The Nation of Islam celebrates the life, legacy and gifts of the noble wife of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad

By FinalCall.com

CHICAGO (FinalCall.com) – Thousands of men, women and children representing diverse races, cultures, religions and ideologies gathered at Mosque Maryam to pay tribute, to honor, share reflections and express gratitude for the life and impacting legacy of Mother Tynnetta Muhammad, wife of the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad at her Janaaza (Islamic funeral service) held Feb. 24.

A woman of tremendous scholarship, artistic and cultural influence who was a faithful student and champion of her husband’s teaching, passed away and returned to Allah (God), February 16, 2015. Condolences poured in from all over the world at the loss of a woman who was a servant of God and described by the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan as an example of what the women of the Nation of Islam should aspire to be. -See Celebration Page 7

PONTIAC SCHOOL DISTRICT NEEDS COMMUNITY SUPPORT TO APPROVE SINKING FUND MILLAGE FOR MUCH NEEDED IMPROVEMENT OF OUR SCHOOL BUILDINGS

By Kelley Williams - Superintendent, Pontiac School

Last month, the Pontiac School District Board of Education voted to approve a 2.87 mill Building & Site Sinking Fund millage request for much needed school building repairs. The school district is seeking 2.87 mills ($2.87 on each $1,000 of taxable value) for five years from property tax payers. This would raise more than $35 million over the five year period, but would still be less than what property tax payers are currently paying. The district currently levies 3.87 mills for the 1991 general obligation bond set to expire in 2015.

So, should this millage pass, property owners would actually see a decrease of 1.0 mill from their current tax bills. Even with passage of this sinking fund at 2.87 mills, the district will have a lower overall tax rate for sinking fund and General Obligation Bonds than 25 other districts in Oakland County. -See Pontiac Page 7

TO CHARTER OR NOT TO CHARTER

By Gloria Harris-Ford

In 2012 a new nine (9) member charter revision commission was elected by the citizens of Pontiac. This Commission has worked diligently spending many hours in discussion to draft the new Revised City Charter. The Commission presented its first draft to the State’s Attorney General in late July, 2014. The Revised City Charter has been officially approved by the Governor and is ready for the approval by the voters of Pontiac on May 5, 2015. The Commission worked extremely hard to draft a charter that would encompass the needs of the City of Pontiac.

Special thanks to Attorney Peter Letzmann for his professionalism, legal guidance and dedication he provided throughout the entire process. Also, special thanks to City Clerk Sherikia Hawkins for her time and efforts in aiding the Commission with this enormous task. On Tuesday, May 5, 2015 citizens of Pontiac will have the opportunity to vote on a new City Charter. To get more information please attend a public meeting about the new proposed city charter on Tuesday, April 7, 10:30 a.m. at the Golden Opportunity meeting at the Bowen Center on Bagley street. To get your copy of New Proposed Charter go to City of Pontiac Website http://www.pontiac.mi.us/mayor/boards_and_commissions/docs/citycharterfinal.pdf -See Charter Page 7

NOW OPEN FOR BUSINESS IN PONTIAC

250 NORTH TELEGRAPH ROAD

Full Page Ad on Back Cover

Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson has appointed Jordie A. Kramer as director of human resources for Oakland County. Kramer replaces Nancy Scarlet who retired Dec. 31, 2014.
MESSAGE TO THE BLACK CLERGY

Greetings to all of my friends in the ministry and other concerned citizens, hope all is well with you all. Over the past decades we have had many discussions about what we can do to properly stimulate, motivate, educate and cultivate the people of the black community, especially our youth. We have tried just about everything and we seem to be going backwards, in these efforts to make our community as productive as the wider community. Recently I was browsing the internet and came across a very interesting book that may be helpful to us in solving the myriad of problems that the masses of our people are now struggling with. This book is a must read for those of us who are serious about solving the long-term problems of our community. This is not about attacking anyone’s faith...it is about seeking a solution to our problems. Listed below are a few excerpts from this book. Hopefully it will be the stimulus for a honest and open solution centered discussion!

‘Jesus worship’ hurts the black community! A new book explains why and how!

“The Jesus worship” equivalent to ‘white male worship’ and is detrimental to the mental and emotional health of black people,” argues Dr. Christopher C. Bell Jr. in his book titled “The Black Clergy’s Misguided Worship Leadership”. Dr. Bell cites cogent educational and behavioral reasons to explain why and how the glorification and worship of the ancient, Roman-made, white male, Christian idol, Jesus Christ is not only idolatrous, but how such worship subliminally makes black people complicit in their own psychological oppression. Specifically, Dr. Bell provides information to show that:

a. The “Jesus Christ” worshipped by black people is the ancient, Roman-made, white male, idol god created by Roman Emperor Constantine and church bishops of the Roman Church at the Nicene Council (CE 325), and hundreds of years later, white slave masters Christianized (or taught) their black slaves to worship this same white male idol god; whereas now the white male image of “Jesus Christ” is deeply ingrained in the psyche of both black and white people.

b. The Jesus worshipping (white male worshipping) culture of the black community subliminally afflicts many black people with a deleterious white superiority syndrome (WSS) that leads to low self-esteem, psychological dissonance, and emotional and spiritual depression resulting in self-limiting beliefs and aberrant behavior such as; low academic achievement motivation among black adolescents, mutual alienation between black men and women, increased feelings of hate toward whites and other blacks, and increased stress and other health related problems in black males;

c. The Jesus worshipping (white male worshipping) customs of the black community reinforces, in both white and black people, the racist notion of white male superiority in the same ways as white racial discrimination and white racial aggression;

d. The white male worshipping (Jesus worshipping) follkways of the black community are mentally oppressive and emotional emasculating to many young black men who after years of embedment in such a culture feel alienated, demeaned, and angry, and react in ways that lead to high rates of recalcitrance, self abuse, crime, violence, and incarceration;

e. The Jesus worship (white male worship) tradition within the black community is a black clergy-administered carryover from black peoples’ past experiences as chattel slaves, and this tradition unwittingly ensures that black people continue to learn and believe, as their slave masters would insist, that “whiteness and the white male Christian power structure are anointed and approved by God”; a result that now leads to behavior and sentiments on the part of many black people that is reflective of a slave mentality and a “low caste group” self-image; -See Editorial Page 3
EDITORIAL

The Jesus worshipping (white male worshipping) culture within the black community subliminally diminishes and demeans black manhood while buttreeing, elevating, and glorifying white manhood; a result that stokes a latent anger, a temperament of violence, and self-injurious behavior in many young black men while promoting a sense of racial superiority in many white men.

Dr. Bell argues that to neutralize the above negative effects of “Jesus worship,” the black clergy must stop teaching black people to glorify and worship Jesus Christ and begin teaching them a “new Christianity” that espouses WORSHIP-PING ONLY GOD the creator and sustainer of life and recognizes Jesus as a human being and prophet. Why? Because this “new Christianity” would promote Jesus Christ from the status of an unbelievable, make-believe, superstition-based, supernatural, extra-terrestrial god-character to the status of a believable, historically feasible, real life human being and prophet; and young black men will be able to relate to a “Prophet Jesus” and to his teachings with a sense of rationality, human commonality, and self-respect. None of these relationships is possible between today’s Christianity and young black men.

