

OUR TIME PRESS

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From the Village of Brooklyn, New York Since 1996

Young Leaders in Our Time

Ajamu Brown, Environmental Activist, Named '09 Audubon/Toyotatogethergreen Fellow

Wins Grant For Magnolia Tree Green Mapping of Bed-Stuy



Today, November 19, Ajamu Brown, a lead organizer of the Brooklyn Food Coalition -- a grassroots partnership of individuals and groups striving to achieve a just and sustainable food system, and an advisor on green projects for the Board of the historic Magnolia Tree Earth Center of Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn, NY, was announced as a winner of the 2009 Audubon/Toyota TogetherGreen fellowship.

(Note to readers: Ajamu Brown's story launches a new recurring column in this newspaper designed to identify and spotlight young leaders in Our Time whose ongoing positive work is making a difference in the life of our community.)

Brown, 32, also an Outreach Coordinator for New York State's Center for Develop-

ment of Human Services, who resides in Bedford Stuyvesant, is one of 40 individuals nationwide selected for the prestigious award which advances and supports the work of outstanding young leaders who are committed to shaping a brighter environmental future for their communities.

The TogetherGreen Fellowship offers specialized training in conservation planning and execution, the chance to work and share best practices with gifted conservation professionals, and assistance with project outreach and evaluation. Each Fellow receives \$10,000 towards a community-focused project to engage local residents in

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Grassroots Orgs., Individuals on Frontlines as U.S. Hunger Crisis Escalates and Thanksgiving Approaches

Lisa Everett of the Northeast Brooklyn Housing Development Corporation; Center Manager Lemuel Mial, Culinary Instructor Charlotte Mial and Special Events Coordinator Neversee Davis of Herbert Von King Park; Mr. Rowe, proprietor, Rowe's Restaurant on Tompkins Avenue; hundreds of volunteers at hundreds of Soup Kitchens, churches and pantries throughout the city; PTA members at P.S. 21 (who continue the vision of workers who gave out meals on Thanksgiving Day many years ago.) And of course there's Mike McCann. Yesterday, Mike gave away more than 100 turkeys and 40 boxes of fresh produce. Earlier this week, he purchased turkeys at a slight discount from Foodtown on Fulton Street and traveled to New Jersey from Brooklyn two hours each way in a Yukon SUV to buy Guarino Sons collards, white potatoes and yams.

Their stories will be reported next week in Our Time Press. But for now ..

The Thanksgiving Spirit's Alive in Bed-Stuy

Saturday, November 21 —

From 11:00am- 5:00pm, the H. Von King Cultural Arts Center, 670 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn, under the direction of Center Manager Lemuel Mial, will present its 12th Annual "Each One, Feed one" Thanksgiving meal project. The idea for "Each One, Feed One" originated with Neversee Davis, Von King's Special Events Coordinator. "About 500 people show up each year," says Ms. Davis. And they are served meals prepared by Charlotte Mial and the youth from the Center's culinary arts program. Donations are greatly appreciated for this

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Community Outraged at Proposed NYPD Use of Youth Center



Community activists came out Wednesday after work to protest proposed use of community center on Pennsylvania Avenue in East New York as NYPD training facility.

By David Mark Greaves

"This is ludicrous" was the emphatic comment of community activist Salema Davis, speaking about the New York City Police Department takeover of the Schwartz Center, a 25-year-old East New York PAL center and the only youth center in the area. "But because the building needed work, they had to close the building and put the NYPD in there as a training facility."

"The building is huge" she continued. "There is a library, studio, basketball courts, and the basement areas have old little courtrooms. What they need to do is bring enrichment programs in there for young people and for the seniors. Bring a training facility. Their failure to do that says they're looking for this community to fail."

Ms. Davis spoke of the four housing projects in the area, the high crime rate and the numerous gangs in the area. "The young people don't have many enrichment programs. When you have more

children than community centers, what do you do?"

Carolyn Walker Diallo, Executive Director of The George Walker Jr. Community Coalition, Inc. said "I was born and raised in ENY and recalled going there as a teenager. About two years ago we heard rumblings that the PAL was out and the building was unsafe for children and the building was closed. With the population of over 90,000 mostly low-income people in the East New York Community we need this Center to provide much-needed services."

A coalition of several groups contacted the city to see what could be done with the building to provide a multi-service center for the community. "We got the run-around and the next thing we know, the response is that there is so much work to be done that the NYPD will come in and take over the building.

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Is Machiavellianism Working in NYC?

By Alton H. Maddox, Jr.

