



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION**

2007 ANNUAL REPORT

AAAC Mission Statement

To improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut, through advocacy, information sharing, cultural awareness, community networking and influencing legislation.

2007 Acknowledgement

The African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC) is indebted to the many organizations and individuals that supported the AAAC's Legislative Agenda and ongoing advocacy concerns. We are grateful for our many partners including but not limited to the Black and Hispanic Caucus, Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Children, NAACP, DemocracyWorks and the Urban League of Greater Hartford.

The AAAC also acknowledges the support and technical assistance provided by the Office of Legislative Management, Information Technology Services and the Capitol Police.

AAAC Commissioners:

Michael Jefferson, Chairperson

George Logan, Vice-Chairperson

Rosetta Jones, Secretary

Derrick McBride, Treasurer

Kristen M. Clark

Lillie B. Crosby

Fred Pierre-Louis

Alphonse Wright

AAAC Staff:

*Glenn A. Cassis,
Executive Director*

*Denise R. Drummond,
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*Cheryl Harris Forbes,
Public Affairs/Special Projects Coordinator*

*Frank Sykes,
Senior Legislative Analyst*

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AAAC Legislative Mandates

- *Maintain a liaison between the African-American community and governmental entities;*
- *Review and comment on any proposed state legislation that would affect the African-American population in the state;*
- *Encourage African-American representation at all levels including state boards and commissions;*
- *Advise and provide information to the Governor on state policies concerning the African-American communities;*
- *Advise the Governor concerning the coordination and administration of state programs serving the African-American population;*
- *Secure appropriate recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of the African-American population of the state; and*
- *Prepare and submit to the Governor an annual report concerning its activities with appropriate recommendations concerning the African-American population in the state.*

Letter to the Governor

The Honorable M. Jodi Rell
Governor of the State of Connecticut
State Capitol
Hartford, CT 06106



*Michael Jefferson,
AAAC Chairperson*

Dear Governor Rell,

On behalf of my fellow commissioners, I am truly honored to submit the 2007 Annual Report of the Connecticut African American Affairs Commission (AAAC) for your perusal.

As you are aware, 2007 marks the Tenth Anniversary of the founding of the AAAC. While it is fitting to celebrate this landmark occasion we must all recognize that the challenges facing African-Americans in this state are many and our mission remains far from fulfilled.

In response to this challenge the AAAC supported various bills during the 2007 legislative session pertaining to education, health, criminal justice, economic development, housing and the environment. We were particularly pleased with your support for a bill to increase the pool of qualified teachers in our state as well as your support to revise the law regarding pardons, which will impact numerous individuals seeking a second chance in life.

Equally impressive was your support for laws regarding the reporting of lost and stolen firearms and compensation of persons wrongfully convicted and incarcerated. Your support of a special act sponsored by members of the legislature's Black and Hispanic Caucus to compensate James Tillman for his wrongful conviction and incarceration is commendable.

In 2007, the AAAC also pursued one of the most ambitious website construction projects in state government. Our new site has been designed to cater to the informational needs of parents, students, business owners, service providers and the general population.

We continue to utilize our public affairs program – *AAAC Update*, which is a 30 minute television show designed to share information about legislative and policy issues that affect the state's African-American population. We would very much enjoy having you as a guest.

In closing, we look forward to continuing our work with you and your administration on matters pertaining to legislation, the judicial selection process and promoting diversity in state government. While we recognize that we will not always agree, what is paramount is that each of us remains committed to making our state one in which every citizen has an equal opportunity to maximize his/her potential as a human being.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Jefferson', written in a cursive style.

Michael Jefferson
AAAC Chairperson



AAAC Highlights of the 2007 Legislative Session

OVERVIEW

The 2007 Legislative Session provided many opportunities and challenges. The African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC) focused its efforts mainly in the areas of education and health and continued its advocacy in other policy areas of concern, such as the criminal justice system, affordable housing, environmental justice, civil rights and minority business growth. Overall results were mixed, with a number of important gains and some unexpected losses. This narrative highlights the outcome of key initiatives the Commission supported in the 2007 Legislative Session.

EDUCATION

Earlier in the year the AAAC participated in a series of strategic meetings in partnership with a number of education advocates. As a result of these meetings the Commission co-sponsored a conference titled "Addressing the Achievement of Connecticut's Black and Hispanic/ Latino Male Students". Certain key initiatives were identified, a number of which the Commission successfully supported. Some of the notable successes included new funding for after-school programs, continued funding of neighborhood youth centers and mentoring services. Others included, funding for minority teacher recruitment and retention programs. A measure allowing students to serve suspension in school, instead of out of school was also signed into law.

HEALTH

Healthcare coverage remained a top priority on the AAAC's legislative agenda and generated much public interest. The Commission's primary goal was to support the legislature's efforts in establishing a comprehensive health care plan that would meet the diverse needs of Connecticut's uninsured population. Eliminating racial disparities in health care delivery was equally critical. While a comprehensive health care plan failed to materialize, a number of other key initiatives were successfully passed into law. These initiatives included the following: expansion of Husky eligibility, increased Medicaid provider rates and increased funding to extend Husky coverage for uninsured newborns up to 4 months.

