The Links, Incorporated
Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service
Bradenton/Sarasota (FL) Chapter

THE CHAIN

A QUARTERLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2020 • ISSUE 2 • VOLUME 1

VOICE OF YOUR PRESIDENT

Doris A. Johnson

The opening lyrics of "Auld Lang Syne" asks a question, "Should auld acquaintances be forgot and never brought to mind?" Of course, it is a rhetorical question, which leads to interpretation on the part of the hearer. To me, the meaning refers to the question, "Is it right that old times be forgotten?" As I reflect on the numerous chapter activities that were planned and implemented during the 2019 membership year, I am reminded of that old folk song. It was sung by many New Year's Eve party-goers, and it has helped me for many years to appropriately store away the good memories of days gone by. From my vantage point, over the past three and one-half years, friendships have strengthened, and we have logged a significantly higher number of service hours . Spending quality time together has become a hallmark of our chapter. I anticipate that members will continue to do more meaningful and fulfilling service, The sisters of this chapter always give unselfishly of their time and utilize their knowledge, skills, abilities and resources to achieve our goals and objectives; for that, I am thankful. As the 9th President of this chapter, I look forward to continuing to live up to my obligations because of you. "Thank you" is the best prayer that anyone can say; I use that one a lot. "Thank you expresses extreme gratitude, humility, under-standing."
~~Alice Walker.

It is my prayer that each of you have a year that flourishes in all things you do.

"Thank You" & Happy New Year!!!

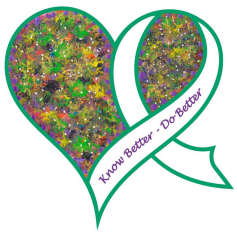
DID YOU KNOW?

ALUMNA LINK AUDREY COLEMAN

Many of Alumna Audrey's traits and characteristics were obvious to everyone, such as her beauty, grace, style, million-watt smile and humility. But, did you know that she adored the organ and began playing it and the piano at the age of 5? Did you know that her parents offered to purchase her a car while she was in high school, but she deferred because it wasn't "stylish" enough for her taste?

Did you know that Alumna Audrey was one of only four African-American students from grade school to high school throughout the entire school system? Did you know that began her career in education as a 5th-grade teacher? Did you know that she was selected as one of this nation's "10 most influential" African-American women and met with Presidents Reagan and Vice President George Bush? Did you know that she was also honored by President Bill Clinton? And, there is so much more we are sure you did not know about Alumna Link Audrey R. Coleman.

"KNOW BETTER - DO BETTER"



Saturday, March 28, 2020

11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Michael's On East

A portion of contributions are tax deductible. Net proceeds will benefit chapter programs, including scholarships. Co-chairs Link Elma McKay (ejmckay58@yahoo.com) and Link Judge Karimu Hill-Harvey (karimuhillharvey@yahoo.com).

MEMBERS GO RED DURING 2019 MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Chapter Joins National "Wear Red Day"

Online communities, news anchors, corporate America and folks across this Nation wear red on the first Friday of each February and unite for the common goal of eradicating heart disease and stroke. While others will observe this practice on Friday, February 7th this year, our chapter members will "wear red" during our membership meeting on **Saturday, February 1st.** Go Red for Women is the American Heart Association's national signature movement to raise awareness about women's heart health and catalyst for change to improve the lives of women globally.

Connecting Threads

Quilting has a long and rich African-American heritage. African-American quilters today are making striking quilts that reflect African culture. In addition to the obvious functional purpose, quilts were also made as a source of artistic expressions to the home. Our Arts Facet, led by Link Barbara Sturdivant, will host quilt-making work-shops at The Educational Consultants Consortium in Palmetto on January 8, 15, 22, 29, February 5, 12 and 19. Participants will include the after-school students, staff, active and alumni Links.

This is a Southern Area Initiative and a component of the All Stars Program. The finished product will find its home at the Safe House in the Bahamas.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (LI & PA) - CONT'D

Wengate Newton - D: State Representative District 70; represents parts of Hillsborough and Manatee Counties; key committee of interest is Children, Family and Seniors Sub-Committee; not seeking re-elections; past support has been on our issues.