Dr. Bell explains that the “new Christianity” is a crucial intellectual and cultural transformation that black people must undertake if they are to ever liberate themselves from the damaging psychological effects of the white superiority syndrome that results from their white male worshipping folkways. He explains further that the black clergy will be reluctant to change and that change will come only when black community uplift organizations (NAACP, ASALH, NUL, SCLC, NNPA, etc.) decide to work together to persuade the black clergy to stop “Jesus worship” and begin “God worship only.” Dr. Bell argues that the “new Christianity” will promote the religious enlightenment and psychological liberation of black people and mediate downward the high rates of recidivism, anti-social temperament, and violence among many young black men and thus reduce their plight and plunge toward incarceration.

About the Author: Christopher C. Bell Jr., Ed.D. is a long time observer and analyst of the motivational and behavioral effects of religious educational programs on black people. He has managed, analyzed, and evaluated educational and motivational programs in the U.S. Army, the U.S. Department of Labor, the District of Columbia Public School System, and the U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Bell earned a Doctor Education (Ed.D) degree from Boston University Graduate School of Education.

PONTIAC SCHOOL DISTRICT NEEDS COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR MUCH NEEDED IMPROVEMENT OF OUR SCHOOL BUILDINGS

The School District’s Ten Year Deficit Elimination Plan approved by the State Treasurer and Michigan Department of Education in January of 2014 included a 2015 sinking fund election so the district could address identified repair and upgrade needs in its facilities. The Treasury has approved the five year sinking fund, part of a ten year overall facilities improvement plan, to address the most critical of these needs. As part of this consent agreement, the State Department of Treasury will continue to oversee our finances and use of tax dollars.

The Pontiac School District has made significant progress on reducing its deficit. In fact, the district was able to reduce its deficit by 24% in just one year. The reduction of $12.6 million to $39.1 million was two years ahead of schedule.

Along with this impressive accomplishment, the district has also improved student learning through effective new teaching programs, expanded the use of technology in the classroom and has seen more stable enrollment with lower class sizes. This has produced an upward trending of student reading and math scores for the last two years on district assessments.

However, much more needs to be done in the district as far as its school facilities. The average age of the school buildings currently being used is approximately 55 years old. And overall, they are in very poor condition, and in desperate need of repairs, upgraded utilities and new roofs. These needs cannot be met without this sinking fund tax levy.

Sinking funds are dedicated for the sole use of school facility repairs and improvements, and cannot be used for any other purpose.

We are committed to providing safe schools for our students. The recent recession and declining revenues has made it difficult to keep up with costly building maintenance and repairs. We now must make improving them a priority. We need schools with sound roofs, efficiently running heating and cooling systems and upgraded security. Safe, updated buildings are not only less expensive to maintain, but have been proven to positively impact student learning.

Without these improvements, many Pontiac School District buildings simply will not be fit to accommodate students in the future. A facilities condition assessment was completed in 2014 and concluded that the overall condition of the school buildings in the district is very poor due to age and lack of investment. The last time voters approved a bond issue for major school facility improvements in Pontiac was 1991. A ten year facility improvement plan was created by the district and the sinking fund being sought would provide the needed dollars to complete the first five years of the plan. This situation is critical and repair work is needed immediately.

Failure to pass the millage will mean the district will have to continue to delay these much-needed repairs and address only emergency repairs using general operating funds that would otherwise be used to support educational programs for students. Eventually, more school buildings might have to close as the funding available would not keep them safe and operable for Pontiac students. The Pontiac School District might run short on the schools needed to house all of our own students.

Our staff and students have proven that we are stronger together, and I truly believe that with support from our community we can be the strongest we’ve been in years. I hope our community can support safe and well operating school facilities so that our students are able to concentrate on their improved education and move forward. Voters’ investment in better schools mean a stronger community, with more learning and career opportunities for our students, healthier property values and most important, a brighter future for all.

PONTIAC SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS

- Karen Cain President
- Brenda Carter Vice President
- Carol Turpin Secretary
- Sherman Williams II Treasurer
- Susan Loveland Parliamentarian
- April Hernandez Trustee
- William Carrington Trustee

Vote May 5, 2015
TO CHARTER OR NOT TO CHARTER

By Gloria Harris - Ford

Special thanks to Attorney Peter Letzmann for his professionalism, legal guidance and dedication he provided throughout the entire process. Also, special thanks to City Clerk Sherikia Hawkins for her time and efforts in aiding the Commission with this enormous task. On Tuesday, May 5, 2015 citizens of Pontiac will have the opportunity to vote on a new City Charter. To get more information please attend a public meeting about the new proposed city charter on Tuesday, April 7, 10:30 a.m. at the Golden Opportunity meeting at the Bowen Center on Bagley street. To get your copy of New Proposed Charter go to City of Pontiac Website http://www.pontiac.mi.us/mayor/boards_and_commissions/docs/citycharterfinal.pdf

What is a City Charter? A City Charter is the basic outline of the nature and structure of city government. In other words, the Charter is a guideline for City government. The Pontiac’s City Charter had not been revised since 1981, at which time the Commission choose the “strong Mayor” form of government. This form of government changed numerous ways the city government was operated which was appropriate at that time. A new nine (9) member charter revision commission was elected in 2012. This Commission has worked diligently spending many hours in discussion to draft the new Revised City Charter. The Commission presented its first draft to the State’s Attorney General in late July, 2014.

Timeline for Charter adoption:

- Submission to State Attorney General
- Review and Comments Returned to City
- Commission review and discussion comments and make adjustments
- Charter is returned to State with adjustments and final submission
- Revised Charter is reviewed and approved by State
- Revised Charter is presented to City voters for approval
- Highlights of Key points of the Revised City Charter:

DEFINITIONS SECTION-explains terms used throughout the charter. (Article 1, Section 1.106)

CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS MEMBERS-The City shall be divided into five (5) districts of equal size, electing a council person from that district. (Article II, Section 2.106)

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS AT LARGE - two (2) city council members will be elected by voters of the entire city and shall represent the entire city. (Article II, Section 2.106)

NOMINATING PETITIONS REQUIREMENT—Candidates for City Council at-large seat, shall contain at least 150 signatures of registered voters, City Council district seat shall contain at least 50 signatures of registered voters and candidate for Mayor shall contain at least 250 signatures. (Art. II, Section 2.107)

BEGINNING OF ELECTED OFFICIAL TERMS—The term of each Council member begins at 8:00 a.m. on the first business day after election. (Article III, Chap. 1, Section 3.103)

CONTROL OF CITY PROPERTY, CONTRACTS—strengthens language governing the sale or transfer of all City assets. ( Chap. 1, Section 3.113)

ABSENCE FROM OFFICE—strengthens the language governing the number of absences that elected officials may be absent from office and the procedures for removal from office for excessive absences. (Article III, Section 3.118)

ENHANCED FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF CITY CLERK (Article III, Chap. 2)

