



Voices

ILLINOIS COMMITTEE ON BLACK CONCERNS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

ICBCHE

www.icbche.org

Summer 2011 Edition

Message from the ICBCHE Chairperson:

A Difficult Road Ahead

Michael Toney, Ed.D.
Executive Director
Urban Health Program
University of Illinois at Chicago



Dear Friends and Colleagues:

These are turbulent times in higher education, and at all levels of education in Illinois, particularly for people of color. The budgetary woes that have plagued our state for the past few years have greatly impacted education and educational access at all levels. Two years ago, the Illinois Board of Higher Education issued its *Public Agenda for College and Career Success*, a document that is to guide higher education policy for the next several years. It points out among other things that Black and Latino students now make up nearly half of the students in grammar school and high school who will (or rather should) eventually be matriculating into our colleges and universities. Yet, the number of minority students, and specifically Black students, on our college campuses is not increasing at a commensurate rate and in many cases is decreasing. Similarly, IBHE reports indicate that the number of Black faculty and staff on our college and university campuses in Illinois is on the decline as well.

Since 1982, the Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education (ICBCHE) has been a champion and an outspoken advocate for the increased presence and prominence

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Message from the ICBCHE Chairperson

of Black students, faculty and staff on college, and university campuses across Illinois. We in ICBCHE recognize that affecting such change cannot and will not happen if we concentrate our efforts strictly on those college campuses. Real change in education, and specifically in educational access, happens at all points in the educational pipeline. We cannot advocate for increased opportunities for Black students in higher education if our K-12 system does not have the resources to prepare our students to take advantage of those opportunities, or if our

young people do not even know that the opportunities exist. We cannot call for more Black faculty and staff if we have not successfully moved our students through the pipeline so that they are prepared to take on such roles.

Thus, we cannot be effective in our mission if we are not working hand in hand with higher education professionals, teachers, principals, superintendents and advocates at all levels of the pipeline, and with concerned political, community and parent leaders as well. We are all stakeholders in the present and the future of our community as it relates to education. To this end, we would like to invite you to work with ICBCHE to develop a strategy and action agenda for assuring Black access and equity in Illinois education. At the fall 2010 ICBCHE Conference there was an unprecedented number of Illinois Legislative Black Caucus members in attendance. We believe this to be the model for addressing many of the concerns facing Blacks in Illinois today, both in education and beyond. One of the short term goals is to work with the Legislative Black Caucus to host a series of town hall meetings to engage stakeholders in the development of an Education Manifesto for Blacks in Illinois. Such an important document would institutionalize our collective knowledge of best practices and serve as the primary resource reference to guide educational policies, and prioritize funding appropriations.

We would like for you to participate in these town hall meetings. Please let us know if you are interested in working with us, or if you know of other important stakeholders who should be included in our initial planning. For more information on ICBCHE, I encourage you to visit www.icbche.org. We look forward to hearing from you and working with you.



In Memorial

Dr. Sheena L. Warren, Director of the Women's Resource Center at Northern Illinois University made her transition on April 17, 2011.



Before working at NIU, Dr. Warren was the Director of Adult and Women Student Programs at Northeastern Illinois University, Director of Student Activities at Spelman College, Director of the Student Activities Center at Georgia Southern University, Assistant Director of Minority Student Services at Central Michigan University, and Coordinator of University Programs & Greek Affairs at Edinboro University. She was a new member of ICBCHE, was Resource Development Chairperson for the Chicago Chapter of the Association of Black Women in Higher Education. Additionally, she was a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, the National Association of Student Affairs Professionals, and the Association of Nontraditional Students in Higher Education, just to name a few. Dr. Warren also volunteered for organizations, such as Between Friends counseling women who were victims of domestic violence. She earned the Specialist Degree and Master's and Bachelor's Degrees from the University of Southern Mississippi. In the last issue of *Voices*, we celebrated the successful defense of her dissertation and completion of her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership with a concentration in higher education from Argosy University, Chicago.

Dr. Warren was known for being the consummate professional, a tireless student advocate, and a tremendous mentor to many. She was preceded in death by her son, Elias Christopher-Kye Warren. Dr. Warren is survived by her husband Bryant C. Warren, daughter, Micaiah Warren, her mother Shirley Glover, her father Hildrey Glover, Sr., brother, Hildrey Glover, Jr. and a host of family members and friends.

