

Semaji

**Black Community Resource Centre
Supporting Youth, Building Communities, A Holistic Approach**



Volume 6, issue 3

November 2008



HISTORY: November 4, 2008
Barack Obama elected first African-American
President of the United States. page 12

“SEMAJI”:
From the Swahili verb “sema.”
Meaning to say or to speak.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Black Violence
Research** 3

**ACSioN
Workshops** 4

YOUTH

Mini-Poste 6

CUTV video project 6

A Mom's Perspective 7

**PARTNER
ORGANIZATIONS**

QBBE 8

QCGN 9

DESTA 10

NDG Council 11

OPINION

Obama's election 12

FEATURE

King's dream 13

JUSTICE

Accessing the law 15

Child custody 15

ARTS & CULTURE

Something special 16

Black Woman Myth 17

**EDUCATION AND
EMPLOYMENT**

Create a gameplan 18

Book launch 19

Reading list 19

**Black Community Resource
Centre**
6767 Côte-des-Neiges
Suite 497
Montreal, Quebec, H3S 2T6
tel: (514) 342-2247
fax: (514) 342-2283
email: bcrc@qc.aira.com
www.blackyouthproject.org

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Supporters and Friends,

This is no doubt a significant period for us all, no matter our political stripes. Even those of us in Canada rightly have reason to celebrate the election of the first African-American to the Presidency of the United States, for it was an event that firmly signaled world-wide progress. Yet, here at home there is continued evidence of the deep need for stronger relationships between minority groups and the greater community.

The violent events that recently rocked Montreal are unfortunate and have touched us all in some form. We will continue to build bridges between the community and the Service de police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM) to promote understanding and ensure everyone's safety.

Our Mini-Poste Program, which is implemented in partnership with the SPVM, just entered its second year. We are impressed with how the participants are developing and continue to see improvements all round in their interactions.

BCRC exists in large part to provide organizational support and networks that advance the interests of the Black Community. We continue to solidify past partnerships and open doors to new alliances. Many of these connections are with individuals who also share the same goal of contributing to our community building efforts. This issue of the

BCRC newsletter, now titled Semaji, reflects our move in that direction and thus we have articles from lawyers, student leaders, artists and, of course, several of our organizational partners.

This issue also gave us the opportunity to herald BCRC's support initiatives beyond our Black communities. You can read about events with QCGN, NDG Community Council and others.

We say goodbye to our longest serving staff member, Mr. Courtney Sewell after seven years of dedicated service to BCRC. Courtney has been a stalwart community liaison coordinator but we take heart that he advances his career with one of our partner organizations, the Union United Church as the outreach Coordinator. BCRC is confident that our longstanding partnership will be enhanced by this move.

Semaji is our voice, albeit a small whisper in the midst of many voices in our community. Still, we are pleased to offer this glimpse into our organization, our outreach and introduce you to the incredible diversity of thought, philosophy and action that impact our community every day.

Very warm wishes from all of us at BCRC for the holidays.

Akute Azu
Executive Director

It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of Emru Townsend, 39, on November, 11 2008. Emru was loved and admired by many in our community. In his last months, he selflessly used his own battle with leukemia to increase awareness of the pressing need for stem-cell donors. Emru is survived by his wife, Vicky Vrinotis, their son Max, his sister Tamu and his parents Beverley and David. They have our prayers.

Semaji contributors: Dwight Best, Annette Carla Bouzi, Phylcia Burke, Barkley Cineus, Dominique Douglas, Anaëlle Dubuc, Amarkai Laryea, Lise Palmer, Simone Powell, Courtney Sewell

Editors: Luigi Marshall and Jason Selman

Layout consultant: David Anderson

Disclaimer:

Material from Semaji may be used or reproduced with the condition that the reference is correctly cited. Further, the assertions and/or opinions of Semaji do not necessarily reflect the overall views of BCRC's staff or Board of Directors.

COMMUNITY

Research examines violence from Black youth perspective

By Courtney Sewell

In light of the violent events over the past year, several questions arose. How is violence defined? How are Blacks affected by it? Where and when does violence occur? Under what circumstances does it manifest? Who are the actors involved? Such questions motivated community organizers to embark on an initiative in search of answers.

“Violence in the Black Community” is a recently produced research document which, as the title suggests, presents a summary of violence in the Black community; however, a special emphasis was placed on the

perspective of youth.

In order to collect data from a representative sample, organizations serving various segments of the Black population were called upon to participate in the project.

These organizations were: the Black Community Resource Centre, the Bureau de la communauté haïtienne de Montréal, the Communauté noire africaine de Montréal-Canada, the Jamaica Association of Montreal, the Mouvement Jeunesse Montréal-Nord, and the Réseau de communication pour la prévention des actes criminels.

Each organization coordinated focus groups in

their respective communities. The focus groups were comprised of youth 15-20 years of age, young adults 20-30 years of age, parents, and community workers.

Researchers from the Université de Montréal asked participants questions and subsequently compiled and analyzed the data. The project was made possible through financial support from the National Crime Prevention Centre and the organizational support of the Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Communities.

The objective in mounting this research was to gain insight into the issue of violence through the eyes and experiences of those who live

and witness it, in the hope that community service providers will be better positioned to address this serious issue. The document is rich in anecdotal and personal accounts. The reader is left with an eye-opening description of violence in the community and its many forms.

An official launch of the 97-page document will be held in early 2009. By making the results of the research known to policy makers, collaborators of the project hope to impress upon them the need for action.

The document will be made available in French and English on our website at www.blackyouthproject.org

Community and police must respect investigative process

The August Montreal North shooting and the ensuing riot have brought attention to the real and unimagined tensions between the Service de police de la ville de Montréal (SPVM) and Montreal's visible minority communities.

BCRC has received many requests for information on this topic. We consider it our responsibility to provide assistance to the best of our abilities.

Because we work closely with the SPVM and minority communities, we have a strong desire to strengthen the relationship between the two groups. Much has already been done, but there remains much more to do. In the case of the Villanueva shooting,

objectivity and transparency are where things must begin.

Despite public concerns of a conflict of interest, it is the responsibility of the Sûreté du Québec to investigate the incident as per Chapter III Division I of the Police Act. They must consider the Code of ethics of Québec police officers. Namely, the report must respect sections 6 and 11:

6. *A police officer must avoid any form of abuse of authority in his relations with the public. A police officer must not use greater force than is necessary to accomplish what is required or permitted;*

11. *A police officer*

must use judgment and exercise care in using a weapon or any other piece of equipment. A police officer must not show, handle or point a weapon without justification.