DEFINED THE DUTIES OF THE MAYOR—states the eligibility of a candidate for the office of Mayor (Article IV, Section 4.101)

DEFINE DUTIES OF THE CITY ATTORNEY- (Article IV, Chap. 2, Section 4.202)

ENHANCED FUNCTIONS OF THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT—(Article IV, Chap. 3)

FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES—requires monthly & quarterly financial reporting. (Article IV, Chapter 1, Section 4.102)

CHANGED PROPERTY TAXES DUE DATES—property taxes due July 1, payable through August 31 without penalty. (Chapter 4, Section 5.408)

DEFINED PERSONNEL MATTERS

ETHICAL STANDARDS—These standards ensure that governmental decisions are made in best interest of residents and business owners. (Article VII Section 7.101-7.107)

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST—Elected, appointed officials and workforce must disclose all conflicts of interest (Article VI, Chapter 1, Section 6.106)

The Revised City Charter has been official approved by the Governor and is ready for the approval by the voters of Pontiac on May 5, 2015. The Commission worked extremely hard too draft a charter that would encompass the needs of the City of Pontiac. Special thanks to Attorney Peter Letzmann for his professionalism, legal guidance and dedication he provided throughout the entire process. Also, special thanks to City Clerk Sherikia Hawkins for her time and efforts in aiding the Commission with this enormous task.

Please note the following Charter presentations:

Tuesday, April 7, 10:30 a.m. Golden Opportunity Bowen Center

The Revised Charter can be review on the City’s website or a copy may be obtained from the City Clerks office., Remember Election is May 5, 2015, close of registration is April 6, 2015.

See you at the Polls!

Commission Members:

- Darryl Fowlkes, Chair
- Roland Elam, Co-Chair
- Dr. Bruce Turpin—Secretary
- Yvette Carson
- Gloria Harris-Ford
- Evelyn LeDuff
- Wilburt McAdams
- Michael McAdams
- Willia Wright

Vote May 5, 2015
OAKLAND COUNTY RANKS SECOND IN STATE FOR HEALTH BEHAVIORS

Oakland County ranks number two for health behaviors among 82 Michigan counties for the second year in a row, according to the County Health Rankings Report released Wednesday. County Executive L. Brooks Patterson attributed this accomplishment to county initiatives that improve quality of life for residents and a strong public health program.

“Maintaining active and healthy lifestyles is at the heart of our public health programs and quality of life initiatives,” Patterson said. “The Brookies Way Half Marathon, Brookies Way Mini-grants, Fuel Up To Play 60, and our employee wellness program OakFit are working together to make Oakland County a healthier place to live, work and play.”

Oakland County has improved or maintained its position in 29 areas of measure in the County Health Rankings Report produced by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. Those areas include quality of life, health behaviors, adult smoking, adult obesity, teen birth rate, unemployment and violent crime rate. In addition, for the sixth year in a row the county remains one of the top 25 healthiest counties in Michigan, ranking ahead of neighboring Wayne and Macomb counties.

“We measure up well for many key factors that affect health,” said Kathy Forzely, Oakland County Health Division manager/health officer. “These results reflect our commitment to improving the overall health and quality of life for our residents.”

April Business Workshops Offered by Oakland County

Business owners and entrepreneurs who need assistance are encouraged to attend seminars offered by the Oakland County One Stop Shop Business Center. Unless otherwise noted, all programs are held at the Oakland County Executive Office Building Conference Center, 2100 Pontiac Lake Road, west of Telegraph, in Waterford. For pre-registration and a location map, visit www.AdvantageOakland.com/businessworkshops or call (248) 858-0783.

CEED® Small Business Loan Orientation April 8, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Fee: This workshop is free but pre-registration is required. Many small business owners face obstacles when trying to obtain a business loan. If your business is in Oakland County and you need alternative financing, consider the Center for Empowerment and Economic Development (CEED) Small Business Loan Program. Discover the requirements and process necessary to apply and obtain a CEED small business loan.

Business Research: Feasibility to Expansion April 8, 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Fee: This workshop is free but pre-registration is required. Are you thinking of starting a business and want to research your business idea? Do you want to identify market trends and opportunities to grow your sales? Are you looking for new customers or to diversify your market base? Business Research shows you ways to find your ideal customers, your competitors, perform competitive analysis and more.

Starting a Business April 9, 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Fee: This workshop is free but pre-registration is required. This workshop is designed for individuals who are at the beginning stages of starting a business. It will help aspiring entrepreneurs assess their abilities to lead and manage a company, as well as evaluate market and sales potential for their products/services. Start-up costs, financing options, and business planning are introduced along with necessary steps to getting started.

Capital Raise April 28, 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Fee: This workshop is free but pre-registration is required. If you are a start-up or early-stage growth-based business looking for funding, come meet and listen to capital expert Mike Brennan. He will detail the various capital sources in Michigan, and talk about how to position your company to qualify for private funding, including private equity, the angel network and venture capital, and/or public funding, including grants, pre-seed, micro-loans and venture match.

Create Your Marketing Plan April 30, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Fee: $40 – Business Research: Feasibility to Expansion is a pre-requisite to this class. When you're marketing a small business, your budget and human resources are often limited, but your ideas and goals are still as big as they come. This 3-hour class is tailored for small businesses and your unique needs. We'll help you whip your marketing program into shape so you can reach your goals regardless of your budget or team size. We'll introduce you to a realistic plan with actionable items customized to reach YOUR target audience. You will come away with a marketing budget, calendar, and tools designed to help grow your business.

Walk-In Start-Up Thursdays Every Thursday, all year, 9 a.m. – noon and 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Fee: This workshop is free and no appointment is necessary. Individuals who want to launch a business but don’t know where to begin can receive confidential, one-on-one advice from an experienced business consultant. Counselors will answer start-up questions, suggest next steps and guidance on business planning tools. Walk-in sessions available on a first-come, first-served basis and are limited to 15 minutes.

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The Untold Narrative of Black Men in the United States

According to figures retrieved from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice, the number of Black men in college is more than 1.4 million versus the 824,340 who were incarcerated.

Yet many portrayals of black men in the media continue to focus on the negative. Unfortunately, these outdated stereotypes neglect the breadth and depth of the lives of American black men, who have many roles—including father, husband, mentor, and community leader, just to name a few.

President Barack Obama’s My Brother’s Keeper initiative recently celebrated its one-year anniversary. The program, designed to combat the persistent gaps faced by men and boys of color, has made great progress, leading to partnerships with communities, corporate and philanthropic leaders, and federal agencies. All of these partnerships are working to expand opportunities and tear down barriers that hamper the likelihood of success for men and boys of color. Programs such as this are essential to continue the momentum that black men have gained in education, employment, and other indicators of success. It’s high time to focus on the real state of black men in the United States.