The positive impact which Dr. Warren had upon the lives of many will certainly be missed.

Creation of the Black Manifesto

By Felicia R. Bohanon

Two years ago, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) issued its *Public Agenda for College and Career Success*, a document that is to guide higher education policy for the next several years. It points out among other things that Black and Latino students now make up nearly half of the students in elementary and high school who will, or rather should, eventually matriculate to our colleges and universities. Yet, the number of minority students, and specifically Black students, on our college campuses is not increasing at a commensurate rate and in many cases is decreasing. Similarly, the IBHE report indicates that the number of Black faculty and staff on our college and university campuses in Illinois is on the decline as well.

Since 1982, the Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education (ICBCHE) has been a champion and an outspoken advocate for the increased presence and prominence of Black students, faculty and staff on college and university campuses across Illinois. We recognize that affecting such change cannot and will not happen if we concentrate our efforts strictly on college campuses. Real change in education, and specifically in educational access, happens at all points in the educational pipeline. We cannot advocate for increased opportunities for Black students in higher education if our K-12 system does not have the resources to prepare our students to take advantage of those opportunities, or if our young people do not even know that the opportunities exist. We cannot call for more Black faculty and staff if we have not successfully moved our students through the pipeline so that they are prepared to take on such roles.

Thus, we cannot be effective in our mission if we are not working hand in hand with higher education professionals, teachers, principals, superintendents and advocates at all levels of the pipeline, and with concerned political, community, faith-based and parent leaders as well. We are all stakeholders in the present and the future of our community as it relates to education. To this end, ICBCHE is working with stakeholders to develop a strategy for assuring Black access and equity in Illinois education. Our

goal is to host a series of planning meetings across the state, with the first to taking place in mid-March, to engage stakeholders in the development of an Education Manifesto for Blacks in Illinois.

Our initial meetings, held at Prairie State College in Chicago Heights, Illinois and the Chicago Urban League in Chicago were used to examine the findings from key documents



recently published on the state of education in Illinois that relates to people of color. Participants then broke into discussion groups to examine which crucial issues the manifesto should address and the strategies and best practices we could use to

address these issues. A subsequent meeting will be held in Carbondale, Illinois in August. An interim report will be presented at the ICBCHE Professional Conference on October 6 and 7, 2011 at Oakton Community College. Additional stakeholder meetings are scheduled for the fall and winter of 2011/2012 at Northern Illinois University and in Springfield, Illinois. In March and April of 2012 the document draft will be submitted for public response. The final draft of the Education Manifesto for Blacks in Illinois will be presented to the community and the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus in May of 2012. Arthur Sutton, Deputy Director of Diversity & Outreach, Illinois Board of Higher Education and Felicia R. Bohanon, Director of the Office of Precollegiate Programs at Northern Illinois University serve as ICBCHE Black Manifesto Committee Co-Chairs.

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Felicia R. Bohanon is an ICBCHE Steering Committee Member, the Board Financial Secretary for the American Association for Blacks in Higher Education. She serves as the Director for the Office of Precollegiate Programs at Northern Illinois University.



Conference Brings ICBCHE & ILBC Together By Detmer (DJ) Wells

This past September's ICBCHE Annual Conference was presented with the hope of forging greater ties between higher education leaders and our elected leaders in the Illinois General Assembly. Titled *Bridging the Academy and the State Legislature*, the two-day event, held on the campus of the University of Illinois at Chicago, provided opportunities for ICBCHE members to network with several members of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus and to discuss key issues facing Blacks in higher education in Illinois.

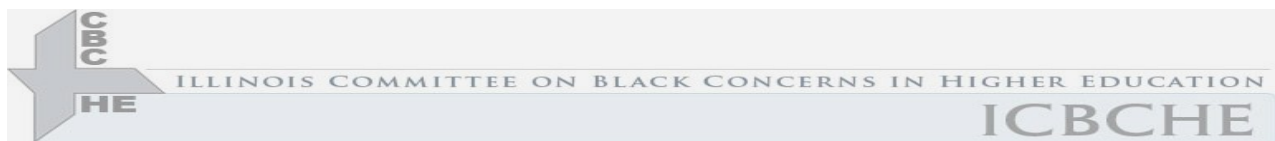


"We have an opportunity at this conference to lay the groundwork for an ongoing partnership," noted State Representative Will Davis (D-30), who currently serves as co-chair of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus Foundation. "[We] will bring together some of the best and brightest minds, both in academia and in government, with the common purpose of improving our communities and finding solutions to the persistent problems that we all face as citizens of Illinois."