With Asians, Blacks and Latinos now having a majority membership in the New York City Council, it would be embarrassing if they chose Christine Quinn to continue as council speaker and allow the three I's to continue to control municipal government.

According to a Daily News article of November 15, 2009 entitled "Everyone knows Quinn's in" these historically-oppressed groups will elect its common oppressor to be the mouthpiece for the politically voiceless. Asians Blacks and Latinos should read Dr. Carter G. Woodson's "The Miseducation of the Negro."

Like Blacks, Asians and Latinos also see their friends as their foes and their foes as their friends. For example, when you pull a knife out of a Negro's chest, he or she will automatically put the knife in the back of a good Samaritan, a descendant of African ancestry. As a good Samaritan, I am constantly pulling knives out of my back.

As President Barack Obama had embarked on a trip to Asia, the Washington Post published an article dated November 15, 2009 and entitled, "Racial rethinking as Obama visits." Apparently, the Chinese have a greater affinity for either Bush 41 or 43 than for Mr. Obama. Chen Juan, a Beijing resident, said, "I wouldn't consider having a black guy as my boyfriend even if he were rich."

Meanwhile, it was the Europeans who invaded China and sought to colonize its people. The Chinese, on the other hand, are seeking to expand their business opportunities in Africa. Hung Huang, host of "Straight Talk" in China says, "The Chinese worshipped the West and for Chinese people 'the West' is white people." Many Chinese are bleaching their skins.

I wrote a letter to Council Speaker Christine Quinn unfolding an affirmative action plan for politics. Giving Blacks, Asians and Latinos access to polling

booths is insufficient to accord these historically-oppressed groups legal and political representation. Absent an affirmative action plan, these groups with continue to endorse and finance their own oppression.

It would be embarrassing if Christine Quinn were chosen as council speaker for the next four years. Councilman Charles Barron is the only known dissenter.

Reportedly, Councilwoman Letitia James has already made peace with Quinn. Her only bone of contention was Quinn's belated endorsement of mayoral hopeful, William Thompson. She is now in Quinn's fold. Are her constituents also in Quinn's fold? I doubt it.

Of course, James is a Black elected official and not a Black political representative. There is a difference. A Black elected official is only beholden to his or her white, political endorsers and Black voters select the dishes.

Our voices must be heard forthwith. Time is of the essence. A plan is already in place for the oppressed, sua sponte, to maintain the status quo. Whites write the political rules and we give great deference to them. The persons who write the political rules rule the political roost.

Under the New York City Charter, the position of comptroller is not a part of the power equation. Thus, this position is now reserved for a Black, Asian or Latino. The successor to John Liu will be a Latino. This is a policy of appeasement.

On Wednesday evenings, bring a pen, pad and postcards to the Elks Plaza, 1068 Harriet Tubman, (Fulton Street) in Brooklyn at 7:30 p.m. There must be a political rebellion to salvage the sacrifices of our revered ancestors. We must get busy. Our voices must be heard.

insecure at least some time during the year, an increase of 25 percent over 2007.

The study also revealed that 146,000 black households with children — a 92 percent increase over 2007 — experienced very low food security, meaning that the food intake of one or more of the

household children was reduced and their eating patterns were disrupted at times during the year because the household lacked money.

This marks the largest increase in food insecurity rates among African-American households with children since the USDA has been collecting data.

"Importantly, these numbers reflect the state of the nation one year ago, in 2008. Since then, the economy has significantly weakened, and there are likely many more children of varying ethnicity struggling with hunger than this report states," said Vicki Escara, president and CEO of Feeding America, the nation's largest hunger-relief organization. "It is an outrage that one in four children in this nation lives on the brink of hunger and doesn't have access to adequate amounts of nutritious food."

A Feeding America study shows that its network food banks experienced an average increase in need of nearly 30 percent this year. Some food banks are reporting increased of more than 50 percent in requests for emergency food assistance over a year ago.

Thanksgiving

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the PTA will serve community families for the 11th year of this annual "Feeding of the 500". They are asking for donations of pies, cakes, sodas, egg nog and cranberry sauce to help prepare a complete "Thanksgiving Care Package." Ms. L. Sanders-Peay, parent coordinator, says "This time of year is for families, and as loyal community family members, it is our obligation to help fulfill families who have lost their jobs, homes, and more. Donations can be dropped off to Mrs. L. August in Room #139B at C.S. 21. Also there will be a free Turkey care package raffle drawings, Tuesday, November 24. Winners will be contacted. Ms. Peay also reports that *Turkey Care Packages* will be distributed Thanksgiving Eve on or before 12 noon, at the school.