Looking closely at the facts, it’s clear that black men play an overwhelmingly positive role in their families and communities. Black men ages 18 to 24, for example, are closing the enrollment gap for postsecondary education. Today, 33.9 percent of black males in this age group attend some form of higher education, compared with 41 percent of the entire population within this age group—an increase from 1988, when only 18.5 percent of black males were enrolled in some form of postsecondary education; this compares with 30.3 percent of the overall population. As of 2014, the share of black males ages 25 and over who have obtained at least a bachelor’s degree has more than tripled, rising to 20.4 percent from 6.3 percent in 1976. Meanwhile, the share of the entire population with a bachelor’s degree grew from 14.7 percent to 32 percent over the same time period.

The rise in college enrollment rates for black men goes hand in hand with rapidly declining high school dropout rates for black men ages 16 to 24. The dropout rate for black men within this age range fell from 21.2 percent in 1976 to 8.1 percent in 2012, while the national dropout rate fell from 14 percent to 6 percent over this period.

Like the negative stereotype of the black high school dropout, the image of the neglectful, absent black father also requires scrutiny. While there are a significant amount of female-headed households in the black community, research has shown that black fathers take an active role in the lives of their children. Of fathers who live with their children, black men are more likely to be intimately involved in their lives. For example, black men living with their children are more likely to bathe, dress, diaper, or assist their child in the bathroom than fathers in all other demographic groups. Additionally, a survey shows that black fathers living with their children are more likely to help them with homework on a daily basis.

When it comes to serving the security needs of this country, black men make up the largest share of people of color serving in the U.S. armed forces. People of color make up approximately 28 percent of military personnel, and black men make up 13 percent of our nation’s troops. They are the largest share of people of color who serve on active duty as officers in our armed forces.

Of course, we must not gloss over the fact that far too many black men continue to come into contact with the criminal justice system. Of black men born in 2001, 1 in 3 have a chance of being incarcerated during their lifetime, while Hispanic men’s odds are 1 in 6. White men’s odds stand at 1 in 17.

Yet there is some hope. Although people of color, especially black men, are overrepresented in our prison population, the number of black men in college is almost double the number of black men in jail.

Black men also face higher unemployment rates than all other demographics. As of 2014, the unemployment rate of black men over age 16 was 12.2 percent, while the total population ages 16 and over had an unemployment rate of 6.2 percent. While there have been great improvements in the employment situation of black men since unemployment peaked during the Great Recession, black men have not recovered nearly as fast as the rest of the population.

In 2009, the unemployment rate for the entire population ages 16 and over was 9.5 percent, while the unemployment rate for black men ages 16 and over was 17.5 percent. Furthermore, median weekly income for black men continues to lag behind their white and Asian American counterparts. The disproportionate unemployment rate and unequal pay of black men persist as significant obstacles toward achieving a more equitable economy and society.

While the consequences of slavery and Jim Crow continue to plague black men and the black community as a whole, there has been great improvement in terms of education, employment, and income, among other areas. Many of these achievements have been supported by progressive policies that have helped lower unemployment, reduce poverty, and further educational attainment. Policies such as instituting universal pre-K, requiring paid sick leave, increasing the minimum wage, and inspiring educational and employment success through the My Brother’s Keeper initiative are essential to a more equitable society.

Despite these impressive improvements in various indicators of success, the media continues to highlight a negative narrative that associates black men with violence, crime, and poverty. It’s time for the media to report the true story—not the outdated stereotype. Jamal Hagler is the Special Assistant for Progress 2050 at the Center for American Progress.

GO SISTERS GO! BLACK WOMEN ARE THE MOST EDUCATED GROUP IN THE UNITED STATES

In a recent episode of the web series, “Truths You Won’t Believe,” Morton discusses the fact that despite the misconceptions and stereotypes perpetuated by the media about African American women, half of all black women between the ages of 18 and 24 are now pursuing degrees. The 2011 data shows that overall, 9.7 percent of all black women are enrolled in college. Asian women come in second at 8.7 percent, followed by Asian men at 8.4 percent, white women at 7.1 percent, black men at 7 percent, Hispanic women at 6.6 percent, and white men at 6.1 percent. Since 1990, the number of African Americans who have earned bachelor’s degrees has risen from 11.3 percent to 19.6 percent. The average enrollment rate for the entire U.S. population is 6.9 percent. The increase for black women represents a 31 percent rise from data reported in 2000. This means that African American women are now the most educated segment of the American population.

These statistics also indicate that, despite the fact that African Americans face multi-layered social, economic, and educational disparities, there is a silver lining in the fact that so many African American women are succeeding. Morton states that, “the data and evidence provides a ray of hope in a plethora oppositional to the negative imagery and information constantly describing Black culture. The facts make a case counter-intuitive to what “common sense” tells us about African Americans. Fortunately, this group of resilient and resourceful people, who have always valued education, are once again proving ‘good sense’ trumps the commons.”
Celebration of the life, legacy and gifts of the noble wife of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad – Mother Tynnetta Muhammad

For her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and the entire Nation of Islam she was and continues to be a “Mother of the Faith.”

During a service that was a dignified reflection of what Mother Tynnetta represented in life, from her childhood in Detroit through her matriculation and development into a world-traveler and cultured and refined woman of the Nation of Islam, her contribution to the world will impact generations.

The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad and Mother Tynnetta had four children, Madeeha Muhammad, Ishmael Muhammad, Rasul Muhammad and Ahmad Muhammad. The family offered thanks and heartfelt gratitude to all who sent condolences.

Two of her sons, Ishmael R. Muhammad and Ahmad Muhammad, and her granddaughter, Jamilah Muhammad, spoke lovingly and passionately about her life during the service, drawing thunderous applause and moving several to tears. Her granddaughter Aida Saffiyah Muhammad read a brief summary of her grandmother’s life which listed some of her amazing life accomplishments.

Jamilah Muhammad spoke on Mother Tynnetta’s willingness to share her life experiences and said she was grateful to Allah (God) she was able to live with her for a year, learning from such an extraordinary woman.

“She represented to us, the standard of what a righteous woman is,” her son Student Minister Ishmael R. Muhammad, National Assistant to Min. Farrakhan said during his remarks. Mother Tynnetta was a gift from Allah (God), “our mother” he continued. “She went all over the world to bring knowledge to our people. She leaves a monumental testimony,” he added.

Born Tynnetta Alethea Nelson May 10, 1941, Mother Tynnetta accepted Islam under the teachings of the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad at 16 and became a “registered” member, receiving her “X” in 1958 at 17. She was the first Muslim woman columnist in several newspapers including the Pittsburgh Courier and Muhammad Speaks and her highly popular weekly column in The Final Call newspaper was titled, “Unveiling The Number 19.” The author of several books Mother Tynnetta was also an accomplished business woman, fashion designer, composer and musician.

Having traveled all over the world seeking knowledge and studying, she always represented the Nation of Islam, was always looking for the beautiful majesty of Master W. Fard Muhammad, God in Person, the Great Mahdi and teacher of the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad, said her son Ahmad Muhammad, Student Minister of Information for the Nation of Islam.

Mother Tynnetta was a principal supporter and helper of Min. Farrakhan when he stood up to rebuild the Nation of Islam in the late 1970s. The Minister also thanked those who came to pay respects to Mother Tynnetta as she offered guidance, insight and words of comfort. He marveled at her dedication to the words of Allah through the Holy Qur’an, which she read faithfully every day, reading the book in its entirety every week.