ICBCHE Chair Dr. Michael Toney agreed with Davis, stating, "As we reinvigorate our education/legislative collaboration... we build on the resources that each of us control, creating a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts when it comes to affecting change and improving our communities."

In addition to the networking opportunities, conference co-chairs Dr. Valerie Johnson of DePaul University and Felicia Bohanon of Northern Illinois University, along with a robust and active conference planning committee that included Davis and State Representative Al Riley (D-38), developed a program that engaged conference participants in several critical issues facing the entire education pipeline. Sessions included discussions on academic support programs, the charter school movement, the educational funding crisis in Illinois, and African American male leadership in education. There were also professional development sessions on 21st Century career options, success tips for current college students, and programs for nurturing diverse college and university faculty and staff. The opening plenary provided opportunities for higher education leaders and several college and university presidents to discuss the state of Illinois higher education as it relates to Black students, faculty and staff, and for elected officials to weigh in as well. The luncheon featured keynote addresses from U.S. Senator Roland Burris and Council for Opportunity in Education President Dr. Arnold Mitchem.

The success of the conference seems to have generated the anticipated response. Representatives Davis and Riley were in attendance at the most recent ICBCHE steering committee meeting in November to discuss next steps coming out of the conference, including ICBCHE's participation in developing the education component of the National Association of Black State Legislators conference that the ILBC will be hosting in Chicago in December of 2011. ICBCHE stands ready to work with our elected officials to increase access in equity in Illinois education, and to help develop the parameters for a discussion on the education problems facing Blacks nationwide.



Save the Date!

**The ICBCHE Professional Conference on October 6 and 7, 2011 at
Oakton Community College in Oakton, IL
*More details to come...www.icbche.org***

Scenes from the Fall 2010 ICBCHE & ILBC Conference



Rep. Will Davis



Dr. Arnold Mitchem and Sen. Roland Burris



Michael Toney, Arnold Mitchem, Will Davis,
Sen. Roland Burris, Valerie Johnson, Rep. Riley



Presidents and Legislative Leaders Panel



Rep. Will Davis, Michael Toney, Rep. Arthur Turner



ICBCHE members staffing registration table



Conference Attendees Enjoying a Session



Seymour Bryson, Michael Toney, Rose Thomas, Arnold Mitchem,
Rep. Mary Flowers, Michael Jeffries, Rep. Ester Golar, Rep. Will Davis



Member Spotlight:

Dr. Wallace Southerland, III

Dr. Wallace Southerland III is the Associate Dean of Students and Director for Minority Student Affairs at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He was appointed to the position in August 2010. Responsibilities include oversight of the University's Federal TRiO programs (McNair Scholars Program, Student Support Services, and Upward Bound), academic (e.g., tutoring and skills development), mentoring, and other retention services for Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) students, President's Award Program students, AALANA students (African-American, Latino/a, and Native American), and other general population students needing academic assistance and support.

As an academic professional, Dr. Southerland has 20 years experience serving in higher education positions beginning with his first professional position as an Assistant to the University President and Ombudsperson for Students immediately after receiving his baccalaureate degree. He has, for example, provided leadership over TRiO programs, ethnic affairs, residential life and judicial affairs, student activities and development, new student orientation, academic and retention services (i.e., academic advising, a learning center, summer bridge programs, and tutoring), and has served as an Executive Search Consultant. As a campus manager, leader, and citizen over the past 20 years, Dr. Southerland has written and/or influenced institutional policies related to services for new students, services for under-represented students, general student success, affirmative action, and sexual and racial harassment.

As a leader in the national TRiO community, Dr. Southerland has served as president-elect, president, and chairperson of the Annual Giving Campaign for the Maryland Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel. In addition, his service to TRiO includes coordinating the regional Annual Campaign for the Mid-Eastern Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel and chairing the Annual Giving Campaign for the Illinois Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel.