The report on the incident has been completed and should be made available to the public as per the Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies.

However, until the information is released the public must not forget that by several accounts, Freddy was approaching police in an aggressive manner.

Hopefully the report will really reveal how the incident unfortunately escalated to the point that a young man

lost his life. At that point the police, the Villanuevas and the Montreal community can each decide in an informed manner how best to proceed.

Until the report is released, we encourage the community to remain objectively informed. BCRC obviously condones neither police brutality nor rioting. We do however encourage the proper exercise of police authority and citizens advocating for a just society. No matter the result of the report, BCRC remains committed to promoting the interests of the Black community.

Our hearts go out to the family and friends of Freddy Villanueva and to all others injured in the ensuing fracas.

COMMUNITY



réseau. ACSioN network

Leaders of new school break ground

By Dwight Best

The future custodians of Montreal's Black community know very little of the achievements of previous generations, which have permitted them to access the privileges they enjoy today. "Who are we?" "Where do we want to go?" "How are we going to get there?" Coming up with answers to these questions is much easier said than done; yet doing so is a fundamental task which all peoples must continually undertake in order to make any sort of meaningful progress.

And so the first "ACSioN Fundamentals Orientation Conference" was created to bridge this gap of self-understanding, and to light the path of those who are being called upon to propel the community to the next level.

Over three September sessions, titled Past, Present, and Future, the Black Community Resource Centre of Montreal (BCRC) and the African & Caribbean Students' Network of Montreal (ACSioN Network) collaborated to introduced the leaders of the Black student community to the fundamental basics of our forebears' legacy on the island.

At the "Past" and "Present" sessions, an all-important foundation for future understanding was created through the presentations of BCRC's Dr. Dorothy

Williams, who outlined the outstanding achievements and turbulent history of Montreal's Black community. From the landing of Mathieu Da Costa to the appointment of Michaëlle Jean, our community has seen many successes and undergone several transformations. Dr. Williams encouraged students to develop their curiosity, and to continue their journey into our community's rich history by suggesting opportunities for further reading.

But the introductions were definitely not purely one-way. During a highly productive discussion period, facilitated by Yvette Ghattas of Multiply, Inc., students and BCRC staffmembers came together in smaller groups to tackle major questions, such as "How can we break isolation in the community?" and "What can the community do to attract and retain Black talent?" As students expressed their opinions on such critical issues, BCRC's own staff gained insight into the students' thoughts about their wider community outside the universities.

After each session, the students, who lead the various member-associations

of the ACSioN Network, had much to say about their experiences as conference participants. So wrote a student: "It was really great. It was a nice way to communicate!" "I did not know about any of this before, I learned a lot!" wrote another. Indeed, many students were surprised by the sheer volume of Black accomplishment in Montreal. They were also surprised that they had never been exposed to such information, whether on their own or in the classroom at any level. So much interest was sparked that the most common (and telling) bit of feedback received was "[we] need more time for questions!"

However, sometimes the best answer to a question is another question. At "Black Jeopardy", an interactive statistical presentation created by BCRC's Luigi Marshall and Jason Selman, the most accurate, currently available community statistics were integrated into a quiz show format. The activity had teams of students rack their brains for the correct answers to basic statistical questions regarding the socio-economic status of Blacks in Mon-

treal, such as "What percentage of Black families are headed by single parents?" and "What is the rate of [un]employment among Black university graduates

compared to that of the general population?" Some questions left out-of-province, international, and native Montreal students alike, stumped.

By the end of the presentation, not a single student remained unfazed by the actual figures - which left no doubt as to the magnitude of our community's staggeringly high, yet severely underdeveloped potential. As students participated in

"all too often in our community, attention is directed exclusively to struggling youth while their succesful peers are totally ignored"

COMMUNITY

What is ACSioN

The African and Caribbean Students' Network of Montreal informally known as "ACSioN" is a federation of post-secondary student associations whose members have strong genealogical and/or cultural roots in Black Africa.

The primary aim of ACSioN is to facilitate communication and collaboration between existing Black student associations. ACSioN's member-associations are able to continue to assert their individuality and to pursue their own specific agendas while obtaining highly beneficial support from other member associations with similar objectives.

Through its many member-associations, the ACSioN Network aims to provide critically-needed representation for Montreal's 25,000+ Black post-secondary students. By participating actively in the ACSioN Network, Black students enable themselves to draw strength from the diversity of their chosen academic institutions, linguistic competencies, and countries of origin, instead of allowing themselves to be locked into in a state of impotent fragmentation by such minor differences.

**To contact ACSioN visit:
www.acionmontreal.org
 or email:
executive@acion.org**

a workshop where they discussed the root causes of the more alarming statistics, the relatively undeveloped observations they had previously made began to take on a finer definition.

Having brushed away the haziest mysteries obscuring our community's Past and Present, we were poised to perform a thorough examination of ways in which students can contribute to its Future development. The BCRC has prepared a set of community development points which will lead to a long-term collaborative program. Akute Azu, BCRC Director, has already called for a multilateral needs assessment to be conducted with these development points in mind. This will aid all associated student and community organizations in determining how best they can assist each other for mutual benefit.

Another project include a Student Success focus group, which will identify a common set of positive environmental attributes which help today's Black university students make it through to successful post-secondary academic careers. As noted by Dr. Williams, all too often in our community, attention is directed exclusively to struggling youth while their successful peers are totally ignored. The inclusion of programs for excellence development, in addition to remedial work, would allow the community to tackle its problems in a more balanced and efficient way. This will allow critical success factors to be defined, distilled, and then applied to uplift community youth across the entire socio-economic spectrum.

We at the ACSioN Network are immensely pleased to have worked with the BCRC, whose members immediately grasped the importance of the ACSioN Fundamentals orientation initiative. Without the invaluable contributions and support of the aforementioned staff, as well as Simone Powell and Courtney Sewell, who both helped ensure the smooth running of each session, the landmark success of this unique presentation and workshop series would have been impossible to achieve. The conference also helped sensitize the leaders of the different Black student associations to the necessity of community involvement in the best possible way: through interactive education and exploration of critical issues which affect our entire community, students included! We eagerly look forward to greater cooperative ties with the BCRC and its associated community organizations, and of course organizing an even more exciting and enlightening Fundamentals orientation conference next year!

We know that the Fundamentals orientation conference was merely a first step in the re-establishment of a long-overdue collaborative link between Black students and their larger community. But with the creation of this solid connection, our progress can only be limited by our creativity, which - as we have demonstrated time and again throughout history - is nothing short of phenomenal!