“What she did in her years on this planet you must understand what her son said and what the (Holy) Qur’an said, we can’t ever speak of her as dead. No. In fact in that box is the house she lived in. She’s not there. That’s what they call the remains. What remained after she left,” said Min. Farrakhan. But, you cannot put her works in the grave he explained. “She lives and her work will go on in the generations.”

Family members, guests and men and women of the Nation of Islam walked down the center aisle of Mosque Maryam and paid final respects to Mother Tynnetta, some saluting her casket, others placing their hand over their heart.

Her impact was felt wherever she travelled and she positively touched all whom were blessed to meet and work with her near and far.

Mother Tynnetta always brought “aura and presence” wherever she went, Hilary Muhammad, UK Representative of the Nation of Islam told The Final Call as family, friends and Muslims gathered later in the afternoon at Salaam Restaurant during the repast. He and the Believers in London hosted Mother Tynnetta twice in the UK. “The presence that she brought was one of divinity and I just thank Allah for the opportunity to have been in her presence,” he said.

A Traveler and Scholar

During her travels, Mother Tynnetta always searched and sought to connect the history of the Original Black man throughout the planet. Her ability to connect the various cultures of the Original family of the planet earth left an indelible impression on Muslims in the Nation of various cultures. She facilitated bridging cultures through Islam and the teachings of her husband.

David Muhammad of Milwaukee, Wisc. is of Puerto Rican descent and said one of the first people besides the Minister he heard represent the teachings was Mother Tynnetta. “Her scholarship, spirit and her way, the ability she had to find the teachings and to find the fingerprints of the Saviour and to really find the imprint of the message of the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad wherever we found the Original people, wherever we found our family on the planet, she found proof of God’s intervention of our affairs in the person of Master Fard Muhammad which sent me in the direction to do the same thing.”

As a scholar of Islam, Mother Tynnetta made her mark on the hearts and minds of others, encouraging them to delve deeper into the study of the Holy Qur’an. Sultan R. Muhammad, a great-grandson of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and resident imam of Mosque Maryam cites her as one of his influences.

It is a tremendous sense of obligation now upon our community to lift up the Holy Qur’an, read and study it in her memory and in tradition said Imam Sultan R. Muhammad. He and Mother Tynnetta would talk for hours about the Table Talks, which are recordings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaching his laborers and guests.

One particular Table Talk that stood out for her was, “Queen of Civilization.” In this talk, the Honorable Muhammad talked about how he wanted to make a woman that would go around the world with a committee of women and make friends for the Black man and woman and represent the civilization of the Nation of Islam.

“That struck her and I believe it struck her because she is that woman,” said Imam Sultan R. Muhammad. Mother Tynnetta had an insatiable thirst for knowledge he added.

“She was the first one that I witnessed academically that demonstrated the universality of our Islam. Universality meaning its connectedness to all of the spiritual traditions on earth, and that’s a big part of my scholarship,” said author Dr. Wesley Muhammad. “Academically, she was my inspiration.” - See Muhammad Page 12
April 17, 2015

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Financial Matters

How Racial Equity Can Make Cities Richer

The study pinpoints the problem areas in the country. Lower wages and higher unemployment widen the income gap; which of these is more of a contributor depends on the city. In Flint, Michigan, the income gap is solely due to unemployment, but in Santa Barbara, it’s because of low wages for people of color.

The nature of industry plays into it. In the Midwest and Northeast, for example, people of color face barriers to employment because the cities here have struggled to revamp their job markets in the post-industrial era, the report says. The coastal and sunbelt cities, on the other hand, employ their large immigrant populations in the service sector, paying them extremely low wages.

The restaurant industry is a great example of an industry where the problem of low wages is visible. It’s the nation’s second-largest private employment sector, with almost 11 million workers. It’s also the lowest paying employer of people of color, says Saru Jayaraman, director of the Food Labor Research Center at the University of California at Berkeley. Two million of these jobs actually pay well, she says. These fine-dining and bartending jobs are almost exclusively held by white men. In general, white workers earn four dollars more per hour than employees of color in this industry.

To combat racial inequity, the researchers recommend growing new jobs in industries such as infrastructure development, raising the minimum wage, and removing barriers to employment. Many cities have already started, Glover Blackwell says. In the Twin Cities, improving transit is being seen as a way to improve accessibility to opportunities. New Orleans is trying to boost employment among African-Americans. Other cities interested in following suit can take advantage of PolicyLink’s new data tool, she says.

These and other recommendations may improve the quality of life for people of color. Latinos and African Americans, for example, could earn an income more than 70 percent higher than currently are if racial gaps are bridged. But really, everyone is going to be a little bit better off.

Education Matters

Talk About It

By Cynthia Kopkowski

Race and poverty don’t need to be the elephants in the classroom. As culturally responsive teaching takes root, these issues can actually help your students learn.

There is no such thing as an elephant in the room in Mona Mendoza’s classroom.

“How many consider this ghetto?” she asks her middle school students in response to the reading passage they’re working through, which focuses on a girl being slighted at a party because she is Latina and low-income. More than three-quarters of Mendoza’s students at Meany Middle School in Seattle are ethnic minorities. She follows her initial question with, “Give me some examples of behavior that seems ghetto.” Her students, who had been following along with the assignment quietly, snap to attention. Suddenly, almost everyone has something to say. Discussion quickly turns to stereotypes and how many of them had experienced racism or been slighted for being poor.

Talking with students about sometimes painful personal experiences connected to their race or economic standing does not come easy. But as the head of the school’s diversity committee, a veteran teacher, and a minority, Mendoza’s more comfortable than most teaching this potentially rocky path. She believes connecting with students’ personal backgrounds—a method known as culturally responsive teaching—is the key to closing achievement gaps at a school where the student body is 84 percent Black, Asian American, Hispanic, or American Indian, and 65 percent are poor. Down the hall though, what is math teacher Wendy Miller to do?

Can a White, middle-class teacher raised in a White, middle-class suburb, talk about race without being labeled a racist? Can she talk about the realities of the poverty in which many of her students live without being accused of being elitist? More to the point, why would she even want to risk it? Born and raised in Orange County, California, and the San Francisco Bay area, the 35-year-old teacher grew up attending schools with students who lived and looked like her. Like nearly half of the teachers at Meany, she came to the school fresh from college, and has around five years of teaching experience. Like 65 percent of the staff, she is Caucasian. Her service training didn’t delve into culturally responsive teaching. In her earliest days at Meany, the rookie stood before her math class and told them that minorities, especially those who are poor, face significant obstacles when it comes to academic success and college admissions. “I was really nervous about bringing up anything about race or socioeconomic,” Miller says, adding that one thought always nagged: “Why would they listen to me?” Miller isn’t an anomaly. Eighty percent of preservice teachers are White females, setting up an unavoidable disparity between teacher and taught. While increasing the number of minority teachers nationwide is crucial, “the challenge is not to match the color of the kids they teach,” says Jacqueline Jordan-Irvin, an Emory University researcher and advocate for culturally responsive teaching. “The challenge is to find better ways to connect to the realities of what students know and live.”