Dr. Southerland is also an academic. He has held faculty appointments in traditional institutions and is currently a faculty member for Walden University's Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership where he teaches qualitative research methods and assists doctoral students with developing their dissertations/project studies. His teaching and research interests include issues related to political, cultural

and symbolic dimensions of organizational leadership; to the history, design, structure, power and influence of Federal TRiO and other educational access and opportunity programs; and to how "online" colleges work (e.g., academic freedom, shared governance, leadership and organizational structures and notions of power and influence). His scholarship includes a published dissertation, *Money, power and influence: The politics of how academic department chairs secure campus budget resources*, and articles such as *Advancing research in the TRiO community*, *Constructing conceptual frameworks for administrative leadership in TRiO programs*, and *From chair to dean: Strategies for career advancement*. His current works in progress include research on barriers to success for African-American males and relationships between school guidance counselors and TRiO pre-college programs.

Since being elected Youth Mayor of his hometown Washington, D.C. at the age of 15, Dr. Southerland has honed his oratorical skills. As an orator, Dr. Southerland has given – and continues to give – speeches related to personal empowerment, student success, organizational effectiveness, education, poverty, leadership, race relations, and other topics. His oratorical skills have resulted in invitations to speak at high school commencements and events, church events, rallies, TRiO events, conferences and summits, and political events.

Dr. Southerland's educational credentials include a baccalaureate in English and a master's degree in counseling and human resource development from the University of Bridgeport in Bridgeport, CT and a Ph.D. degree from the University of Maryland, College Park. He is married to Medra Roberts-Southerland, a Long Island, NY native, and has a daughter, whom he adores, Kia Isabelle Renée Southerland.

Before the rise of president Barack Obama, one of Dr. Southerland's mottos is from lessons learned from his days as a youth and from growing up in inner-city Anacostia Washington, D.C. and in Prince George's County Maryland: "If it is to be, it is up to me. Yes, I can, and yes I will."

Dr. Southerland may be reached at ws3rd@illinois.edu.

New Appointments



Congratulations are in order to Jack Thomas, Ph.D. who became the 11th President of Western Illinois University (WIU) on July 1st.

Dr. Thomas has served in the role as Provost and Academic Vice President at WIU. Under his leadership the institution has been aggressive in establishing many new academic programs as well as enhancing articulation agreements within the state of Illinois and that

of Iowa. Additionally he has had a significant role in increasing funding via grants and in establishing more fellowship and visiting professor opportunities on the campus.

Dr. Thomas has a doctorate in English Literature and Criticism (University of Pennsylvania); master's degree (Virginia State University); and a bachelor's degree in English (Alabama A & M University). In addition to his earned degrees, Dr. Thomas completed the Management and Leadership Education Program at the Harvard Institute.



Kimberly Everett has the distinction of being appointed the first Director for the African/African American Resource Center in the Angelina Podroso Center for Intercultural Affairs and Diversity at Northeastern Illinois University. Previous positions that Everett has held include being an Advisor in TRiO Student Support Services, Multicultural Liaison officer for the College of Engineering, and Resi-

dence Hall Director all at Iowa State University. She also has served as the Assistant Director of residence life at the University of West Georgia.

Everett holds a Master of Education Degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education from the Iowa State University. Currently Everett is completing her Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Iowa State University. Her dissertation topic is: "A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Construction of African American Women Students in Student Affairs Literature."



Dr. Jermaine Williams was appointed earlier this year as the Assistant Dean of Academic Development at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU). Before joining NEIU, Dr. Williams served as Director of Student Success Initiatives at the Community College of Philadelphia, Coordinator of First-Year Student Programs at Temple University. He earned an Ed.D. in Higher Education Ad-

ministration and a M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration from Temple University, a M.A. in Sociology from St. John's University, and a B.A. in Anthropology and Sociology from Lafayette College.

Dr. Williams' current and past professional affiliations include New DEEL (Democratic and Ethical Educational Leadership), the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), and Atlantic Center for Learning Communities (ACLC).

Lakeesha J. Harris

New Graduate Making Her Mark

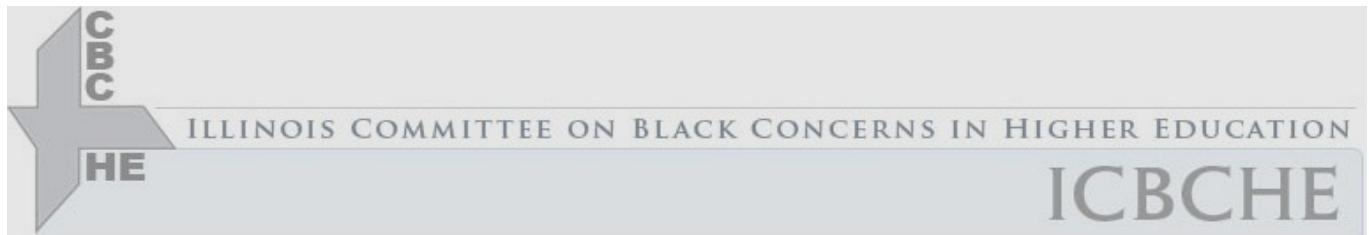


Lakeesha J. Harris graduated with honors, earning her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Women Studies this past May from Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU).