Students discuss how to help develop the community

YOUTH

Mini-Poste launches its second year

By Courtney Sewell

Following its 2007-2008 inaugural year, the Mini-Poste Program is now under way for 2008-2009.

At the conclusion of last year, BCRC staff and its partners took inventory to determine where and how the program could be improved. We believe that changes brought to the program will address last year's shortcomings. Preparation for this year's program began as early as June 2007.

While the program will see changes in certain areas such as scheduling and structure, the essentials remain the same. In addition to the introduction of Luigi Marshall as a key organizer, student volunteer Denise Tittle will complement the crew. Other changes in personnel include Françoise Leveillé as a replacement to Guylaine Cool as Vice-Principal of Simonne-Monet elementary school.

The program got under way September 29. The kids from Des Nations and Petit-Chapiteau elementary schools are excited and motivated to dethrone last year's winner, Simonne-Monet. The quest for bragging rights among the three participating schools serves to maintain a charged energy. This energy was apparent at the onset when the three schools faced off during their first intramural activity. The reigning champions prevailed on that occasion, but were later upstaged at the following police challenge by Des Nations.

In its fourth week of operation, the program has seen visits from four past participants. This is an attestation of the level of involvement invested by the children. A key element of the program is to bring a sense of belonging to the kids in the program. It is a reward in itself for animators to witness how their efforts bear fruit.



Youth engage in teamwork activity

For those who would like to follow the progress of the Mini-Poste program, you will soon be able to do so by visiting www.blackyouthproject.org in January 2009 when we launch our redesigned website.

Mini-Poste has a new after-business hours hotline: 514-377-1685

Call us for information or assistance regarding your child

Video production team assists community organizations



By Luigi Marshall

This past summer, as part of the Mini-Poste project, BCRC collaborated with Concordia University Television (CUTV) to allow six youth to write, direct, shoot and act in a video project.

The end-product was a hilarious anti-bullying basketball skit titled "The Best Defence" that, through the magic of creative editing, culminated with a thunderous slam-dunk by a 10-year-old.

The project, filmed in Côte-des-Neiges and edited at CUTV's downtown studio, was a huge success in large part due to the assistance of CUTV and their staff. A special thank-you goes to Lauren Lupton, without whom we would have simply been a group with a camera. Her amiable attitude is representative of CUTV's openness to assisting community organizations.

Their production studio includes semi-professional video, sound and editing equipment. Training is provided for uninitiated amateurs and support is available for skilled enthusiasts. In the past two years, CUTV has overseen the creation of

over 70 productions, often by people who have never worked with the medium before.

CUTV helped provide our youth with an opportunity to work together and to learn about a medium that they otherwise might never experience. Best of all, they had a good time.

CUTV has an abundance of resources for community groups looking to produce quality media. They play an important role in providing a unique opportunity for organizations like BCRC, and we look forward to working with them in the future.

CUTV

(514) 848-2424 x7403

<http://cutv.concordia.ca/>

check out our video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDrEHfkYUpl

YOUTH

A mother's perspective on sending her child to school

By Simone Powell

Sending my child to kindergarten for the first time was an overwhelming experience. It reminded me of coming home with my newborn for the first time and not having a clue about what to do next.

I'm afraid of letting my child go out into a world of turmoil and corruption, and every day I pray that she comes home safe. Being a single parent is pretty challenging and a strain. It's especially difficult when you have a job or you're looking for one, because you have to work around your child's school schedule.

The first days of school for my daughter were hectic. I had to accompany her for two hours each day to fill out applications and to get her comfortable with going to kindergarten. It can be difficult to ask your boss if you can come in late or leave early to deal with your child. Some employers, especially those facing the same situations as you, are considerate and understanding of the needs you may have for a flexible schedule to deal with your child. Such considerations are much appreciated. Other employers aren't as compassionate and that's when anxiety kicks in. You wonder if, sooner or later, your boss is going to show you the door; you contemplate finding another job that suits your child's schedule.

But there's always going to be some sort of obstacle when it comes to childcare: your child may get sick, school holidays fall on a working day, and a trustworthy last-minute babysitter isn't always easy to find.

And just preparing my child's lunch can be difficult. I don't really have a lot of ideas about different types of sandwiches I can make, and peanut butter is forbidden in consideration of other kids' allergies. I was okay as far as meat was concerned until it was reported that there was widespread meat contamination. So I started giving my daughter cheese sandwiches, until I heard cheese was also coming off the shelves at the supermarket. At first I was terrified, wondering what next.

I asked a few older folks what they offer their kids, and a few of them gave me some recipes, while the rest said they get their recipes from the internet. By the time I got accustomed to making sandwiches for my daughter, her school started providing lunch. That doesn't mean I'm not compelled to do it myself, it's just much easier and cheaper for a single parent trying to make a living to take advantage of the school's lunch service.

Sending a child to school is an emotional experience every mother goes through every year, from daycare, right through to university. Some of us are like a mother hen: afraid to let her chicks go too far from her warm, comforting feathers; espe-

cially the stay-at-home moms or dads. Others are like a mother bear: too protective, wanting her cubs to come home without a scratch, or else hell will be paid. And if the child comes home with a bruise or a cut on his or her knees, they get irrational hoping to get an explanation from the teacher the next morning. Parents should understand that we are not there to protect our child or watch over them while they are at school for six to eight hours. All you can do is teach your kids to be careful when they are playing with their schoolmates, because accidents do happen whether our kids are in our presence or out of sight.

In the face of all the challenges, perseverance is the answer. It gets me through everyday. I want my child to make a difference in society, to get the utmost education, to reach the heights of success. As a dedicated mother, I will never give up. In spite of difficulties, I face every day with a defiant determination to make a better future for my child. And I hope every parent has that same defiant attitude.

Batshaw
Youth and
Family Centres

A long-term foster home is being sought for 10-year-old Max, who is charming, helpful and engaging. He has many endearing qualities. He is well organized, able to formulate and develop relationships and is doing well academically.

Max is emotionally fragile and is struggling with issues of rejection, loss and trust. He can be stubborn, impulsive and disrespectful of rules. He responds well to clear rules and expectations. He is working on these issues with a therapist and has shown tremendous improvement.