One unavoidable reality is the continuing achievement gaps. According to the 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests, 13 percent of Black...
and 19 percent of Hispanic fourth-graders performed at or above proficiency in math, compared with 47 percent of their White counterparts; similar gaps existed among eighth-graders tested. When poverty is factored into NAEP math performance, there is a 22- to 27-point gap between poor and non-poor fourth- and eighth-graders, respectively. And given that minority groups now account for 12.4 percent of the population—and growing—it’s an issue no longer relegated to select schools or states. “Because of the changing demographics of our schools, ignoring it is no longer an option,” says Sheila Simmons, director of NEA Human and Civil Rights.

Nor is giving it lip service. Culturally responsive teaching is not about one lesson on Martin Luther King Jr. during Black History Month. It is not serving tacos in the cafeteria on Cinco de Mayo. Beyond heroes and holidays, it is about understanding students’ home life, their language, music, dress, behavior, jokes, ideas about success, the role of religion and community in their lives, and more. It is bringing the experiences of their 24-hour day into the seven-hour school day to give them information in a familiar context. Like the teacher in Atlanta who conducts a geometry lesson by talking about geometric patterns in Mexican pottery and African kente cloth and has students bring in examples from home. Or the veteran Chicago teacher who uses “your mama” jokes (clean ones only, of course) to teach students about wordplay and advises fellow teachers that it’s a viable way to help disadvantaged Black students decipher complex literary pieces they are exposed to in the classroom. “We are teaching the whole child, not teaching in a vacuum,” says Magda Costantino, a Washington researcher and academic who designed a reading curriculum that incorporates American Indian culture. “If we are serious about closing the achievement gap, we have to address the child within the context of his or her community.”

Costantino, along with Denny Hurtado, an American Indian education specialist, created their curriculum after searching for culturally appropriate lessons and discovering none existed. In states like Washington, Oregon, and Wisconsin, there’s been a move away from what Simmons calls “a more touchy-feely type of multicultural education that didn’t have a strong framework” to more concrete policies and plans. In Seattle, work began in earnest four years ago and now reaches across the entire district. But none of this comes easily. “Some teachers don’t feel there is a connection to make,” Irvine says. Meany Middle School faculty member Robert Bernstein voices the opposition he sometimes hears: “I’m spending a lot of time talking about race and not solving math problems.” More often, though, educators fear that they’ll say or do something wrong. “They feel that to bring up race makes them a racist,” Irvine says. “Race has become a four-letter word in schools.” In the late 1990s, however, Meany Middle School’s reputation was dismal and race could no longer be ignored. Test scores were low. Discipline problems were high. Although the neighborhoods surrounding it are now seeing more middle-class growth, they were then largely poor. Race and poverty are the most significant factors in Meany’s students’ performance, says principal Princess Shareef, so when Seattle Public Schools decided to start implementing culturally responsive teaching district-wide four years ago, her school was a ripe target for the improvement it could bring. A series of corrosively uncomfortable meetings about race kicked off the staff’s work. Called “Courageous Conversations,” the sessions brought everyone from teachers to education support professionals (ESPs) to administrators into a room to share their ideas about personal and institutional racism and their own life experiences. One of the first questions posed by the mediator—“Does racism exist at Meany?”—had people shifting in their chairs and staring at the floor, Bernstein recalls. When they finally started talking, “people’s different ranges of acceptance became evident,” she says. Shareef remembers thinking that there wasn’t much trust in the room. “Our feelings were pretty divided along racial lines,” she says. The long-dormant feeling that a staff member from a different race couldn’t possibly understand one’s own experiences was now out and hanging in the air. “I don’t think you can move forward with effective culturally responsive teaching if you’re not comfortable,” Miller says. “It meant acknowledging that I don’t know everything about other cultures, and that we aren’t all the same. If you don’t have a staff that’s willing to go there, it won’t work.” Unlike quick-hit diversity training seminars that merely skim the surface of race and economic status, these sessions marked the start of a lengthy journey. “It’s a process over time,” Miller says. “There’s no way I would have shared things two years ago that I now feel comfortable discussing.” Facilitators say the key is not to go too far too fast, or to accuse White, female teachers of being out of touch with their students. It’s unfair, and “people will shut down then,” Bernstein says. Facilitators led similar conversations across the Seattle district as part of a systematic effort to bring issues of race and cultural identity out from under the rug. Faced with significant achievement gaps, administrators decided “we had to change because what we were doing was not working,” recalls Caprice Hollins, director of the district’s office of equity and race relations. That meant institutionalizing culturally responsive teaching, as well as considering all new policies, curriculum, and family outreach programs in the context of students’ cultures. “We’re taking a customer service approach—how do we better understand our families?” says Hollins. Putting what’s learned into practice runs the gamut from academics to parent-teacher conference times and locations, including meeting with parents in their homes and at community centers, to food service options. At Meany, “our cafeteria personnel focus on things as simple as acknowledging that Muslim students don’t do pork, or that we may need more rice offerings,” Shareef says. “They know these things.” Four years later, it’s clear that approach has become deeply ingrained at Meany Middle School. As Mendoza continues working with her students on the birthday party reading passage, she stops to not only have students discuss the misconceptions about race and money its characters display, but also to quiz them on vocabulary. Mendoza then pushes even further, sharing a personal story about being snubbed by a sales clerk at a nearby department store, she believes, because she is Latina. Later, eighth-grader Brea Roberts confides that this type of teaching “makes me think about what happens outside of the classroom, instead of doing straight lessons. It stretches us.”

In a nearby lab, science teacher Carol Furry acknowledges that “there is always a little bit of a challenge to find the relevance.” But when discussing certain scientific discoveries and principles, she tells her students about minorities who deserve credit. Modern-day scientists and researchers, such as famed neuroscientist Benjamin Carson, come up in the context of lab assignments and chapter work. If the day’s lesson focuses on health, she discusses the prevalence of diabetes, heart disease, and glaucoma in poor and minority communities. When Furry finds herself lacking for ideas, she relies on technology. “With the Web, you’re never at a dead end,” she says. Her initial anxiety that parents would be upset by any approach to teaching that uses race and economic status subsided, Furry says. “If they didn’t like what I was sending home, I’d hear about it.” Language arts and social studies teacher Sarah Lockenvitz focuses on having students explore their own cultures, sharing what they know about them and talking about how it informs their lives. And in the library, media specialist Susan Jenkins stocks her shelves with as many multicultural books as possible, including reference material focusing on distinguished minority leaders in multiple fields, works of fiction by and about minorities, and books on such issues as bullying, teen pregnancy, and child abuse. “Through what kids are reading, they can see their own lives reflected,” Jenkins says. Throughout the year, the library is also a gathering spot for parents and students who attend special sessions highlighting the student body’s different cultures. Despite Seattle’s top-to-bottom adoption of a culturally responsive approach, “we have wonderful teachers and leaders who don’t get it,” Hollins says. Not because they’re bad teachers. Rather, “they think that this should be a color-blind society where race doesn’t—or shouldn’t—matter.” But when teachers see how the approach works, Irvine says, “they believe it.” Miller’s seen it in her students’ level of engagement. Her peers, in turn, point to her as evidence that a White, middle-class teacher can reach students who don’t look like her. Miller, who openly acknowledges that she once worried about appearing racist just by bringing race up, has gained confidence. Still, the memories of those first uncomfortable days are still powerful enough to bring an expression of mock horror to her face as she recalls them. But, she adds, “kids know reality, and they understand I’m not pointing out anything that isn’t true. It’s adults who don’t want to talk about race and money.”
I haven’t seen anyone do it like her so the impact is profound. I would not dare to do my scholarship the way I do as it relates to this teaching if I didn’t see her do it,” said Dr. W esley Muhammad.

