

CHESTER N.A.A.C.P. NEWS

Newsletter of the Chester Branch of NAACP

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Spring 2007

Getting to know you

Our 'Dynamic Duo' Keep Things Humming at Chester NAACP



Darrell and Karen Jones

[Editor's note: This is the first of a series of profiles on people who make the Chester Branch of NAACP a vital force in the Chester community and beyond.]

It was NAACP's support of his union in a strike at BP Refineries that convinced Darrell Jones that he ought to become more than a paper member of the Chester Branch. That happened in 1988. Since then he has been, among other things, a one-man recruitment machine for the NAACP.

That is what brought wife Karen into the fold - as well as many of Darrell's brothers, sisters, nieces, and nephews. But that's not surprising. As Karen says, "NAACP is like a family." The couple attribute a lot of the success of the organization to that sense of family, of loyalty and caring that keeps sometimes contentious issues from splitting people up into factions.

Family has a central place in the Joneses's lives, as witness the twice-a-year banquets that Karen prepares for as many as 45 members of the clan, at Thanksgiving and Easter. Little wonder, then, that Karen has become the driving force behind the Chester Branch's annual Awards Dinner, a Herculean task, along with her awesome duties as Unit Secretary. The Awards Dinner is a joint operation. Karen heads up a committee of nine members, who all pitch in to organize the yearly event that can attract as many as 500 participants. "I let the committee make the decisions," says Karen, with the modesty that has become a hallmark of the Joneses.

Operating as a Team

Just as their predecessors, John and Delores Shelton, did before them, Darrell and Karen Jones work as a close-knit team in their respective roles as President and Secretary of the organization. "We try to keep our roles in NAACP separate from our personal lives," says Karen. For example, she always refers to Darrell as "the President" in Unit dealings. Some people are not even aware they are husband and wife.

Everything is done in the spirit of teamwork. No tender egos getting bruised because somebody else is getting too much credit. This kind of selflessness and dedication that puts NAACP

(continued, page 4, Dynamic Duo)

2007 Annual Awards Dinner April 20 Law Center Assisting C-U School District Activists Will Be Among Honorees

Among the honorees at this year's Annual Awards Dinner will be the Philadelphia-based **Education Law Center**. An attorney for the Center, Baruch Kintische, has worked closely with Chester-Upland Citizens for Educational Progress (CUCPEP), formerly known as Chester-Upland Community, Parents, and Students on the Move, in challenging the recently dismissed C-U Special Board of Control. A number of members of Chester NAACP, including President Darrell V. Jones, are active in CUCPEP.

The event will take place on Friday, April 20, at the Ramada Inn, 76 Industrial Highway, Essington. It will get underway at 6 PM.

Also being honored are the following community members:

June Gaines, Chester-Upland Teacher of the Year; **Hattie Bailey**, retired educator and recruiter for Bennett College; **James P. Balk**, community activist; **Kenya Harris-Chellis**, youth/community activist and entrepreneur; **Steven A. Fischer**, Executive Director, Chester Housing Authority; **Curtis D. Morris**, Pastor, Bethany Baptist Church; and **Marguerite Watson**, President, Jeffrey Manor Civic Association.

Youth honorees this year will be **Nalia Carter**, **Jameel Cleveland**, **Taahira Herring**, **Timothy Hudson**, **Ommar Gonzalez-Nunez**, and **Donald Thomas, Jr.**

Tickets are \$40, \$35 for seniors, \$400 for a table of ten. Consider placing an ad in the Souvenir Booklet. Deadline for placing an ad is March 31, and for purchasing tickets, April 13.

Karen Jones is dinner chairperson. For further information, call 610-872-3664.

We Launch Voter Registration & Education Campaign 2007 People Died So That Others Could Vote; We Owe It To Them To Use That Right

By Will Richan, Chair, Political Action Committee

Of all the gains that came out of the civil rights revolution of the 1960s, none was more important than extending the right to vote to people who had been denied that right just because of the color of their skin. Voting is the one way we can all have real political power. When you step into that voting booth, you have the same power as the high and mighty when they enter the voting booth.

We've lost a lot of ground since the sixties - in the resegregation of schools and exploitation of workers and loss of health benefits. But one thing they have not been able to take away is the right to vote. If we give up that right, it is our own fault.

(continued, page 3, Vote Campaign)