Max is living in a group home and is ready to be integrated into a foster home. He should be the youngest in the household, ideally a two-parent Black or Bi-racial family. Support will be provided, including continued therapy, counseling, respite care and financial help

For more information, call Batshaw Homes for Children at 514-932-761, local 1139

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Afterschool special

By Phylcia Burke

The Quebec Board of Black Educators (QBBE) has been providing quality educational services to families across Montreal for over forty years. Through the Da Costa Hall and BANA Summer School Programs, as well as the Family Program, the QBBE continues to educationally and socially enrich the lives of families in the community.

op their coping skills, and to help them build self-esteem and respect for others. We will help them make positive connections between their education and other aspects of their lives.

Our Educational Afterschool Program takes place every Monday to Thursday between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. at the QBBE office. The program includes homework assistance for elementary and high school

books they read.

Our Saturday Math Tutorial program caters to students in grades 7 to 11. The Tutorial Program also begins in October and ends in June. The program takes place every Saturday morning between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. We provide remedial support and instruction in order to increase the students' overall academic standing. We also hope to help the students develop a positive atti-

offered throughout the city. Activities and workshops include: Ice skating, watching a live local football game, a workshop on understanding the educational reform, and much more.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: If you enjoy working with children and have a dynamic personality, please contact us. We can work together to ensure the success of our students.



QUEBEC BOARD OF
BLACK EDUCATORS



This year, the QBBE's Family Program caters, but non-exclusively, to families living within the CDN/NDG borough. The Family Program consists of an Educational Afterschool Program; Math Tutorial Program; monthly Saturday educational sports and leisure outings; and monthly workshops for parents and youth.

Our goals are to improve the students' overall academic standing, to devel-

students. Students are provided with a light snack and they receive one-on-one help with their homework. Additionally, every Monday is reserved for the Literacy Program. We want to encourage the students to read more, and to help them acquire proper language skills, both written and spoken. We also bring the students to the library and encourage them to take out books. The students keep a reading log and are given incentives for the number of

tude toward math and school. The program will provide the students with strategies for studying, test taking and homework completion.

Our monthly Saturday outings and workshops are for the entire family, both parents and youth. We want to reach parents of Black English speaking youth and to help them integrate into Quebec society by introducing them to the different resources and social activities

If you would like to register or for more information, please contact us

QBBE
3333 Cavendish, Suite 310,
Montreal, P.Q.
H4B 2M5
Tel: (514) 481-9400
Fax: (514) 481-0611
E-Mail: qbbe@videotron.ca
Web: www.qbbe.org

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”

- Nelson Mandela

PARTNER ORGANIZATION

Youth develop ideas and solutions for Quebec's future

By Lise Palmer

Almost 100 young people from across Quebec gathered at GENERATION Provincial Youth Forum to draw attention to important issues affecting young English-speakers.

The forum was organized by the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) with assistance from the BCRC and select young adults from across the province. The aim was to create an opportunity for youth to respond to the issues with youth-driven strategies and solutions. Participating youth addressed issues such as French-language skills, employment opportunities, and having a sense of belonging in their respective communities.

Held on September 27 and 28 at Concordia University, the group of 16-29 year olds addressed the results of recent youth consultations that were held in eight regions. These consultations highlighted the difficulties young English-speakers face integrating into the job market, accessing the education they need, and feeling a part of

their communities. It became clear that the difficulties (such as isolation, lack of infrastructure, access to education) youth face in remote regions like the North Shore are quite different from those experienced by English-speaking youth in Montreal (they have more subtle and varied barriers to participation). In some of the Montreal workshops, youth discussed the ways that discrimination and language barriers interacted for those of visible minority status. At the forum, young people had the opportunity to respond to these challenges with solu-

Another theme that emerged from the forum was intercultural exchange between English and French speakers. Young people expressed that they felt somewhat segregated from French-speaking youth due to factors such as language, institutions, government programming and terminology. All these factors have been shaped by the difficult political history in Quebec and the majority status of English-speakers outside Quebec.

To overcome this feeling of separation, young

QCGN | Quebec Community Groups Network

tions and strategies.

Although the forum discussions included topics such as education, employment, and identity, the theme of bilingualism was present almost everywhere. Bilingualism, everyone agreed, was essential in ensuring that English-speakers can integrate into their communities, avoid feeling isolated, get a job, attend the school they want, and – in short – do everything necessary to feel like a full member of Quebec society. Thus many of the strategies generated focused on ways to obtain a high level of bilingualism.

people recommended programs that would bring English and French speakers together to collaborate in various ways, and to share their respective languages and cultures. As the English-speaking community is so rich in diversity, intercultural exchange is not limited to French and English.

Concrete project ideas were also suggested that would be in line with the recommendations generated, such as holding a completely bilingual youth leadership conference, twinning French and English high schools to encourage linguistic and cultural exchange, and using the



CBC's Shari Okeke helps host forum

BCRC's experience with police sensitivity programs as a model for similar initiatives.

The forum ended with a series of workshops for participants, one of which was offered by BCRC on being Black in Quebec – a minority within a minority within a minority. BCRC also contributed to the forum by doing outreach for participants, helping with publicity, and providing a member to the QCGN Youth Standing Committee.

The Youth Standing Committee provided guidance and help through each stage of the project, and will now continue to oversee the QCGN's actions to ensure that this youth input and energy are not lost. The next step for the Youth Standing Committee will be to create a three-year strategic plan including the solutions and strategies generated at the forum. This plan will contain a vision for Quebec held by many English-speaking youth, and a roadmap on how to get there. It will be released this fall.

To hear more about this project, or to contribute, visit www.qcgn.ca or join the Facebook group 'Young Quebec'.



PARTNER ORGANIZATION

The advantage of opportunity

By Barkley Cineus

I was once a participant of DESTA. Now, I work with DESTA to give others the same support and opportunity that I was fortunate enough to receive. As a young adult who has clearly benefitted from what DESTA offers, I feel that I am in an ideal position to understand and respond to the needs of my peers.

What is DESTA? DESTA is an outreach project which provides support to young adults between the ages of 18-25. We use our resources, partnerships and education to offer individual support to those who participate in our program. The primary objective of the project is to provide young adults a safe and supportive place where their needs can be identified and met. DESTA helps move alienated youth into a more positive life experience.



Prior to DESTA, I worked at an overnight cleaning job for two years making what I felt was decent money at the time. After many attempts, I wasn't able to successfully work and go to school at the same time. DESTA helped me find a more affordable apartment which allowed me to work less and return to school full-time. While in school, I was fired from my cleaning job. During the same period DESTA had a position open on the staff and felt it necessary to hire and train someone younger to inspire peer leadership; thus I was given the opportunity to work here and encourage my peers.