Thursday, November 26

Brown Memorial Baptist Church will host an annual Thanksgiving Day Lunch. The church is located at 484 Washington Avenue in Brooklyn. Call for details: 718-638-6121

THE BACKDROP

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (USDA) reported this week that almost one in four children living in the United States are hungry. Nearly two million black households with children were food

GREENPRINT

African American Environmentalist Group Revving Up Youth and Community Interest in Discussions

About Energy and Environment "Through All Lenses"

It's not easy teaching green, especially with the tsunami of information and breaking news on climate change issues constantly hitting the public. But the African American Environmentalist Association (AAEA) and their partners are developing creative ways to involve communities nationally in conversations centered on sustainable issues that will impact their lives.

Last month, here in New York, the AAEA and local environmental advocates hosted an environmental panel discussion entitled "Air Quality & Electricity: Why it Matters to You" at the CUNY Graduate Center in midtown.

Panelists engaged audience members, including high school students and environmental peers and partners in discussion and problem solving scenarios addressing environmental justice, economic and political struggles and energy concerns that directly affect residents and businesses in the New York City region.

African American Environmentalist Association (AAEA) is a national, non-profit environmental organization dedicated to protecting the environment, enhancing human, animal and plant ecologies, promoting the efficient use of natural resources and increasing African American participation in the environmental movement. AAEA is based in Washington, D.C.

Since its founding in 1985, AAEA has implemented many environmental programs from creek walks and clean ups to placing interns with mainstream environmental groups. The organization weathered and audited homes in the 1980s and hosted boat tours on rivers and bays for community youth.

"Discussing ways in which New York can address energy concerns on both a micro and macro level is an important conversation that all New Yorkers should be having," said Norris McDonald, founder and president of AAEA. "The audience members ranged from local high school students to representatives of environmental community and corporate groups in the region.

"I think the conversation and scenarios were quantum leaps forward in getting the

audience thinking about ways in which New York can examine the energy dynamic from all perspectives — economic, social, and environmental."

The panelists included Frank Stewart, President and Chief Operating Officer of American Association of Blacks in Energy; Craig Wilson, Executive Director of Safe Healthy Affordable Reliable Energy (SHARE); Amber Sisson, Program Director of the New York AAEA chapter and local New York environmental advocate Samara Swanson.

The students were from High School of Environmental Studies, which is located on the Westside of Manhattan.

The panel covered a range of topics about New York's energy future, including:

- Basic concepts of energy and how humans use various energy resources
- Economic resources needed to build green future
- Political influences in the energy debate on all levels-city, state and national
- Environmental justice legislation
- Green jobs-employment, specialized training and education requirements, technology and science education programs in high schools and colleges

"By having this discussion, the students were able to look at the energy crisis through all lenses and brainstorm ways New York can work efficiently, effectively and safely towards providing power to its residents and businesses," said Wilson.

"Having this discussion and more like it, is an excellent way to get New Yorkers more aware of some of the fundamentally important issues in their own backyard," said Stewart. "It was a solid introduction to the challenges and the opportunities that will be before us in the months and years ahead."

While some of AAEA's views are not necessarily those of *Our Time Press*, it should be acknowledged that it is recognized as the nation's oldest African American-led national environmental organization. Specific information can be found at <http://www.aaenvironment.com>

Community Outraged

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At the same time, they are requesting money from the community board to fix the building."

Ms. Walker was perplexed by this, asking "If we have money to fix the building for the NYPD, then why don't we have money to fix it for our seniors and our young people?" Speaking more on the young people of the area, she says, "We have a very high crime rate. The gangs are out of control and when you speak to these children, a lot of them just don't have anywhere to go."

"It's absurd," said Councilman Charles Barron, who's district is nearby. "How are you going to take away youth services? The reason you need the police is because we have no youth ser-

vices."

Ms. Davis and Ms. Diallo both described Council member Erik Martin Dilan, as a supporter, but we were unable to reach the councilman before press time.

A coalition that includes the George Walker, Jr. Community Coalition, Inc.; East New York United Concerned Citizens, Inc.; Brooklyn East New York Crisis Team and We the Kids Foundation has come together and held a rally in front of the Schwartz Center.

Ms. Diallo reported that at their Wednesday meeting, Brooklyn Community Board #5 passed a resolution in support of retaining the location as a community center and in opposition to the NYPD bringing in offices and a training center.