon to set the tone for the celebration. He reminded the gathering of the work that remains in truly remembering the life of Dr. King and his calling for action. Mayor Schock of the City of Elgin provided the welcome. Humanitarian Awards were presented to Major Ken Nicolal of the Salvation Army and to the Reverend Nathaniel Edmond, Pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Elgin and the School Partnership Ministry of his church.

GOVERNMENT OF ISREAL AND ICDHR TO LAUNCH MIDDLE EAST PEACE INITIATIVE PLANNING UNDERWAY

As part of its Cultural Diversity and International Peace Initiatives, the Commission and the Government of Israel have united to re-activate the strong bond between the people of Israel and religious leaders in American. The Commission will lead a delegation of America Pastors to Israel to speak and preach at various Holy Land sites.

The Pastors will also be certified as Middle East Ambassadors for Peace by the Government of Israel. This fact finding and cultural and religious exchange is but a first phase of the initiative. Upon their return to the United States, the Pastors will return to Israel with members of their congregations for a journey to Holy Land Sites and hold discussions with residents of Israel.

The primary purpose of this initiative is to re-activate the closed working relationship that existed when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led the Civil Rights Movement.

COMMISSION JOINS OPERATION HOPE AND WALT WHITMAN AND THE SOUL CHILDREN OF CHICAGO IN LAUNCHING “MONEY IN THE BANK” INITIATIVE

As stated by John Bryant, Founder, Chairman and CEO of Operation HOPE headquartered in Los Angeles, California, “there is a difference between being broke and being poor. Being broke is a temporary economic condition, but being poor is a disabling frame of mind and a depressed condition of the spirit and we must vow to never, ever be poor again.” Rev. Clyde Brooks, President and CEO of the Illinois Commission on Diversity and Human Relations (ICDHR) often quotes the Book of Hosea in the Bible. He points to the fourth chapter and 6th verse of this book which states: “My people perish for a lack of knowledge”. In other words, Rev. Brooks means that people perish economically, educationally, spiritually, and in many other ways as a result of not having knowledge.

ICDHR and its partners are united in the belief that more attention must be given to providing solid information to our youth about the world of finances, especially in areas of financial savings, investments, credit, money management and financial problem solving. They also believe that people who focus only on spending and seldom on savings will more likely become and/or remain poor.

To address the painful epidemic of financial illiteracy, the ICDHR and its partners will sponsor the “Money in the Bank” Project involving 2,000 Chicagoland students and their parents. Teachers and community leaders, including religious leaders will participate. ICDHR believes that while many people attempt to save financially, they wait far too late in their lives to begin the process.

Each student, ages 12-16 who attend the conference along with a parent or guardian will receive a savings account with a value of \$50.00. In the words of ICDHR President Rev. Brooks, “we want to jump start the process of challenging young people to value financial saving and we want to do it now.” The first 50 students who save \$350 by January 1, 2009 will receive a bonus of \$100.00. They will need to prove how they raised the funds. We want parents to help their children to work for the funds and not simply to give them the

funds to meet the threshold. The project will also bring local banks closed to the needs of families in the area in which their banks are located. All students and parents who plan to attend must register in advance.

COMMISSION HOLDS 40TH ANNUAL DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. REMEMBRANCE

On January 10, 2008 and January 12, 2008, more than two thousand concerned business and community leaders joined together to remember the life, work and 79th birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The first event was held in Schaumburg, Illinois. Walt Whitman and the Soul Children of Chicago thrilled attendees with their remembrance of Dr. King by way of music. John Burgess, Managing Director of International Profit Associates and Senior Pastor Bill Hybels of the Willow Creek Community Church joined Rev. Brooks, Commission President and CEO in making commentaries about Dr. King and the work that remains.