ENVIRONMENT

On March 14, 2007 the AAAC, in partnership with a number of organizations co-sponsored an informational forum, to raise the awareness of lead poisoning in children. The Commission's efforts paid off in the following ways: increased funding for a comprehensive lead screening program, continued funding for childhood lead poisoning prevention and lead education programs. The bill also required local health authorities to conduct additional on-site inspections of lead sources.

A bill concerning environmental justice once again failed to get out of the blocks. This bill if enacted would ensure that residents have a voice in determining where power plants and other emission producing facilities are located. This issue is expected to be revisited in the next session.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Recognizing the need to assist ex-offenders transition into the community, the AAAC in partnership with the Connecticut Pardon Team, convened a press conference to tackle the issue. The efforts was successful and the Commission is excited to report that the budget provided new funding to educate and assist ex-offenders in applying for pardons.

Another area of concern for the Commission was curbing urban violence especially in light of the rise of homicide rates reported in some of Connecticut's major cities. The Commission responded by supporting *Senate Bill (SB) 938* which became *Public Act (PA) 05-248*. The passage of this bill can be described as a major step forward in reducing gun violence, considering that a number of attempts to enact such a law had previously failed. The new law holds negligent gun owners accountable by enforcing stricter reporting requirements and establishing stiffer penalties. The Commission was equally pleased to report that the legislature restored funding for the Firearms Trafficking Task Force after a number of years of inactivity.

TRANSPORTATION

In transportation the following successes are worth mentioning. The biennial budget provided additional funding for new buses and increased bus service in certain regions of the state, including but not limited to Bridgeport, New Haven, Stamford, Waterbury and Meriden. Proposed increases in bus fares originally included in the Governor's budget were eliminated.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the commencement of the 2007 Legislative Session the need to establish a state earned income tax credit seemed to have momentum and the attention of the legislature. The groundwork had been established and all that remained was guiding it through the legislative process. Unfortunately in spite of the diligent efforts of many anti-poverty advocates including the Commission, the bill failed to make it to the floor of the house or senate. A renewed effort is expected in the 2008 legislative session.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Commission was successful in its support of maintaining funding for individual development accounts (IDA's), a program aimed at providing financial literacy education and asset building to low-income families. Unfortunately the Commission's efforts to support funding for an economic disparity study, administered through the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities were unsuccessful. Other successful initiatives the Commission supported were funding for the Artist Collective and strengthening compliance and reporting requirements for the state set aside program.

CIVIL RIGHTS

The biennial budget provided funding for nongovernmental organizations to develop a coordinated response system to assist victims of trafficking. The Commission participated in meetings and was supportive of efforts to move the work of the Human Trafficking Task Force forward.

FAMILY AND CHILD WELFARE

The Commission supported a bill aimed at addressing the lack of paternal involvement. The bill died but prompted the interest of a number of legislators for a renewed effort at strengthening families. A number of other family related initiatives were successful, including expanding the family/school connection program, and establishing an urban youth violence reduction program.

HOUSING

The budget for housing provided funding for repair and rehabilitation of older public housing units. Funding was also provided for supportive housing and transitional housing for populations with special needs. The most significant development to date was the creation of a new program called "Home Connecticut" aimed at increasing construction of affordable housing, through incentives to municipalities. The Commission was supportive of these proposals.

ENERGY

Rising energy costs were a concern for the public and the state legislature even before the beginning of the legislative session. The following are some key outcomes: restored funding to the Operation Fuel program, requirements for the Department of Social Services (DSS) to maintain energy assistance benefit increases as adopted in 2005. Funding was provided to Department of Public Utility Control (DPUC) to launch a statewide energy efficiency outreach campaign to educate the public on energy conservation and choices.

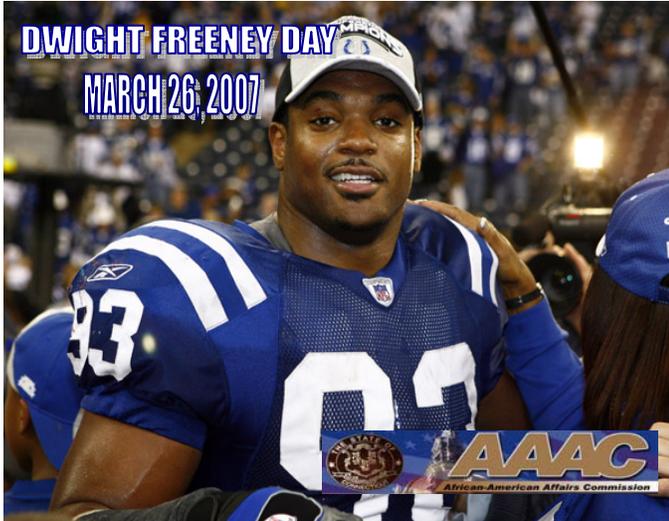
2007 Racial Profiling

During 2007, the African-American Affairs Commission continued to collect traffic-stop data from compliant police departments, pursuant to Public Act 03-160. Limited funding was provided in Fiscal Year 2006-07 for the first time. An abstract report will be forthcoming in Fiscal Year 2008-2009.