Arts and Cultural Contributions
Mother Tynnetta’s influence on arts and culture was also profound as a composer and musician. “I look at how she travelled the world and so music is often sometimes in a box in our community ... but when I listen to Mother Tynnetta and the history of her life, she went across the world. It really inspired me to study more on music,” said vocalist Chandra Hakim. She is inspired to study the broad, universal spectrum of music, like Mother Tynnetta.

Delores Ali, was a cook for the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and was a friend of Mother Tynnetta. She spoke of her sense of humor. “She was always very humorous and kept you laughing. She could be serious but most of the times she was just like a little girl. All the wisdom that she had you would never know it because she was always so free with making people feel comfortable around her. I loved her so much,” said Delores Ali. Toward the end of the day, Min. Farrakhan greeted guests, smiled and shook hands before sharing a few more brief words about the woman whose lasting legacy and impact was on the hearts and minds of many. “Thank you for being the beautiful brothers and sisters that you are on such an occasion as this. Mother’s spirit has lifted us all a notch higher, can you feel it? Min. Farrakhan asked the crowd. “Yes sir!” was the spirited reply.

Detroit Burial
Hundreds gathered February 25 for the final portion of the funeral service for Mother Tynnetta Muhammad in Detroit, Michigan, the place of her birth. The city’s residents looked out of their windows while others watched from the street marveling at the seemingly endless caravan of vehicles in the funeral procession led by a full city and state police escort detail regulating traffic.

Members of Muhammad Mosque No. 1 turned out and braved the cold weather standing at Westlawn Cemetery as the Fruit of Islam Honor Guard in full uniform, stepped forward to carry Mother Tynnetta Muhammad’s remains to their final resting place.

The Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan delivered Al-Fatiha in Arabic over the wooden casket. “I think we should shout to the heavens ‘Allahu Akbar’ for this life that touched our lives and made a difference in our lives and in the lives of many now, and many, many more in the future,” said Min. Farrakhan. The voices of those gathered on that crisp, cold day rang out through the burial grounds. “I thank all of you for being here, and I pray that Allah will bless all to return safely to your homes and remember, do unto others as you would have done unto yourselves, that when the end of our days comes, there will be no regrets—we’ve done like Mother Tynnetta Muhammad—the best that we could,” Min. Farrakhan said.

Many family members and others wiped away tears, others said silent prayers, while a few stepped forward to place small portions of earth on the casket as a final tribute. As the casket was prepared for lowering, her son Ishmael Muhammad, sensing the sadness of many, said, “We’re not burying Mother Tynnetta Muhammad. This is only the vessel she traveled in.” (Ashahed M. Muhammad contributed to this report from Detroit.)
America’s Heart Disease Burden

About 610,000 people die of heart disease in the United States every year—that’s 1 in every 4 deaths.1

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women. More than half of the deaths due to heart disease in 2009 were in men.1

Coronary heart disease is the most common type of heart disease, killing over 370,000 people annually.1

Every year about 735,000 Americans have a heart attack. Of these, 525,000 are a first heart attack and 210,000 happen in people who have already had a heart attack.2

Deaths Vary by Ethnicity

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for people of most ethnicities in the United States, including African Americans, Hispanics, and whites. For American Indians or Alaska Natives and Asians or Pacific Islanders, heart disease is second only to cancer. Below are the percentages of all deaths caused by heart disease in 2008, listed by ethnicity:4

African Americans 24.5
American Indians or Alaska Natives 18.0
Asians or Pacific Islanders 23.2
Hispanics 20.8
Whites 25.1
All 25.0

28 Days to a Healthier Heart

Now is the perfect time to get started on a new, heart-healthy game plan. Think about making one small change each week to lower sodium, get active, quit smoking, and control blood pressure to boost your heart health this month.

Halt the Salt

Most American adults (and children too) are eating too much sodium. In fact, we are eating about 3,400 mg of sodium a day. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend reducing sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg per day. Eating too much sodium increases your risk for high blood pressure, a major contributor to heart disease and stroke.

Week 1

Read Nutrition Facts Labels. Processed foods account for most of the sodium in our diet, not the salt shaker at home. When shopping at the grocery store, look for the lowest sodium options of your favorite foods. You’ll be surprised to see how the amount of sodium can vary in the same foods depending on the brand. http://www.cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/Sodium_Tip_Sheet.pdf

Week 2

Eat more servings of fruits and vegetables a day to ward off heart disease. A diet rich in fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables can help lower sodium. If you’re not sure how many servings you should be eating, visit the Fruit and Vegetable Calculator. Here you can calculate your fruit and vegetable servings based on your calorie needs for your age, sex, and activity level.

Week 3

Eat out less, cook more at home. One restaurant meal can easily add up to more than a day’s worth of sodium. Try making some of your favorite dishes with lower sodium ingredients at home. If a recipe calls for salt, use half the amount. You can also experiment with fresh herbs like cumin, basil, rosemary and cilantro to wake up your palette and enhance the taste of your food. To get you started on some heart-healthy recipes, check out the DASH eating plan. http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/index.htm

Week 4

Eat less of the Saltiest Top 10 Foods. Knowing the foods that contribute the most sodium in today’s diet can help you make wiser, healthier choices. Here are the common foods that can lead to sodium overload: bread and rolls, cold cuts and cured meats, pizza, poultry, soups, sandwiches, cheese, pasta dishes, meat dishes and snacks. http://www.cdc.gov/Vital-Signs/Sodium/index.html

Get Moving

Regular physical activity is a must for having a healthy heart. Commit to exercising 5 times per week or 150 minutes per week. Schedule your workout days on your calendar and treat them like an important appointment you can’t miss. In addition to helping your heart, exercise will give you more energy and reduce stress.

Week 1

Aim for 30 minutes. Moderate-intensity exercise for 2 hours and 30 minutes every week is a great way to lower your risk of heart disease. You can even try breaking up your workout into 10-minute intervals throughout your day. If you don’t want to go to the gym, try taking a brisk walk around your neighborhood or at your local mall to kick off your new fitness habit.

Week 2

Build Muscle. Pumping iron can help your body’s most important muscle—your heart. You can begin slowly, increasing the weight and repetitions as you progress. Adding resistance training to your workout has other benefits too, including increased bone density, coordination, and keeping a healthy weight. Here’s a sample workout to get you started: http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.htm#Musclestrengthening.

