

On Being a Member of NAACP**They Gave So Much Then. Help Us Carry On the Fight Today**

By Ella Mae McFarland, Membership Chairperson,
& Karen D. Jones, Branch Secretary

We are often asked "Why should I join the NAACP?" We are all aware that many lives have been affected in a positive way because of organizations such as the NAACP, and the struggles of many people from different walks of life who have identified injustices in our society and decided to take a stand to make a difference.

Today we benefit from those who marched, boycotted, endured threats, injuries and even lost their lives to open the doors to fair housing, education, employment and freedom from discrimination. Their efforts were not only for themselves, but for future generations. And while we have made great strides in these areas, discrimination has taken on different forms.

The NAACP fights continuously to make those who discriminate accountable for their actions, whether they are individuals, corporations, or the government. We fear no one and will take on anyone who challenges our God-given rights. With your help in becoming a member, continuing your membership and asking others to become members, we become many voices who merge into a single voice that demands and commands respect.

And so, like those who took a stand so that we may now enjoy freedoms that we sometimes take for granted, we must step forward and become an example to our youth. We must encourage them to become a part of an association that will continue to fight for them.

If you are already a member, make a commitment to continue your membership and encourage others to become members. If your membership has expired, please contact the office to renew it.

Our freedom came with a price. Let us not forget that to whom much is given, much is required.

Awards Dinner Has Surprise Visitor Gov. Comes By to Plug Minimum Wage Hike

The Chester Branch's Annual Awards Dinner on April 21 followed its fine tradition of honoring Chester citizens and high school grads. But in the middle of the gathering of 350 souls came something quite un-traditional: Governor Ed Rendell paid a surprise visit to the event, escorted by State Representative Thaddeus Kirkland.

The Governor, never one to pass up an opportunity to promote his policies, asked attenders to urge their state representatives to increase Pennsylvania's minimum wage to \$7.15 an hour. He pointed out that it would mean an immediate boost in income for thousands of Pennsylvanians.

Not to be upstaged by the Governor were these student award recipients: **Rodney E. Bost, Jr.**, the James E. Cottrell Youth Award; **Chardae P. Davis**, the Cora Lee Dixon Youth Award; **Larif Kahron Hamm**, the Willie Mae James Leake Youth Award; **Camilla Nix**, the Delores R. Shelton Youth Award; **Cephus S. Richardson**, the John Lee Mathis Youth Award; and **Taneisha Mykia Shaw**, the Gwendolyn J. Foster Youth Award.

Community members receiving awards were **Delores Freeman**, the George T. Raymond Freedom Award; **Cynthia Ann Jetter**, the Louis G Brown Freedom Award; **Rev. James L. Ley**, the John Shelton, Sr., Freedom Award; **Maria L. Randolph**, the Andrew Herman Webb Freedom Award; **Will Richan**, the Judge Robert A. Wright Freedom Award; and **Rev. Bernice Warren**, the Cecil W. Bond Freedom Award.

Veterans: Check Out This Important Information on Your VA Benefits

By Bruce Neal, Chair Military Committee:

To veterans and their next of kin: Read and react to this information.

- Discharge documents (DD-214) are now available online! The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans or their next of kin to gain access to their DD-214 online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov/>.

- For the following VA benefits: Burial, Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA), death pension, dependency indemnity compensation, direct deposit, directions to VA Benefits Regional Offices, disability compensation, disability pension, education, home loan guaranty, life insurance, medical care. 1-800-827-1000.

- Education (GI Bill): 1-888-442-4551.

- Health care benefits: 1-877-222-8387.

- Income verification and means testing: 1-800-929-8387.

- Life insurance: 1-800-669-8477.

- Mammography Helpline: 1-888-492-7844.

- Special issues (Gulf War, Agent Orange, Project Shad, mustard agents and lewisite, ionizing radiation): 1-800-749-8387.

- Status of headstones and markers: 1-800-697-6947.

- Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDD): 1-800-829-4833.

- For other health services, contact your nearest VA medical facility. To locate all VA facilities, click on [Find a VA Facility](#).

School Resegregation**You Thought Brown v. Board of Ed Was Settled Law? Think Again**

By Ella Mae McFarland
Member, Education Committee

The new U.S. Supreme Court session, with four new appointees and a "swing-voter" Justice Kennedy, is now debating whether students would best be served in their surrounding "neighborhood schools." Given today's housing patterns, that means Whites in one school, Blacks in another, and Hispanic students in another. This re-segregation is a growing trend documented by a 2003 case ties to affirmative action. Some jails are already segregating inmates by race, because "research shows" they have different habits, cultures, and diets.

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