Who are we involved with? Youth who participate at DESTA tend to come from the lower socio-economic levels of society. In many cases, both their personal and family histories have been marked by drugs, crime, unemploy-

ment and delinquency. We support not only those who are at high risk but also those whose needs are less extreme by helping them realize their individual talents, strengths, and personal goals. Furthermore, we do this in an environment that allows all youth to benefit from each other's experiences.

How do we do our work? Many of our relationships are one-on-one, and have developed through crisis intervention. DESTA also creates mentoring relationships to guide individuals to their own self-actualization. Participants are encouraged to create a personal vision by developing and following an IAP (Individual Action Plan).

DESTA provides the individual with the support, encouragement and hope that is often absent from the lives of many of our young adults.

I've gained many new skills working at DESTA that I know will give me an advantage in any working environment. For example, I've organized events, created budgets and written official reports. However, the biggest part of my job is creating and maintaining relationships. The best thing DESTA did for me was to teach me how to be accountable to myself and to the people around me. I now have to make sure that the resources and opportunities that were made available to me are also made available to others. Everyone should be so lucky.

For more information or to get involved:
(514) 932-7597
info@destanetwork.ca
www.destanetwork.ca

Our Programs

DISTANCE EDUCATION

We have a distance education and tutorial program for Native and Black youth who want to get their high school diploma. This program offers group and one-on-one tutoring in a culturally sensitive environment. Distance education allows each individual to work at their own pace.

DESTA EDUCATION FUND

There is an education fund for those wanting to pursue specialized education (finish high school, trade, CEGEP, etc.). An independent scholarship committee is set-up to determine scholarship criteria and make final decisions on each application.

CONCORDIA DIGITAL LITERACY

Concordia University Digital Art Department has partnered with us to provide youth with computer software, sound recording and technical training. The computer skills taught within this digital literacy project foster different forms of artistic self-expression.

Our Future

more emphasis on awareness
education and emotional literacy in
one-on-one and group environments

strengthen our basketball program to
develop a traveling basketball team

develop Health and Fitness program

produce a film which focuses on the
positive potential of black youth

teach skills related to money
management

focus on skills-building to improve
employability

PARTNER ORGANIZATION

Festival brings nations together

By Anacëlle Dubuc

On October 4 at the first NDG Intercultural Festival, residents of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce got together at NDG Park to celebrate the richness and cultural diversity of their district. The Festival was held within the framework of the Quebec Intercultural Meetings Week: a Ministry for Immigration and Cultural Communities event.

Over 500 people, young and old, attended the Festival. Visitors were able to experience musical performances from Mali, Bulgaria and Korea. Recent immigrants hailing from Morocco, Nigeria, China and Romania recounted their positive experiences immigrating to Quebec. In addition, the public was offered a wide array of fun activities and international desserts.

The event was organized by the NDG Intercultural Committee. The com-

mittee is headed by the NDG Community Council and includes representatives from the BCRC, CSSS Cavendish, the Service of Intercultural Integration NDG, the Table de Concertation Jeunesse, Hippy Montréal, the Commission Scolaire de Montréal, and the NDG Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi.

All in all, the event was a huge success. Not only did it bring together a variety of NDG's cultural communities, but it signaled a future where cultural diversity will not be an obstacle to integration but rather an asset to building a strong community.

The NDG Intercultural Committee would like to thank the Ministry for Immigration and Cultural Communities as well as the CDN-NDG Borough for their financial support. We would also like to thank the residents of NDG for participating in the event in such large numbers. We hope to repeat the experience next year.



**NDG
Community
Council**

(514) 484-1471
ndgcc@ndg.ca

www.ndg.ca



OPINION

November 4, 2008

First African-American elected President - Barack Obama

By Luigi Marshall

I'm not sure whether or not I really believed it would happen.

But it did.

Barack Hussein Obama's election as the first African-American President of the United States of America was a moment that will forever be etched into my consciousness. It was an accomplishment that, until last year, I didn't dream of seeing for at least another twenty years. Obama's road to the Presidency was the most enthralling and inspiring, political and cultural event of my life.

Like many of you, I followed the U.S. Presidential race for the past year with the audacity to hope for an Obama win. I wanted Obama to win not because he's Black, but because I believed that he was the candidate with the most character, most capable of moving past divisive politics, most willing to work with the global community, and most willing to help those in need. It was these characteristics combined with his Blackness that made him my candidate of choice.

And as I followed the race, it was with every speech he gave, and every Primary state he won that I began to believe that it could happen: a Black man being elected President. It was as I learned about how he intended to govern that I increasingly wanted it to happen. It was as I watched him energize young and old that I was progressively inspired. It was as I watched him bridge racial and political divides that my interest and my exuberance reached levels near obsession.

Finally, the most noteworthy election I may ever witness arrived.

I watched as people of all backgrounds lined up for hours to exercise their right to vote. I marvelled at the renewed sense of value placed on democracy by Americans and the international community alike. I contemplated how the impending moment truly signalled change.

Then at 11pm Eastern Time, alongside a loved one, I witnessed history in the making. As Obama was announced the next President of the United States, I watched grown women jump and yell in excitement. I watched grown men cry. I jumped and yelled myself, pausing only to call and text the significant people in my life that were elsewhere celebrating in their own manner.

In one seemingly instantaneous moment I experienced a never-before-felt sense of optimism. I believed that people could look past their differences. I believed that any challenge could be overcome.

I'm not certain that I can in so few words encapsulate the range of emotions that I, along with millions around the world, felt as Obama became the president-elect. I can only imagine that what I felt bordered on what was felt by those who witnessed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech.

On November 4, 2008 I witnessed a portion of Dr. King's dream being fulfilled. I witnessed White people, Black people and every shade in between joining hands as sisters and brothers. The American people came together and judged Obama not by the colour of his skin, but by the content of his character.

It happened.

And it happened in outstanding fashion.

**“Rosa sat so Martin could walk.
Martin walked so Obama could run.
Obama ran so our children could
fly.”**

-Anonymous

FEATURE

August 28, 1963

I have a dream speech - Martin Luther King, Jr.

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the "unalienable Rights" of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note, insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds."

But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so, we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.

We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of Now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate



discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. And there will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice: In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.

The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom.

We cannot walk alone. And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back.

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bod-

ies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their self-hood and robbed of their dignity by a sign stating: "For Whites Only." We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until "justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream."¹

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. And some of you have come from areas where your quest -- quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends.

And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" -- one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."²

This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with.

With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

And this will be the day -- this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning:
My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing.
Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride,
From every mountainside, let freedom ring!

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true.

And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire.

Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York.

Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.

Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado.

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California.