2007 ACTIVITIES

- DWIGHT FREENEY DAY
- GHANA INDEPENDENCE DAY
- LEAD POISONING FORUM
- CONNECTICUT PARDON TEAM
- TASTE OF THE CARIBBEAN
- 42ND ANNUAL NAACP STATEWIDE CONVENTION
- HEART HEALTHY
- SALVAGING THE AFRICAN AMERICAN VILLAGE (SAAV)
- MINORITY HEALTH SUMMIT ON YOUTH VIOLENCE AND INFANT HOMICIDE
- BLACK HISTORY MONTH CONCOURSE EXHIBIT
- CLASSIC AWARDS

2007 DWIGHT FREENEY DAY



Representative Marie Kirkley-Bey and Indianapolis Colts, # 93 Dwight Freney

On March 26, 2007, the African-American Affairs Commission honored Indianapolis Colts, defensive end Dwight Freney. Freney's spin moves and sacking prowess lead the Colts to 2007 Super Bowl Championship victory.

Dwight Freney was born in Hartford, Connecticut and raised in Bloomfield. As an outstanding athlete at Bloomfield High School, he earned several awards, including Super Prep, and attention from media outlets such as *Prep Football Report*, *USA Today*, the *Hartford Courant* and *New Haven Register*. After his collegiate football career at Syracuse University, Dwight graduated and was drafted as a first-round pick by the Indianapolis Colts, where he established a franchise record in career sacks.

In recognition of his achievements, Governor M. Jodi Rell declared March 26, 2007 *Dwight Freney Day*. Legislators including House Speaker James Amann, State Treasurer Denise Nappier, City of Hartford Deputy Mayor Veronica Airey Wilson, Bloomfield Mayor Sydney Schulman, the Bloomfield High School Athletic Department and the Syracuse University Alumni Association, offered remarks and congratulatory citations. Nearly 350 cheering fans were present at the event when Dwight's Bloomfield High School and Syracuse University football jerseys were retired.



Representative Ernest Hewitt and Dwight Freney, # 93 Indianapolis Colts,



Independence Day – Ghana Flag Raising Ceremony & Lead Poisoning Forum

*Indianapolis Colts, # 93 Dwight Freeney and
Veronica Airey-Wilson, Hartford Deputy Mayor*

On March 6, 2007 the African-American Affairs Commission hosted “Ghana’s 50th Independence Day Anniversary”. The event began with a Flag-Raising ceremony in the Hall of Flags of the State Capitol with Governor M. Jodi Rell and was followed by a reception held in the Old Judiciary Room of the State Capitol.



*Frank Sykes, AAAC Legislative Analyst, Cecilia Asamoah, Kojo Appiah,
Glenn Cassis, AAAC Executive Director, and Jem Kissi*

2ND Annual Taste of the Caribbean

On August 4, 2007 the African-American Affairs Commission joined the West Indian Celebration Committee, CAYASCO, Inc. and Riverfront Recapture in celebrating the Second Annual Taste of the Caribbean and Jerk Festival. About 7,000 people attended the event. Many took the opportunity to learn about the AAAC, its advocacy efforts, state boards and commissions, as well as Caribbean cuisine, music, and culture. The AAAC’s free bottled water, first aid kits and canvas bags were an extra bonus.



*Glenn A. Cassis, AAAC Executive Director, and Mr. Hugh Freeney, father of
Indianapolis Colts #93 Dwight Freeney*

2007 Health Education Lead Poisoning Forum

On March 14, 2007 the African-American Affairs Commission co-sponsored the 2007 Health Education Lead Poisoning Legislative Informational Forum, to discuss educational implications of childhood lead poisoning.

An introduction to an internationally acclaimed Cognitive Intervention Program was presented. Practitioners, parents and school instructional leaders provided information on cognitive interventions for improving learning for children with cognitive, behavioral and developmental disabilities through the use of a neurodevelopmental and cognitive education intervention model.



Donna Lydem, Hartford Educator, Cognitive Education Instructor/Presenter, Glenn Cassis, AAAC Executive Director, Edwin Vargas, Hartford Educator - Cognitive Education Instructor/Presenter, Monica Chusid, President SEPTA (Special Education Parent Teacher Association of Westport) and Dr. Vivian Cross, Executive Director of the Foundation for Educational Advancement, Inc.

Connecticut Pardon Team

The African-American Affairs Commission, Connecticut State Legislators and the Connecticut Pardon Team, held a press conference on January 10, 2007 at the State Capitol. The purpose of the event was to announce a series of statewide informational forums about the state's non-inmate pardon process. During the year, the AAAC continued to assist the Connecticut Pardon Team, as well as help interested individuals with the pardon process. Currently, persons who have been convicted of crimes and have completed their sentence, parole and/or probation, and have had no criminal violations for the preceeding past five years, may apply for a state pardon. Additionally, the AAAC encourages the public to cntact the AAAC office or the Connecticut Pardon Team for pardon information.



Rosetta Jones, AAAC Commissioner, Richard A. Caron, Sr., CT Pardon Team Treasurer, Diane Daniels, CT Pardon Team Executive Director / President, Jacqueline Caron, CT Pardon Team Founder and Chairwoman, Glenn A. Cassis, AAAC Executive Director and Attorney Michael Jefferson, AAAC Chairperson.