Among the honors that she has received are, being recognized in Who's Who Among University and College Students, the 2011 NEIU Black History Month Student Award of Excellence, the Barbara Scott Women's Studies Program Distinguished Student Award, and being named a Student Lincoln Laureate. Ms. Harris has also been a recipient of the College of Arts and Sciences Merit Scholarship at NEIU. Additionally, she is a Ronald McNair Scholar. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. In addition to being a scholar, Harris is also a writer. Harris is one of the founders of Seeds Literary Arts Journal at NEIU where she has served as the Poetry Editor. In 2010 her essay, "Defining the Black Fam-

ily" was featured in the May 2010 issue of Ebony Magazine.

In the fall, Ms. Harris will continue her studies, by entering the graduate program in Political Science at NEIU. In addition to the many hats that she wears as a scholar, poet, and activist, she and her partner are the proud parents of six children.



Submission Guidelines to *Voices* Newsletter

The *ICBCHE Voices Newsletter* is published twice a year, and provides information regarding ICBCHE sponsored events, ICBCHE business, accomplishments of our members and colleagues, and diversity issues in higher education. For the fall/winter issue we are currently accepting articles on topics and/or issues and initiatives related to African American faculty, staff, and student experiences in higher education. Book reviews are welcome as well. Articles should be approximately 500 words or less and may be edited for clarity and length. Articles should be submitted as e-mail attachments in MS Word format to *ICBCHE Newsletter* Editor Dr. Melvin C. Terrell (melvinterrell@sbcglobal.net) or Co-Editor Michelle Morrow (michelle_morrow@mindspring.com). The submission deadline for the fall/winter issue is **September 15, 2011**.

A Voice for Her Fellow Students

The following is an interview with Gwendolyn Fulgern who served as the student trustee for the City Colleges of Chicago.

Voices: What is your academic major and which City of Chicago College (CCC) campus do you attend?

Fulgern: My current academic major is nursing and I attend Richard J. Daley College.

Voices: How did the opportunity present itself for you to become the Student Trustee?

Fulgern: City Colleges of Chicago has a seven year rotation for the role of Student Trustee. Daley's turn came up, and with the support of many of the students of my campus as well as some staff members, I successfully secured the post of Student Trustee for the City Colleges of Chicago. Although I will admit, it did take a bit of encouraging to convince me to run for the position; it's a great deal of responsibility if you desire to represent your peers well.

Voices: What have you learned from the experience?

Fulgern: I've learned that it takes due diligence to get to the root of the issues, and great diplomacy to navigate the sometimes murky waters of misinformation and good intentions. Identifying a problem does not readily identify a solution. Solutions take collaborative effort, and students have to be valued participants at the table. The student perspective has to be ever present in the decision making process with regard to their education, and students should never underestimate the importance of this.

Voices: As a representative of the CCC students, what do you believe are their major concerns that they have regarding the pursuit of their education?

Fulgern: Students that attend CCC have the same primary concerns as any student pursuing higher education. The three repeating themes are affordability, access to quality academic resources, and economic return on their academic investment. Many of the individuals that attend CCC like me are non-traditional students; some returning from military battle, some surviving life's battles. Many require additional academic support and wrap around services that make it possible for them to remain on their academic track. They come through the doors with the courage and commitment to complete their academic goals but a significant number of them don't feel that the need for additional support is being adequately met.

Voices: What are your future plans in terms of further involvement in college affairs and academic and professional goals?

Fulgern: I'm not sure what my future plans are regarding involvement in college affairs. As I approach my second year in the nursing program, I'm sure things will become a bit hectic for me. However, I'm sure I'll be an advocate for students in some capacity. I do intend to transfer to a four year University to pursue a Master degree in Nursing. I'm also pursuing a degree in the sciences. IIT has an excellent program with a concentration in molecular biology that I find extremely attractive. Ultimately, I want to perform research in the area of infectious disease.



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