But not only that:

Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia.

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee.

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi.

From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual:

Free at last! Free at last!

Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!

JUSTICE



Accessing the law



In this new four-part series we will introduce to you some of the institutions and organizations that exist in Quebec society to assist in the enforcement of some of our most valued rights.

There is a certain myth that only those who have studied law have the ability to understand it. One of the goals we hope to achieve is to show that this is not the case. Surely, those who have had the privileged opportunity to study law may have a better understanding of it, but this is simply because over time they have de-

veloped an instinct for certain issues. However, this does not mean that those who have not studied law cannot understand it nor that instincts cannot be developed through other means.

During this series, we will be setting you on the path of developing some of these instincts to the issues that are often in the forefront of our daily struggles: housing, employment, and human rights. By engaging in a deeper analysis of these issues we will examine how the law and the institutions established to enforce it, deal with conflicts when they arise.

We will also focus on each of the key institutions established to deal with complaints related to these issues such as the Quebec Rental

Board, Quebec Labour Standards Commission and the Quebec Human Rights Commission. When possible, we will give examples of cases that have had an impact/relevance to our community.

Furthermore, we will also take a look at some of the community organizations that exist which have been doing important work around these issues and share some ideas on how we, as active citizens, can effectively work together with them.

In our present times, we can look up court cases, legislation, legal information, etc from the comfort of our homes or from wherever there is access to the internet. This is partly due to the conscious effort by both government and private organizations to make this information freely available and accessible. We will also introduce you to useful legal websites and resource

centers in order to demonstrate how to conduct basic legal research on your own.

The law should be and can be accessible to us all in terms of understanding how it works and being able to easily and effectively use it to enforce our rights. We hope what is learned from these articles will strengthen your understanding of our legal framework. Join us in Accessing The Law. We look forward to sharing our knowledge.

Amarkai Laryea is a lawyer and a Trustee of the Alfie Roberts Institute.

Annette Carla Bouzi is a lawyer, currently based in Ottawa.

How child custody is determined

To determine which parent should have custody of a child, the courts use the criteria set out in section 33 of the Civil Code of Quebec and paragraph 16(8) of the Divorce Act. In both cases, the absolute criteria are in the best interest of the child.

In analyzing the best interest of the child, many elements are evaluated. For instance, the courts favour the stability of the child's environment, unless it endangers his or her psychological or physical development.

Also, the courts consider both the child's age and choice. The older he

or she is the more the courts respect their decision because they are more likely to express the reasons why they prefer to reside with one parent or the other.

In conclusion, the best interest of the child is the only criteria that the courts take in account to determine which parent should have custody. Every case must be analyzed individually.

LEGAL NOTICE: The presentation of information in this article is not individualized legal advice and should not be relied on as such. Persons seeking legal advice can contact me Dominique Douglas at (514) 743-0237.

Legal humor

The Judge said to the defendant. "I thought I told you I never wanted to see you in here again."

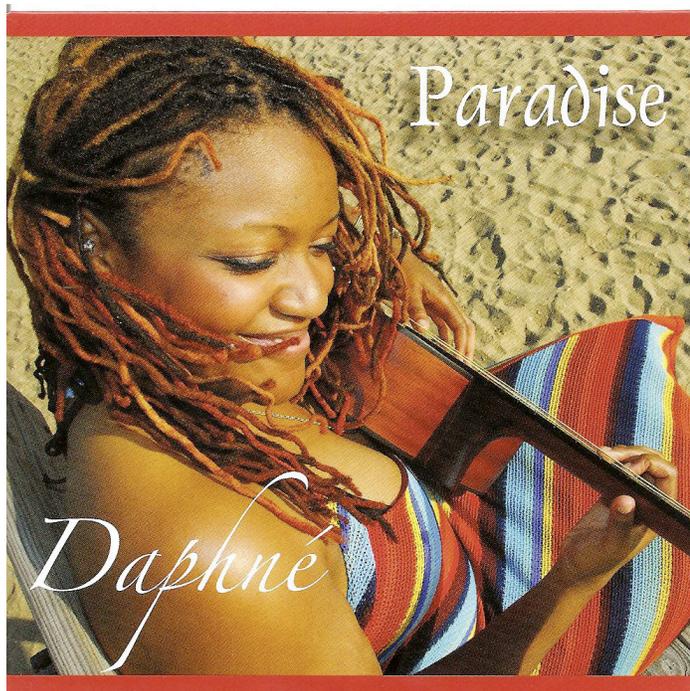
"Your Honor," the criminal said, "that's what I tried to tell the police, but they wouldn't listen."

"Mr. Quinn, I have reviewed this case very carefully," the divorce court judge said, "and I've decided to give your wife \$775 a week."

"That's very fair, your honor," the husband said. "And every now and then I'll try to send her a few bucks myself."

ARTS & CULTURE

Something Special



By Jason Selman

There is a lot of talent on the Montreal music scene. But talent and craft will only get you so far. You need drive and that little something special to get you the rest of the way. Singer/songwriter Daphné not only has drive and a wonderful ear for songwriting but also that magical something special that grabs your attention for as long as she's on stage. Semaji sat down with her to talk about her art, her business and her journey.

What made you decide to become a solo performer?

I'm not sure it was really a decision. I've always been somewhat of an outcast in music. By the time I picked up the guitar in high school, everyone else had their own band. And then when I got to CEGEP it was the same thing.

I want musicians to play with me but I've never really wanted to start a band. I feel that I have more freedom by myself. I'm not consulting anyone about what I want to write or to play or running

after anyone about rehearsals. I'm still looking for people I think I would have a good chemistry with but I haven't found those musicians yet.

How would things change if you worked with a band?

I think it would just complement my music without overpowering the guitar and the vocals because I think that as artist that's essentially what I'm about. I want to keep that image

and that organic sound. I don't want it to be covered up by a whole bunch of instruments, but I do like the idea of a full band and enjoy all kinds of instruments, so I guess we'll see.

What do you enjoy and dislike about performing?

I like going on stage and being myself. It's liberating. It's like an intimate conversation but with a whole bunch of people at the same time. I feel like I'm telling my secrets to someone but all the songs are based on real things that happened to me. The part I don't like is some of the preparation, the sound check, etc. I think that's because I'm very serious when it comes to sound check so when people fool around I get really upset. It's only me and my guitar so if it doesn't sound good I'm screwed. And [the audience will be screwed too] because it won't be enjoyable for me or for them.

What is your songwriting process?