Margaret Goode - D: State Representative District 72; represents parts of Sarasota; 2750 Stickney Pt. Rd. Sarasota 34231; margaret.goode@myfloridahouse.gov; 941-955-8077; key committee of interest is Health Market Reform. Sponsored multiple bills effecting health issues and weapons and firearms; watch HBs 823 and 451.

See you at Links Day at The Capitol • January 23 - 24, 2020!

OFF THE CHAIN OPERATIONS TIDBITS

Finance - February is the deadline for Chapter Budgets to be approved by membership.

The Executive Board can approve an amended budget without chapter approval as long as there is no change to the bottom line.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (LI & PA)

by Link Peggye Mezile

Wishing my Link sisters in the Bradenton/Sarasota area and all of Florida a hearty "Carry On" for a healthy and service impactful 2020. We met the challenges of 2019 and look forward to carrying forward the Links' torch in 2020. We have assessed the political and social landscape and have planned service activities that utilize available resources.

It is always wise to not only vote, but to be an informed and educated voter. Many of us moved here from other sections of the country where we might have enjoyed a closer relationship with our state legislators. In our earlier lives, we might have taken those relationships for granted because we knew the ropes and knew the deal. Link sisters, we are in a new area with new and changing players, and the "rules" might be different. Most of the state legislators do not look like we do, and in some instances, do not have "our" issues as a legislative priority. However, we cannot take anything for granted. Sometimes people who look like we do do not have "our" issues as their priority.

Some basic information on a few legislators :

Bill Galvano - R: State Senator District 21; President of Senate; represents Hillsborough and Manatee Counties; on Education Committee; 1023 Manatee Ave., W., Ste. 201 Bradenton 34205 galvano.bill.web@flsenatelgov; key committee of interest is the Appropriations Committee

Tommy Gregory - R: State Representative District 73; represents parts of Manatee and Sarasota Counties; 5228 E SR 64 Bradenton 34208; 805-717-5073; key committee of interest is the Children, Family and Seniors Sub-Committee; watch HB 2687.

NSBE NEWS

Booker Nation - BS LINKS NSBE JR. Chapter

Newly elected chapter officers flanked by Advisors Links Wanda Gilbert (L) and Marilyn Thompson (R)

by Link Marilyn Thompson

National President, Kimberly Jefffries Leonard renewed and expanded our partnership with the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) in 2018. Chapters are encouraged to establish and maintain NSBE Jr. Chapters for students between grades three and twelve. Our partnership has been widely successful. As of November 2019, 68 chapters have been established throughout the country and Jamaica. This represents one-third of all NSBE Jr. Chapters chartered worldwide! Thanks to the generosity of corporate sponsors this year, all active chapters who met specific criteria received a grant up to $600. Our states-side NSBE Jr. Chapter was established during the 2018 school year and currently consists of 25 students of which 56% (14) are boys. The NSBE vision and core values are cited at each meeting, and presentations by guest speakers are invited to share the latest STEM concepts and careers. The remaining sessions and topics are as follows:

January 17 - Forensic Science: Sarasota Police Department
February 21 - USF Engineering Expo Field Trip/Tampa
March 20 - Intro to Coding: Microsoft Store Representative
April 17 - Artificial Intelligence in Medicine: Link Dr. Katrina Davis

Our goals are (1) to cultivate the interest of students in STEM education and careers, (2) encourage them to enroll in STEM courses offered at BMS and (3) participate in local STEM competitions. The attainment of these goals will TRANSFORM OUR COMMUNITIES ~ FULFILL OUR PURPOSE.

STEM Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

Watford Hill - BS LINKS Hopewell, Jamaica, WI

NSBE Jr. Chapter Members studying energy

NSBE Jr. Chapter Established at Watford Hill Primary School

A NSBE Jr. Chapter was established on the campus of WHPS in October 2019. This year's STEM curriculum focuses on energy. The students were introduced to "The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind" and LEGO blocks. They used LEGO block in December to build cars using a rubber band as a source of energy.