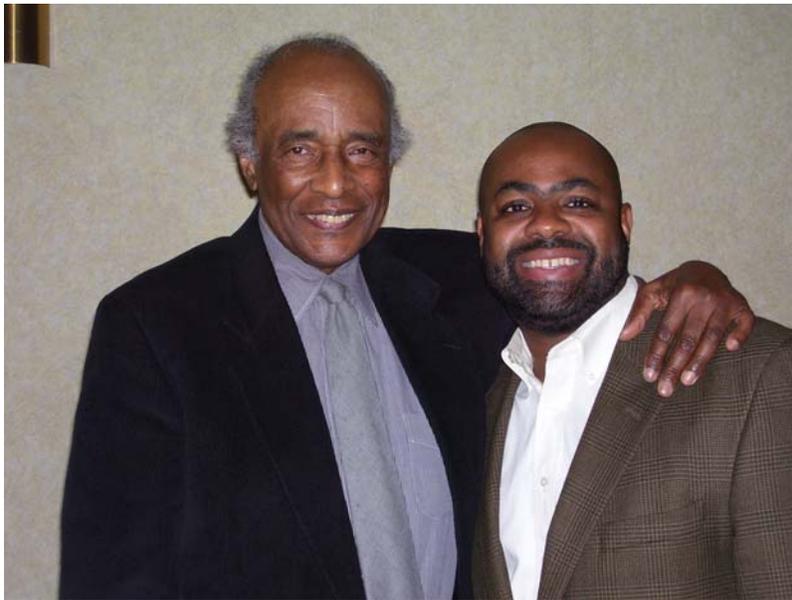
Back Row: AAAC Chairperson, Attorney Michael Jefferson, CT Pardon Team Executive Director/President , Diane Daniels, AAAC Executive Director, Glenn A. Cassis, CT Pardon Team Treasurer, Richard A. Caron, Sr., CT Pardon Team Founder / Chairwoman, Jacqueline Caron, State Representative Jason Bartlett, State Representative Douglas McCrory, State Representative Faith McMahan and State Representative Kenneth Green.

Front Row: State Representative Toni Walker, AAAC Commissioner Rosetta Jones, State Senator Martin Looney, State Representative Minnie Gonzalez and State Representative Marie Kirkley-Bey

42nd Annual NAACP Statewide Convention

The African American Affairs Commission co-sponsored the 42nd Annual NAACP Statewide Convention in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Among the roster of national speakers, for the “Power Beyond Measure” conference were veteran newscaster and WABC- TV talk show host Gil Noble, Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health - Dr. Terry Mason, Black Entertainment Television Host Jeff Johnson, CNN financial journalist and co-author of *The True Cost of Happiness The Real Story Behind Managing Your Money*, Stacey Tisdale.

In addition to providing inspiration and networking, the two day event which began on October 26, focused attendees on the issues of health, education, leadership, and civil rights and community activism.



Gil Noble, Veteran Newsmen, Emmy Award-winning host of WABC-TV's Like It Is, and Attorney Michael Jefferson, AAAC Chairperson.

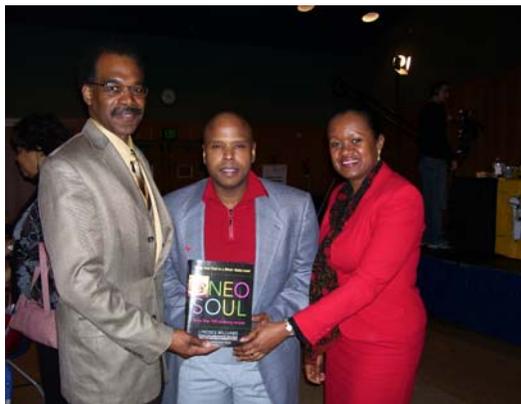
SEARCH YOUR HEART GO RED EVENT

The African-American Affairs Commission continued its work with the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the American Heart and the American Stroke Associations to increase awareness of cardiovascular disease and how to prevent it.

During February 2007, “Heart Month”, the Commission worked with the American Heart Association to bring information and mouthwatering cuisine to the attendees of the *Search Your Heart* luncheon. *Search Your Heart* is an American Heart Association initiative to engage faith-based and cultural organizations, as part of outreach efforts to provide information and education about heart related health issues.

The event, held at Quinnipiac University, focused on women and African-American women in particular. Heart disease is the number one killer of women and African-American women suffer disproportionately. Lindsey Williams, author of the *Neo-Soul Cookbook* was the celebrity guest. The Connecticut Culinary Institute prepared lunch for the occasion, demonstrated heart-healthy *Neo-Soul Cookbook* recipes and provided samples to the audience. Other presenters included Dr. Marian Evans, Director of the Bridgeport Health and Social Services Department. Her presentation focused on the need for proper diet and exercise as well as community health resources.

Clergy, ministerial staff, community volunteers, “heart ambassadors” and members of various faith congregations were the majority among those in attendance.



AAAC Executive Director, Glenn A. Cassis, Lindsey Williams and AAAC Public Affairs / Special Projects Coordinator, Cheryl Harris Forbes



Lindsey Williams, Dr. Marian Evans, Director of Bridgeport Health and Social Services Department, Lorene Highbridge, American Heart Association - State Health Alliances Director, Maredia Warren, American Heart Association - Senior Regional Director, and Glenn Cassis, AAAC Executive Director.