I always have a tape recorder in my bag, so that when I have an idea for a

melody or any other ideas I can just record myself. When I write a song I focus mostly on what I think will sound beautiful and not on theory or what is supposed to go with certain chords; for me that kills creativity.

How have you found the business side of things and the public's reaction to the album?

Since it's just me it's a lot of work. It's exhausting but it's fun at the same time. I market myself mostly through shows, so I try to perform as much as possible so that people can see me and I can sell my album. Performing is the easiest way to promote the album because then people really see what they're going to hear. Right now the response is good. People have been asking me for years about having a CD.

What's your motivation?

I think music is what I'm meant to do, it's just that I haven't been doing it. Being a nurse, meeting a lot of people who work in hospitals who are either burnt out or just really unhappy because they didn't pursue their dream really opened up my eyes. Plus seeing people getting sick or dying made me say "okay, I really need to do it now, and see if it can work so that at least whether things work or not I know I tried." I like jumping in with both feet and so far it's working. My main motivation is testing myself to see if I can make my dreams come true.

How has completing your first album changed your outlook on your career?

I think that it makes everything concrete. It's a great business tool and it's a great way for people to get to know what my music is about. It's real now. I'm a singer/songwriter who has an album; who can actually live from my art, my dream.

For more information on Daphné visit:
www.myspace.com/daphneguitar

ARTS & CULTURE

Black women are like...

By Jason Selman

Producer Tetchena Bellange is creating a documentary entitled “The Myth of the Black Woman” that examines the stereotypes that plague Black women. The film will examine archetypes such as the jezebel, the sapphire, the mammy, and the tragic mulatto. It will look into the origins of these myths and how they are perpetuated.

These myths are negative because they breed dangerous expectations in all of us. The beliefs that Black women are hypersexual and promiscuous (jezebel), angry and combative (sapphire), maternal and asexual (mammy) are views still widely held in the public consciousness. These ideas are colonial traps that have been very carefully set and that, unfortunately, we still fall into. We asked Tetchena a few questions to help us explore the subject.

What are the biggest barriers to overcoming these stereotypes?

The media. Even even if I try to explain to someone that these stereotypes are not based in reality, the media portrays images that are so beautiful and that have been so glamorized that they still reach the unconscious mind. There is a lack of awareness that these stereotypical images are ingrained.

Are these stereotypes found more inside or outside the Black community?

I’m not sure, but inside the Black community these stereotypes are very insidious. Even as a Black woman before working on these stereotypes, I was not aware that I had these perceptions of myself. Working as an actress I identified with some parts of the jezebel without even knowing so.

I used to have an acting teacher and he told me, “because of your natural energy you’re going to play these kinds

of roles.” I thought, “teachers know what they are talking about so there must be something about me that’s like the jezebel.” But doing this documentary I realized I’m not like that.

In the White community, if they’re not in contact with Black people, they’re led to think that everything they see is real. Sometimes speaking to White people they’re like “oh my God, you’re so nice for a Black woman.” They rarely talk to Black people so to them I’m like an extra-terrestrial.

What impact do these stereotypes have on relations between Black men and Black women?

There are a lot of impacts. For example, because of the stereotypes, Black women are perceived as invulnerable and indestructible. I read this beautiful book called “The Double Lives of Black Women In America” by Charisse Jones and Kumea Shorter-Gooden. It said that because of these stereotypes Black women feel that they have to take care of Black men in a way that never shows their vulnerability. What this does, when you’re in a relationship and you’re not able to communicate everything of yourself, is create resentment.

How difficult is it to not internalize these stereotypes?

It’s very difficult. Doing this documentary I realized that I wanted Black youth to see it because they have no idea. A lot of them are greatly influenced by these images, the way they talk, the way they dress and the way they behave. [As a child] myself, I was convinced that a beautiful Black woman was light skinned, with long hair and that I didn’t correspond to this image. Working on this subject was healing for me because I got to talk to a lot of women and I saw that I [was brainwashed]. And it’s not something my mother taught me. She always told me I was pretty and beautiful. But growing up I spent most of my time in

school and watching TV and these things influenced me.

Are Black women are made to fit into one of these stereotypes or are there instances where they are expected to subscribe to more than one?

In “The Double Lives of Black Women in America” they call the way we behave “shifting”. We shift from one to the other depending on the circumstances. With men we’re seductive, the jezebel; at work we’re the sapphire, we feel that we have to perform; in other circumstances we feel that we have to be the good friend, the mammy. But we’re all human beings so there’s a lot more depth than this. In storytelling and in movies, the writers or the directors use archetypes so that people are able to know what a character is all about in the next few scenes. The problem comes when all we see are the same images again and again and people think that all Black women are like that.

In what ways do you hope your film will help to eliminate these perceptions?

Through awareness, making sure the film gets seen. I really feel that the movie is not only good for young black women but for all young people since we are all subject to stereotypes. I think it would be amazing to have this type of discussion in a classroom so that youth realize “if Black women are stereotyped then what about me?” I’d love for other people to produce movies about that; a young Asian doing a movie for their community, a Black man, a White woman, Latino, etc. I would love to have people come out and say that they too want to do a documentary about stereotypes and their experiences.

Ms. Belanger is currently looking for people to be interviewed as part of her documentary. If you would like to take part, please contact the BCRC.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Create a gameplan

By Luigi Marshall

How do you approach the game of life? Why do you get up every morning? To go to work, to go to school? To pay the bills? Or are those just steps to move the ball up the field? Just the means to an end. What constitutes a touchdown for you? What's your purpose and do you have a design on how to get ahead in the game of life?

Most people know that every successful sports franchise is guided by a set of clearly defined goals, principles and values. But surprisingly few people recognize that successful individuals also subscribe to a method of clearly defining their goals and principles. And clearly defined usually means written down. They use a plan.

There are approximately seven major stages in every adult's life that should have a strategy: education, career, relationship, parenthood, crisis, sandwich generation and retirement. You will go through these stages whether you like it or not, so play offense rather than defense. Be proactive: determine how you can best shape each stage and execute your strategy.

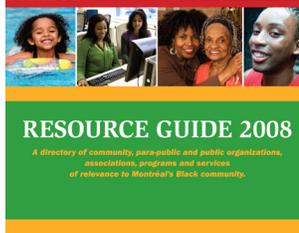
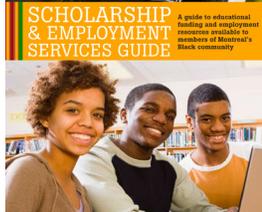
Writing down your goals and values works for four reasons. First, it works because it gives you a constant reminder of where you want to be. Secondly, it reminds you of who you want to be. Thirdly, writing them down works because you're creating a system of self-accountability. Finally, when done

properly, goal writing is drafting a map to success.