LINKS PARTNERSHIP WITH WATFORD HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL (WHPS) PROPELS SCHOOL TO NEW HEIGHTS

by Link Carolyn Glenn

Transformational programs, activities and resources delivered by The Links, Incorporated, Unconditional Love for Children (ULC), Inc. and partners are yielding huge successes at WHPS. In 2019 alone, sixth-grade graduates increased their national test scores by 20 percent over 2018; the chess team that competes among all schools, including high schools, continues to reign as the Hanover Parish champions since 2017; the school was recognized and awarded as having the nation's most outstanding parent involvement program and **Link Brenda Belsito**, assisted by **Alumna Link Thelma Mumford-Glover** of Magnolia (GA) Chapter, installed a National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) Jr. Chapter. These accomplishments are among the many reasons that Dr. Michele Pinnock, Area IV Director of the Ministry of Education, deemed our Watford partnership as her model for all Montego Bay Area schools.

Since our partnership with Watford in 2014, student enrollment has increased from 38 to 73 students and community interest and parent involvement is at an all-time high, according to WHPS Principal, Fania Davis. The construction of a preschool department has been approved to address this increased interest and enrollment. Southern Area Links Chapters will fund a classroom, and ULC will build a second one, along with a dedicated pre-school playground. Link Carolyn Glenn met with the construction department of the Jamaica Ministry of Education in November, and they have pledged to fast-track the construction in 2020.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Information & Timelines

Community Service Hours:

- May 1 - April 30: Program/Service Hours Year
- April 1: Last day to submit service hours to your chapter's membership chair using Track-It-Forward. If your facet programming extends beyond April 1, you may project an estimated number of hours that will be accumulated after the chapter's submission of its Master Data Form. If an estimate is necessary, hours may only be accumulated through April 30.
- Activities that DO NOT earn service hours include travel time, local (non-sanctioned) community service, social and meal time at meetings, attendance at National Assembly and Area Conferences.

Dues & Assessments:

- All national and local dues must ($635) be paid no later than the last day of March each year.
- Be reminded that the Building Assessment is due April 1, 2020. While the Building Assessment can be paid at any time, the final payment must be paid by April 1 of the third year of membership to avoid forfeiture of membership.

Attendance Requirements:

- An active member shall be regular in attendance at chapter meetings. To maintain active status, a member shall not miss more than three meetings without an excused absence.
- Excused absences shall consist of illnesses, death, work-related obligations or personal reasons.
- The member shall give the reason for absence t the First Vice President in writing as soon as reasonably possible.
- A member who has more than three unexcused absences shall be sent a letter from the membership committee documenting her lack of attendance and requesting that she meet with the President.

Membership Intake Process:

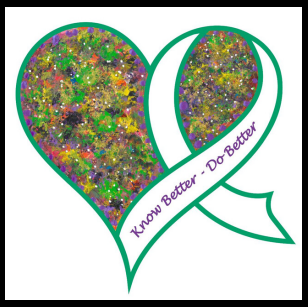
- We are now well into our Membership Intake Process and what an exciting time this is; reviewing and presenting candidates, voting, preparing for orientation and induction!! These are all key components of growth of our beloved chapter. Voting on perspective candidates will occur at our February meeting. It is anticipated that the Induction Ceremony will take place on May 17, 2020. The schedule of orientation sessions is the the planning process. Stay tuned for an announcement of the dates in the near future.

"Know Better - Do Better"

The Bradenton/Sarasota (FL) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated is on a mission to help Black women "know better" so they can "do better" about their physical and mental wellness. Maya Angelou's quote resonates loudly for us and serves as the inspiration for our upcoming **"Know Better - Do Better"** Inaugural Women's Health Awareness Luncheon on **Saturday, March 28, 2020 at Michael's on East from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** Sponsorships are available, and individual tickets are $100 each.

Did you know that about 49% of all Black women in the U.S. over the age of 20 have some form of heart disease? That's nearly half! Give that some thought! In addition, over the last 20 years, there has been a universal drop in breast cancer mortality rates, but during the same period the incidence of breast cancer for Black women has actually increased.

Black women often ignore their own health issues because they are busy taking care of others, and it is our intention to dedicate this annual signature event to moving the needle on improving women's health awareness and self-care.



" **Know Better - Do Better"** will be a chic and celebratory affair that shines a much needed spotlight on the importance of women's health through education, entertainment friendship and fun. Just as the specially designed logo reflects all the colors associated with women's medical issues (like red for heart health, pink for breast cancer, etc.) the event itself will heighten awareness of a myriad of health and wellness subjects in an engaging and interactive way.

We need your support to make this event a resounding and memorable success. You can help by talking it up, selling tickets to your friends and family, identifying sponsors and also by volunteering.