Week 3

Take a class. Try salsa dancing, yoga, Pilates, or kick-boxing to add variety to your fitness routine. It’s a great way to try something new and keep your body moving. Take a friend with you and have fun exploring new activities.

Week 4

Go High-tech. Try one of the many fitness apps available on your smartphone to help reach your fitness goals. Think of it as a personal trainer in your phone ready 24/7 to give you training tips and motivation when you need it. Many of these apps are free and can log your workout progress.

Kick Butt

Tobacco is still the leading preventable cause of death in the U.S. Most deaths are caused each year by tobacco use than by all deaths from HIV, illegal drug use, alcohol use, motor vehicle injuries, suicides, and murders combined. So now is the time to quit for good.

Week 1

Change your routine. Do things and go places where smoking isn’t allowed. Visit libraries, museums, or even a department store. If you try to be near non-smokers it will help in your resolve to kick the habit.

Week 2

Talk to your health care provider. Your doctor can help if you’re considering using medication to help you stop smoking. There are prescriptions and over-the-counter medications that can help reduce your cravings and withdrawal symptoms so you can focus on changing the behavior and habits that trigger your urge to smoke.

- see HEART on Page 14
Jonas Gray, Pontiac native from Marshall Street

Who is Jonas Gray? A Pontiac native from Marshall Street who was amongst many other stand-out athletes growing up in the city. Jonas's fondness for football began when he and his brother Cori played little league football for the Southside Chiefs. Because of his size and stature, his mother Jerri had a hard time convincing people of his real age. That is when residents affectionately began to call him “Man Child” Jonas attended Jefferson Middle School where Pontiac residents began to take notice of his athletic and academic ability.

Jonas took his noticeable talents to Detroit Country Day High School where he received many accolades in Basketball, Track and in Football while earning several scholarship offers from many Universities for all three sports however, more so for his power style running on the football field. Jonas was ranked the #1 running back in the state of Michigan and #4 in the country by Rivals.

Jonas chose The University of Notre Dame to study Pre Law and to play under the golden dome. Because of his style of play teammates called him “Meat Ball”

After college, the third-year pro from Pontiac finally claimed his victory of playing in the NFL. He spent his first two seasons elsewhere — 2012 with the Dolphins rehabbing after a college injury and 2013 with the Ravens on their practice squad — before signing with the Patriots Jan. 8.

As the running back’s dreams have started to become a reality, those closest to him aren’t surprised. Once activated to the 53 man roster, Jonas made an immediate impact playing in his first three regular season games, all wins, and rushing for a combined 131 yards over that span to lead the team. He rushed for a career-high 86 yards on 17 carries in the win over Chicago.

Jonas’s record-setting night began On November 16, 2014 when he rushed for what was credited as 201 yards and a franchise-record four touchdowns on 37 carries in his fourth NFL game, leading the New England Patriots to a 42-20 victory over the Indianapolis Colts. Jonas is the first NFL running back since 1921 to score four rushing touchdowns in a game after entering the game with zero career touchdowns, and the first running back in the Super Bowl era to account for more than 25 percent of rushing touchdowns (4 of 10) in a week with at least 10 games. That performance also made him the fifth back in the Super Bowl era to run for at least 150 yards and four touchdowns on the road.

Who is Jonas? That night he earned his third nickname once he entered the locker room that night. Supreme! Supreme! Supreme!” coaches and players yelled out as Jonas received congratulatory handshakes and embraces. Amongst those endeavors that night, Jonas Gray earned a Sports Illustrated cover and AFC Offensive Player of the Week honors. Jonas has elected to use this attention to be an Ambassador for Multiple Sclerosis to help create awareness of this debilitating disease and to raise funds for research.

Who is Jonas Gray? The residents of Pontiac know exactly who he is. We are proud to say he is one of ours.

Health Matters

- HEART from Page 13

Week 3

Let others help Tell family, friends, and co-workers that you’re going to quit and you need their support. Sign up for individual, group, or telephone counseling. Studies have shown that you have a better chance of being successful if you have help. Free telephone counseling is available at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).

Week 4

Don’t give up. Don’t let previous attempts to quit sabotage you now. Think about your past attempts to quit—what worked and what didn’t. Keep trying to quit methods until you find what works for you. Find more resources to help here http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco.

Know Your Blood Pressure

Lowering your blood pressure or maintaining normal blood pressure can greatly reduce your risk for heart disease and stroke. Nearly 1 in 3 adults (about 67 million) has high blood pressure and more than half of them don’t have it under control.

Week 1

Check it. It’s important to know your numbers and what they mean. A normal reading is under 120 systolic (top number) and under 80 diastolic (bottom number). Track your blood pressure and discuss your readings with your doctor, pharmacist or other health care provider.

Week 2

Take prescribed medicines. Remember to take blood pressure medications daily and follow the directions on the bottle. Use notes, pillboxes, and other reminders to take your medication. It’s important to get refills one week before your prescription runs out. http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/resources/teamuppressuredown.html#Patients

Week 3

Limit Alcohol. In addition to raising blood pressure, too much alcohol can add unneeded calories to your diet. If you drink alcoholic beverages, have only a moderate amount—one drink a day for women, two drinks a day for men. http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/hbp_low/hbp_low.pdf[PDF-268K]

Week 4

Take time to relax. We live in a fast-paced hectic world that’s often stressful. Coping with stress by turning to excessive alcohol or smoking can raise the risk for high blood pressure.

Instead, take some time daily to meditate. Sit quietly for 10-15 minutes, take slow, deep breaths and think peaceful thoughts.

Sports
Board of Education Citizen Advisory Committee Application

Get Involved! The Pontiac Board of Education seeks Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members. This committee is designed to keep the Pontiac School Board informed with regards to community opinion, represents the interest of students, parents, and the community in studying school issues, and to promote maximum interaction between the Board and the community. This committee will raise community awareness of Board decisions and policies. You are invited to:

Community Advisory Committee Open Forum April 20, 2015 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Odell Administration Building 47200 Woodward Ave. Pontiac, Michigan 48342

Citizen Advisory Application:

Name: __________________________ Address: __________________________
City: ___________________________ State: ___________________________ ZipCode: __________________________

Email Address: __________________________ Primary phone: __________________________ Secondary phone: __________________________

Occupation: __________________________ Professional Activities: __________________________

Community Affiliations and Activities (please describe your current and previous community affiliations and activities):

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Please explain why you would like to serve on this Community Advisory Committee, and give any other background you might have in this area:

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

What should be the top goal or purpose of this Community Advisory Committee, and how would your membership on this group contribute to attaining that goal or purpose:

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Email this application as an attachment to Cynthia Wright cwright@pontiac.k12.mi.us, or mail to Cynthia Wright, Pontiac School District 47200 Woodward Ave., Pontiac, Michigan 48342. Applications will be available at the address listed above. You may hand deliver the application or Fax: 248-451-6890.

Thank you for submitting your application. If you have additional questions please contact Trustee Caroll Turpin (cturpin@pontiac.k12.mi.us) 248-568-2628.
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