Now let's be real. Setting a goal like having sports-franchise-type cash doesn't necessarily mean it'll happen. Although it is possible, such a goal is vague and unlikely. So set S.M.A.R.T. goals. S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, timed) goal setting is something that unfortunately many of us don't learn until well beyond the little leagues or not at all. Another tool is a personal mission statement. (Create one at www.franklincovey.com/tc/resources/view/msb)

Ultimately, consistent effort is the runningback that will move you up the field. You need to create your own opportunities, because in the end, you'll get whatever you settle for. There's a saying that "when you know what you want, and want it bad enough, you will find a way to get it." There are certain things in life that you can control and others that you can't. Manage (forcefully) the things that you can (and don't sweat the rest).

When the clock finally runs out, hopefully you've won your personal Super Bowl. But if you haven't, you want to be able to say that you enjoyed the game because you planned for it and played it the way you wanted it to be played. All great teams get through the season, and every game for that matter, by using a printed playbook, a plan. So should you. Go ahead. Get a pen and paper. Start writing.



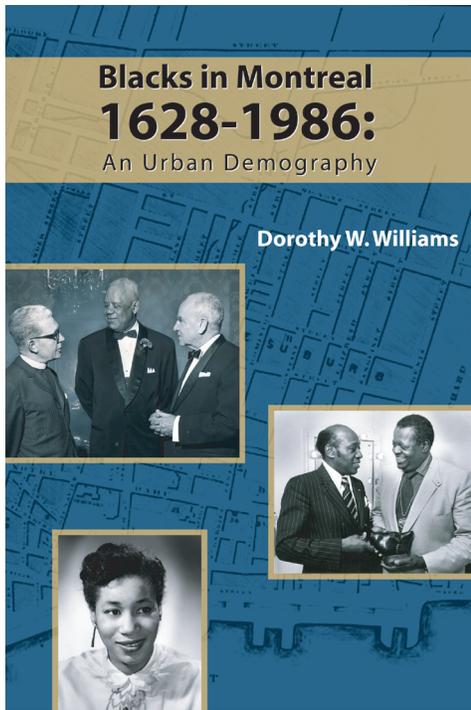
BCRC has put together two guides to assist Montreal's Black community.

Our Scholarship and Employment Services Guide gives you detailed information on educational funding and organizations offering job search support.

Our Resource Guide highlights a variety of organizations of service to the Black community.

You can come by our offices 9-5 weekdays and pick up a copy.

Come check out the latest info on vocational and trade training as well. Take advantage of the information on the shelves of our Resource Library. Come and browse or give us a call. Simone will be happy to assist you (514) 342-2247



BLACKS IN MONTREAL 1628-1986: An Urban Demography (Reprint)

On Tuesday, November 18, 2008, BCRC's very own Dr. Dorothy W. Williams launched her book **BLACKS IN MONTREAL 1628-1986: An Urban Demography (Reprint)** at the Centre d'Histoire de Montréal.

When first published in 1989, this book was groundbreaking and is still in demand. It was the first demography to explore 400 years of Black diversity across the island of Montreal. This comprehensive study examined many aspects of Black mobility, including the impact of Canadian discrimination, skewed immigration, job market segmentation, and housing exclusion. These, and many other factors, which fueled the socio-economic disadvantage that continues to reverberate throughout Quebec society, are explored.

This special reprint edition includes a unique 30 minute DVD interview where Dorothy speaks about her personal experiences growing up in Little Burgundy in Montreal from 1956-1976 and discusses why she wrote this book.

You can request your autographed copy of **BLACKS IN MONTREAL 1628-1986: An Urban Demography (Reprint)** by reserving it at BCRC (514) 342-2247, or logon to www.dorothywilliams.ca.

Recommended reading list

bell hooks (2006). Outlaw Culture, Resisting Representation (Routledge, ISBN: 978-0415389587)

Charisse Jones and Kumea Shorter-Gooden (2003). Shifting: The Double Lives of Black Women In America (Harper Collins, ISBN: 978-0060090548)

Djanet Sears (1998). Harlem Duets (Scirocco, ISBN: 978-1896239279)

Jeff Chang (2005). Can't Stop, Won't Stop – A History of the Hip Hop Generation (Picador, ISBN: 0312425791)

Robert Ashe (2005). Halifax Champion: Black Power in Gloves (Formac, ISBN: 978-0887806773)

Rosemary Sadlier (1995). Mary Ann Shadd: Publisher, Editor, Teacher, Lawyer, Suffragette (Umbrella, ISBN: 978-1895642162)

Savion Glover (2000). Savion, My Life In Tap (Harper Collins, ISBN: 978-0688156299)

Stephanie Nolen (2007). 28: Stories of Aids in Africa (Knopf Canada, ISBN: 978-0-676-97822-3)

LAST WORDS

Unsung Warriors: Colours on Black Women Art contest

Students are asked to produce a painting featuring or inspired by an Afro-Canadian woman whose contributions and efforts in the arts, community service, politics and or science are remarkable and striking. Such outstanding women are not hard to find, they may be a friend of yours, or someone working hard to advance worthy causes near them or abroad. The idea is to honor them and bring these women out of the shadows by putting them in colour.

12 finalists will be selected (6 Secondary / 6 CEGEP). All of these finalists will have their works exhibited at the Mosaik Art Gallery from February 3, 2009 to March 31 as part of Mosaik's Black History Month celebrations.



For more information:
(514) 849-3399
mosaikart@bellnet.ca

Open to Secondary V & 1st yr.
CEGEP students

Deadline for submissions is
January 12th, 2009. Submissions
are to be emailed to:
mosaikart.submissions@gmail.com



After seven years of service to BCRC, we regret to say that Courtney Sewell, Community Liaison Representative, is moving on.

Courtney's tireless efforts to improve the community have been fruitful and much appreciated. He will be missed.

Courtney will continue to help build the Black Community as Outreach Director at Union United Church of Montreal.

The Black Community Resource Centre (BCRC) is an organization that strengthens community capacity by providing professional support to organizations and individuals in need.

Our team is committed to assisting visible minority youth rekindle their dreams and achieve their full potential.

Our Funders:

- Human Resource and Skills Development Canada; Multiculturalism, Official Languages Branch; Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, National Crime Prevention Centre
- Emploi-Québec; Fonds Jeunesse du Québec; Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'immigration; Ministère de l'Emploi de la Solidarité Sociale et de la Famille