Salvaging the African American Village (SAAV) Minority Health Summit on Youth Violence and Infant Homicide

After nearly eight months of organizing and planning, a Minority Health Summit on Youth Violence and Infant Homicide was held at the Legislative Office Building on Saturday, June 16, 2007. The goal of the Summit was to inaugurate an African-American Village Council to develop a strategic plan to address African-American youth violence, and to give youth threatened by street violence a public platform to speak to adults about their concerns.

With support from the African-American Affairs Commission, leadership from the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (Hartford), sponsorship from the United States Department of Health and Human Services (Office of Minority Health, Region I), and the City of Hartford Department of Youth Services, the event attracted several organizational partners. Among those joining the effort were: the Hartford Police Department, State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, Department of Children and Families, and Department of Social Services, Greater Hartford Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, Union Baptist Church, Connecticut Judicial Department, and Mothers United Against Violence.

National and local leaders attending the conference included the United States Acting Surgeon General, Rear Admiral Kenneth Mortisugu, Hartford Mayor Eddie Perez, Connecticut Department of Public Safety Commissioner John Danaher, Hartford Police Chief Daryl Roberts, and Department of Children and Families Area Director Michael Williams.

The event was successful in increasing the participation of youth and the faith-community in tackling youth violence. It also introduced the SAAV Mentoring and Restorative Justice Program to the community, and helped to increase awareness of model prevention programs for reducing risk factors that contribute to violent behavior.

Sessions led by youth included the dramatic presentation - *Taking It By Force*. The script focused on a memorial service for youth victimized by violence. Additionally, two group discussions; *Salvaging the Village: An Intergenerational Panel*, and *Effectiveness of Current Prevention Programs* were well attended. Rear Admiral Mortisugu presented the keynote address: *Closing the Disparity Gap in Youth Violence Among the African-American Population*.



*Hartford Mayor, Eddie Perez, Hartford Police Chief, Daryl K. Roberts
and Rayshawn Robinson*



In Recognition and Observance of Black History Month

The State of Connecticut
African-American Affairs Commission

Proudly Presented

***AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY:
A WORK IN PROGRESS***

February 2-9, 2007

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY: A WORK IN PROGRESS

The table top exhibit *Black History: A Work In Progress* held in the Capitol/ Legislative Office Building Concourse, provided an opportunity for more than 21 organizations to gain greater visibility and to display their contributions to the African American community.

Held in February in celebration of Black History month, during one of the busiest times of the Legislative Session, the exhibit afforded staff, visitors, and legislators alike the chance to become familiar with governmental, non-profit, historic and cultural organizations and to explore their service connections and significance to the African – American community. Exhibitors and their materials varied widely. African-American history panels, memorabilia and ephemera were prominently featured, as was information about health and wellness, environmental justice, breast and prostate cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and stroke prevention.

***AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY:
A WORK IN PROGRESS PARTICIPANTS...***

- African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities (AFCAMP)
- American Heart Association
- Amistad America
- Amistad Foundation
- Bill Costen Sky Endeavors
- Bone Marrow Foundation
- Connecticut Pre-Engineering Program (CPEP)
- Charter Oak State College
- Citizen for Quality Sickle Cell Care
- Connecticut Association Against Domestic Violence
- Department of Public Health Heart Disease/Stroke Chronic Maladies
- Dr. Caldwell McCoy Jr. Memorial Engineering Scholarship Foundation
- Foundation for Educational Advancement / Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention
- Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut
- John E. Rogers Foundation
- Connecticut Association of Educational Opportunity Programs (CAEOP)
- National Kidney Foundation
- Prostate Screening Program
- Sickle Cell Disease Association of America of Southern Connecticut
- Small/Minority Biz Showcase
- Urban League of Greater Hartford

The following individuals were chosen as recipients of the Eighth Annual Classic Awards, held on May 5, 2007 at the Legislative Office Building. Honors were bestowed on Connecticut residents who contributed to the quality of life of Connecticut's African-American communities. Honorees were selected from a distinguished pool submitted by the public. More than 225 people celebrated the event.

AAAC Woman of the Year

Marilyn Moore

AAAC Man of the Year

Kenneth W. Mouning, Sr.

AAAC Youths of the Year

Jonathan White and Judy James

Lifetime Achievement

Elizabeth Hall Hurley

Business and Economic Development

Tony March



2007 Classic Award Recipients



Woman of the Year
Marilyn Moore



Man of the Year
Kenneth W. Mouning, Sr.



Youth of the Year
Judy James



Lifetime Achievement
Elizabeth Hall Hurley



Business & Economic Development
Tony March



Youth of the Year
Jonathan White

2007 Classic Awards



AAAC 2007 Honorees

Tony March, Marilyn Moore, Elizabeth Hall-Hurley, Judy James, Jonathan White and Kenneth Mouning, Jr.



AAAC 2007 Hillhouse Basketball Team Honorees

Hillhouse Basketball Team Seniors along with AAAC Chairperson, Michael Jefferson, and Kermit Carolina, Hillhouse Basketball Coach.