(Left to right: John Burgess – Managing Director, International Profit Associates; Rev. Brooks – President, ICDHR; Richard Mooney – Honoree and Chairman, Hayes Mechanical; and Gregg Steinberg – President, International Profit Associates)

On January 12, 2008, hundreds came together at the Chicago Hilton and Towers Hotel to hear an eloquent presentation by John Hope Bryant, Founder and Chairman of Operation HOPE, headquartered in Los Angeles. In his presentation, Chairman Bryant called on American to renew its commitment to equality, including eliminating financial illiteracy. He called for every American to have a bank account. He called on business, educators, religious leaders and others to unite to address inequities in having access to income and financial growth opportunities for the disadvantaged. Ric Mooney, Chairman of Hayes Mechanical received the distinguished Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Excellence in Leadership Honor.

COMMISSION PLANS 41ST ANNUAL REMEMBRANCES OF DR. KING

In cooperation with hundreds of organizations, businesses and community leaders, the Commission is planning the 41st celebration of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. A number of changes are on the drawing board to enrich these celebrations to be held in Schaumburg, Illinois on Thursday, January 15, 2009 and in Chicago on Saturday, January 10, 2009. A group of Honorary Remembrance Chairs has been formed and involved in the planning. Their first planning meeting was held at the Green Dolphin Restaurant on February 27, 2008. The events will again be co-chaired by Terry AnCel, President of Hayes Mechanical and Gregg Steinberg, President of International Profit Associates.

Honorary Remembrance Chairs and members of the Planning Committee, including Remembrance Co-Chairs AnCel and Steinberg are Roger Reitz, Managing Partner of Cray, Kaiser LTD, Jack Calhoun, Executive Vice President, Arthur J. Gallagher Company, Mary Lastrapes, Senior Vice President, Midwest Bank and Trust Company, John Hayes, Director and Senior Estimator, Comdesco Groups, Inc., George Agyen, Vice President, C.N.A Insurance, Heather Mooney, President, Helco Corporation, Attorney Joe Eichberger, Smith Amundsen LLC, Christine O'Reilly, Senior Director, Chicago White Sox, Augustus Rogers, Vice President, Imperial Zinc Corporation, Jeffry Melnick, Shefsky and Froelich Law Firm, Dan Ryan Midwest Director, Jones Lang LaSalle, Colleen Tunney Ryan, Vice President, Transunion, Dana Burgess, President, IPA Charities

Foundation Tony Robledo, Vice President at Harris N.A., George Englebrecht, Executive Vice President, Hayes Mechanical and Eric Griggs, Provost, Chicago City Colleges. Additional business leaders will join in the planning over the next several months.

JOHN EILERING TO CHAIR NORTHWEST KING REMEMBRANCE



**John
Eilering**

John Eilering, Area President-Northwest of the Midwest Bank and Trust Company will chair the 8th Annual Dr. King Remembrance. The event, to be held Thursday, January 15, 2009 at the Woodfield Hyatt Hotel, Schaumburg will bring together more than 500 concerned community leaders and residents in this annual remembrance of the life , contributions and birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Chairman Eilering has been a long time supporter of this event and has been honored in the past for his service. Chairman Eilering has announced that Walt Whitman and the Soul Children of Chicago will again appear in concert.

40TH ANNUAL DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING REMEMBRANCE PHOTOS



(Left to Right: Gregg Steinberg – President, International Profit Associates; Richard Mooney – Honoree and Chairman, Hayes Mechanical; Rev. Brooks – President, ICDHR; Colleen Tunney Ryan – Vice President, Transunion; and John Bryant – Chairman, Operation HOPE and Speaker)



(Left to Right: Terry AnCel – President, Hayes Mechanical and Remembrance Co-Chair; Gregg Steinberg – President, International Profit Associates and Remembrance Co-Chair; Merri Dee – Co-Emcee and Director of Community Relations, WGN Television; Rev. Brooks – President and CEO, ICDHR; Richard Mooney – Honoree and Chairman, Hayes Mechanical; Mrs. Mooney – Wife of Richard Mooney)



(Above: Walt Whitman and the Soul Children with Rev. Brooks – President and CEO, ICDHR and Michero Washington – President and CEO, Outside the Box Knowledge Brokers)

E-mail the Commission at info@icdhr.com to request the answers.