AAAC 2007 Classic Award Honorees and AAAC Commissioners

Rosetta Jones, Marilyn Moore, Kenneth Mouning Jr., Elizabeth Hall-Hurley, AAAC Chairperson Michael Jefferson, Judy James, Tony March, Jonathan White and AAAC Commissioner Derrick McBride

Outreach Events & Activities

- African-American Women's Summit
- Black and Latino Male Student Achievement Gap
- Bloomfield Public Schools
- Capitol Preparatory Magnet School
- Citizenship Forum
- Commission on Children – Poverty Council
- Connecticut Health Foundation Multi-Cultural Health Forums
- Department of Environmental Protection / Black History Presentation
- Juvenile Justice Issues Forum
- National Council of Black Males
- Permanent Commission on the Status of Women - Leadership Roundtable
- Permanent Commission on the Status of Women - Making Women Visible Day
- Reflecting Connecticut Forums
- Small & Minority Business Showcase
- Taste of The Caribbean
- Trafficking Task Force

- Appointive Boards and Commissions
- Black Male Development
- CT Public Interest Law Journal/ Center for Children Advocacy
- Charter Oak College
- Childcare
- DMV Immigrant Concerns
- Department of Developmental Services
- Department of Public Health
- Disparate Criminal Justice
- Economic and Business Development
- Educational Achievement
- Election Day Registration
- Environmental Justice
- Greater New England Alliance of Black School Educators
- Health Programming
- Health Status Disparities
- Juvenile Justice
- Juvenile Violence
- National Correctional Center
- Organ Transplants
- Pay Equity
- Predatory Lending
- Prison Reform
- Secondary School Reform
- Sickle Cell Association
- Sickle Cell Treatment Disparities
- Social Service Program Reductions

- The African-American Affairs Commission would like to thank the following organizations whose partnerships helped to support AAAC activities.
 - Central Connecticut State University
 - Commission on Racial & Ethnic Disparities
 - Connecticut Department of Education
 - Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection
 - Connecticut Department of Higher Education
 - Connecticut Department of Labor
 - Connecticut Department of Transportation
 - Connecticut State Chapter of NAACP Branches
 - DemocracyWorks, Inc.
 - Department of Administrative Services
 - Freedom of Information Commission
 - Greater Hartford Interfaith Coalition for Equity & Justice
 - Groton Sub Base
 - Help Educate Lead Poisoning Initiative
 - Indiana Commission on Black Males
 - Latino & Puerto Rican Affairs Commission
 - Manchester Community College
 - Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
 - Salvaging the African-American Village
 - Secretary of the State's Office
 - Small Business Administration
 - State Education Resource Center

AAAC COMMISSIONERS

Chairperson	-	Michael Jefferson,
Vice-Chairperson	-	George Logan,
Secretary	-	Rosetta Jones,
Treasurer	-	Derrick McBride,
Commissioner	-	Kristen M. Clark
Commissioner	-	Lillie B. Crosby
Commissioner	-	Fred Pierre-Louis
Commissioner	-	Alphonse Wright

AAAC STAFF

Executive Director	-	Glenn A. Cassis
Public Affairs/Special Projects Coordinator	-	Cheryl Harris Forbes
Senior Legislative Analyst	-	Frank Sykes
Senior Legislative Secretary	-	Denise Drummond

AAAC Commissioner Profiles



Michael Jefferson

Member of the Public and Chairperson – Commissioner Michael Jefferson is a criminal defense attorney and community activist. He earned his Juris Doctor from the University of Connecticut School of Law in 1995 after completing a Masters degree in Child Welfare from Saint Joseph College (1991) and a Bachelors degree in Computer Science from Southern Connecticut State University (1986). In addition to his role as founder of New Haven’s Black Parent Teacher’s Organization and the AIDS Brigade, an organization to fight the effects of AIDS in the African-American community, Attorney Jefferson established New Haven’s first ever All Civilian Review Board as a means of combating police brutality. For two years he hosted WNHC-1340 AM’s radio public affairs show “*Inside the Community*”. Attorney Jefferson continues to advocate for reform of Connecticut’s criminal justice and juvenile justice systems. He was appointed in September 2003 by Senate Majority Leader, Martin M. Looney.



George Logan

Housing Member and Vice Chairperson - Commissioner George Logan Housing Member and Vice-Chairperson George S. Logan is Director-Capital & Planning at Aquarion Water Company of Connecticut. In this role he is responsible for the entire range of Capital and Planning activities, including water resource planning, project management, new services, purchasing and inventory for Aquarion’s facilities in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. A resident of Ansonia, Mr. Logan completed undergraduate study at Trinity College where he received a bachelor of science degree, and he received a masters degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Bridgeport. In addition to serving on the AAAC, he is a member of the Griffin Health Services (Derby-CT) Board of Directors / Griffin Hospital Board of Trustees, Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce-Inc. Board of Directors, Junior Achievement of Western Connecticut-Inc. Board Of Directors and Trinity College Engineering Advisory Council. A native of New Haven-CT, Mr. Logan has an extensive record of community service within the Bridgeport and New Haven areas. In 1998, House Majority Leader Moira Lyons appointed Mr. Logan as a Commissioner of the African- American Affairs Commission. In 2005, he was reappointed by House Majority Leader, James Amann.



Rosetta Jones

Human Services and Secretary - Commissioner Rosetta Jones retired in 2001 as Warden of Brooklyn Correction Institution. Her career began with the Connecticut Dept of Corrections as a Correction officer. Spanning 22 years Ms. Jones ascended through the ranks as Lieutenant at Niantic Correctional Institution for Women; Executive Assistant to the Deputy Commissioner of Operations, Commissioner, Deputy Warden, and Warden. The Connecticut General Assembly, Association of Police Commissioners, Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice, Connecticut College, CPTV, have recognized her. Ms. Jones holds a Master’s Degree in Organizational Management and Leadership from Springfield College, and was recently elected as a Councilwoman, in the town of Montville, Ct. She was appointed to the African-American Affairs Commission in November 2003 by Governor John G. Rowland.

AAAC Commissioner Profiles



Derrick McBride

Public Safety Member and Treasurer - Commissioner Derrick McBride is a native of Bridgeport. He currently resides in Willimantic. Mr. McBride holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Benedict College, Columbia, South Carolina. He was appointed to the commission by the Speaker of the House in 2001. He has worked in law enforcement since 1987 at Eastern Connecticut State University's Police Department, and is currently the department's Executive Officer/2nd in Command. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, VA. He served in the United States Army Reserves for 10 years as a Captain and member of a Civil Affairs Unit. Mr. McBride is involved in many roles at the University and within the Windham community. As a reflection of this commitment, he is a recipient of Eastern's Martin Luther King Community Service Award and the Excellence in Service to the University Award. He was appointed by the Windham First Selectman to serve on Windham's Affirmative Action Commission. Mr. McBride is deeply devoted to his family and church.



Kristen M. Clark

Member of the Public – Commissioner Kristen M. Clark is the Village for Families and Children, Inc.'s Community Ambassador. During her fourteen years with the agency, Ms. Clark has worked as a supervisor, therapist, and case manager in the Village's foster care program. As part of her community involvement, Ms. Clark participates as an officer with several organizations in the Greater Hartford area. She is currently the President of the Howard University Alumni Club of Greater Hartford, an active member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and member of the Board of Directors for Community Health Center in Hartford. Additionally, Ms. Clark serves as a member of the National Association of Black Social Workers, the Greater Hartford Alliance of Black Social Workers, the NAACP, past member of Hartford Communities that Care Advisory Board and the Neighborhood Enforcement and Stabilization Team (NEST). She is involved with the Development Committee of the Open Hearth as well as the Corporate Intern and Young Professionals committee of the MetroHartford Alliance Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Clark was appointed to the AAAC Board in 2007 by Representative Christopher G. Donovan.



Lillie Crosby

Environment Member - Commissioner Lillie Crosby of Monroe is a retired executive from the Southern New England Telecommunications Corporation (SNET). She attended Waterbury Public Schools and holds a Bachelors of Science degree from Teikyo Post University, where she majored in Business Office Management and Administration. She also holds a Masters of Science in Health and Human Services from the University of Bridgeport, and was a Minority Fellow with the Connecticut Community Technical Colleges' Minority Fellowship Program. Mrs. Crosby has served as a Commissioner for both the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission. In 1998, Senate Minority Leader M. Adela Eads appointed Mrs. Crosby to the AAAC

AAAC Commissioner Profiles



Fred Pierre-Louis

Member of Public – Commissioner Fred Pierre-Louis is a proven leader in both community and professional arenas. He is a passionate team player with a keen understanding of group dynamics. Mr. Pierre –Louis has fourteen years of combined business development and project management experience. He is pursuing a doctorate degree in educational leadership at the University of Hartford. His academic achievement include: a Sixth Year Degree in Secondary Education from the University of Bridgeport, an Executive Masters of Business Administration (EMBA) from the University of Connecticut, an Advanced Business. Executive Program from the Amos Tuck Business School at Dartmouth College, a Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry from the University of Connecticut, and Business Computer Programming credentials from **the** Computer Processing Institute, in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Commissioner Pierre-Louis is committed to continuous self-improvement and actualization. He is a member of Stamford Republican Town Committee, the vice-chairperson of the Smith House (for elderly citizens in Stamford), a member of Kappa Delta Pi International Education Honor Society and the chairman of the Education Committee of AAAC. Commissioner Pierre-Louis was appointed in 2006, by House Minority Leader, Robert M. Ward.



Alphonse Wright

Member of Public - Alphonse Wright has more than twenty years of Human Resources experience and eleven years as a mortgage broker, dedicated to meeting the needs of small business. As part of his commitment to give back to the community, he participates on a number of inner-city boards as well as the Connecticut State Board of Education. In Norwalk, he was Excel's Chairman of the Board. Excel is an organization that helps at-risk students graduate high school. As a result of Mr. Wright's willingness to represent his community and engage the political process, he received a letter of recognition from President George W. Bush, Congresswoman Nancy Johnson and Governor M. Jodi Rell. In addition to serving on the AAAC Board, Mr. Wright is Chairman of the New Britain Commission on Community Neighborhood and Development, Board Member of the New Britain Human Resources Agency and a Trustee of McCullough Temple. Mr. Wright is a graduate of Boston University. He was appointed to the African-American Affairs Commission by House Republican Leader, Lawrence F. Cafero, Jr. in 2007.

AAAC Staff Profiles



Glenn A. Cassis

Executive Director - Glenn A. Cassis has served as the Executive Director of the State of Connecticut African-American Affairs Commission since August 2006. Prior to joining the AAAC, Mr. Cassis, a New York native and Bloomfield resident, worked for nearly 20 years as the executive director of the Connecticut Pre-Engineering Program, Inc.(CPEP). Under his leadership, the statewide program expanded from a single school district serving 43 students, to 12 urban school districts serving more than 9,000 students. CPEP is a non-profit educational program that encourages underrepresented minority and female middle and high school students to pursue careers in math, science, and engineering. Mr. Cassis is an active member of several professional and non-profit organizations, including but not limited to the American Society of Engineering Educators, the Southern New England Association of Technical Professionals, and Hartford NAACP. He serves as a board member or officer in the following organizations: Connecticut Council for Philanthropy, Bloomfield Raiders Youth Football, treasurer of the National Association of Pre-College Directors, Connecticut Academy for Education Fellow, vice-president of the Bloomfield Education Foundation and reviewer for National Science Foundation and NASA. Mr. Cassis attended the University of Connecticut where he earned his undergraduate degree in political science and his graduate degree in arts administration.



Cheryl Harris Forbes

Public Affairs/Special Projects Director - Cheryl Harris Forbes is a Connecticut native and graduate of Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. Prior to her current position, she worked as a Writer/Editor in the University Relations Office at Eastern Connecticut State University. Her accomplishments include the creation of Connecticut State University's first institutional advertisements, and collaborative efforts with the State Department of Environmental Protection, the Governor's Office, and WFSB-TV3 to produce a statewide water conservation campaign, including television public service announcements



Franklin Sykes

Legislative Analyst II - Franklin Sykes is a resident of Rocky Hill and holds an MBA degree from the University of New Haven. Mr. Sykes spent the earlier part of his youth outside the U.S. including England. His parents finally settled in their native Ghana where he completed high school with an emphasis in Liberal Arts. Mr. Sykes is also a veteran and served in the U.S. Army in Germany. Mr. Sykes has a well rounded background. He has worked in the financial industry, briefly in academia and has always had passion for humanitarian work. Mr. Sykes main functions in his position are research, policy analysis and advocacy. He also serves as liaison between the Commission and the legislature. Frank understands the socio-economic challenges facing minority populations in the state. To this end he has been proactive in forging relationships with legislators, has worked in partnership with individuals and community groups, to improve the welfare of the African-American community. Mr. Sykes provides testimony at public hearings and forums, to present the Commission's position in influencing state policy and legislation.



Denise Drummond

Senior Legislative Assistant - Denise Drummond is a native of Connecticut. Prior to joining the African-American Affairs Commission, Mrs. Drummond worked for Allegheny Ludlum as an executive secretary, a payroll analyst, and Materials Management Coordinator.

AAAC TALENT BANK

The African-American Affairs Commission maintains a talent bank of applications from African-Americans who are interested in appointment to state boards, councils, commissions, or task forces. The African-American Affairs Commission serves as a resource by forwarding these applications to appropriate appointing authorities. (Generally, positions on state boards and commissions are unpaid, and are appointed by the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, Speaker of the House or other state officials in accordance with State law.)

The Connecticut Secretary of State's published report, *Gender and Racial Diversity on Connecticut State Appointive Boards, (2005)* revealed of the 1,859 appointed members of the 189 reporting state boards and commissions, 89.0% were White, 6.7% Black, 3.1% Hispanic and 1.2% were classified as "Other". Consequently, the African-American Affairs Commission worked to increase the participation of African-Americans on state boards and commissions.

The Commission is aggressively utilizing its online capabilities and outreach efforts to increase the number of African-American constituents who are referred to appointing authorities with the goal of making our government more representative of the population.

Talent Bank Application



AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION

TALENT BANK FORM

Name: _____
Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial

Address: _____
Street City or Town State/Zip Code

Telephone: _____
Home phone Work phone fax E-mail address

Employer: _____

Gender: Male Female - U.S. Citizen: Yes No - Racial/Ethnic Background: _____

Registered Voter: Yes No - Political Affiliation: Democrat Republican Independent

SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE / BACKGROUND / OR ATTACH RESUME

Education: _____
Degree Major/Concentration Institution Graduation Year

(Areas of interest for appointment):

____ Education ____ Human Services ____ Health ____ Housing
____ Public Safety ____ Children / Youth ____ Economic Development ____ Other

Briefly describe your community experience. Please include organizations purposes, your role/title and dates served.



African-American Affairs Commission

The African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC) is located in Room 509 (5th Floor) of the State Capitol in Hartford, Connecticut.

The African-American Affairs Commission maintains a website that includes information about our Commission, our Legislative and Administrative Priorities, Resource Links, Talent Bank Information and Forms, Commissioner and Staff Profiles, Internship Program Information, Service Providers, News Items, a College Search, a listing of regional employment opportunities and a Calendar of Events. Our website address is www.cga.ct.gov/aaac.

If you would like to request additional information, or to correspond with the AAAC, please feel free to contact us:

**State of Connecticut
African-American Affairs Commission
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue - Room 509
Hartford, CT 06106-1596**

(860) 240-8555 (Phone)

(860) 240-8444 (Fax)

[aac@cga.ct.gov](mailto:aaac@cga.ct.gov)

www.cga.ct.gov/aaac

We look forward to hearing from you.

