

AAHMI MISSION

The mission of the African American Healthy Marriage Initiative (AAHMI) is to promote and strengthen the institution of healthy marriage in the African American community.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

AAHMI Readers Share their "Secrets" to a Happy and Healthy Marriage! 1

Spotlight on Health: Don't Get Burned—Skin Cancer Can Happen to You! 2

Focus on Fathers: The History of Father's Day 2

Spotlight on Region VI: Father-Daughter Summit 2010 3

Youth Insights! Looking for summer employment? Here are a few tips for finding a job! 4

All Around ACF: Family Bridges Hosts Community Forum on Responsible Fatherhood 4

A Message to Hampton Graduates from President Barack Obama 5



AAHMI NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3

MAY—JUNE 2010

AAHMI Readers Share their "Secrets" to a Happy and Healthy Marriage!



Willy and Kathy Cain—
Married 23 years

Kathy Cain of Lithonia, GA writes, "Willie and I have been married for 23 years; we are inclined to believe our secret is still developing, which makes it all the more interesting. Our

marriage is like digging for pearls which [you] may not discover immediately; so we just wait for our daily acceptance that we're not perfect people. We're always laughing and clowning around about one thing or another with our daughters."



Jeremiah and Deneise Smith—
Married 5 years on July 1, 2010

This is what Deneise Smith of Elberton, GA said about her marriage to husband, Jeremiah: "...we do not have any secrets—we just keep the faith and know that [we were] placed together and no man

or woman can separate us. If we have a problem, we talk it over. We have four kids all together—my husband has a 6-year old son and a 10-year old daughter; I have two daughters and their ages are 12 and 14."



Sara and Dexter Clemons of Watkinsville, GA with children McKenzie and Jeremi

From reader Sara Clemons, "I believe communicating and feeling comfortable communicating is one of the secret ways to keep a healthy marriage. Marriage is continual work. People change. As time goes [on], life will have an impact on your marriage [in] that if it is not discussed, [it] can cause an unhealthy wedge in a relationship. One way to communicate is to pray together. I do believe that a family that prays together stays together. If you can openly pray about what you thank Him for and what you need and what you are believing in Him for in front of your spouse, it can create a more intimate relationship that is deeper and richer and can withstand the test of time."

"Dexter is from a family of nine and I am from a family of eight and communicating has never really been a part of our upbringing because with both of us being the youngest, we never felt we had a voice. We had to work extremely hard to keep this as part of our relationship for 22 years. We have two kids, McKenzie, 18 and Jeremi, 15 and we pray every morning before school and we encourage talking."

If you (or someone you know) are an African American couple and would like to share the "secret of a healthy and happy marriage," send a photo of you and your spouse along with your name, location, years married and your "secret" to:

Darlene.Tart@acf.hhs.gov. Include a sentence or two about your family. Please note, **you must indicate your permission to use your likeness and quotation in the AAHMI Newsletter!**

“The theme of our wedding was *A wedding lasts a day but a marriage lasts a lifetime*. By keeping a spiritual foundation as the focus of our relationship we have entered into our 21st year of marriage. Having four children, it has been important to nurture our relationship by having weekly date nights where we concentrate on each other!”

Dr. Adrienne H. Berry,
LPC, NCC

Focus on Fathers: The History of Father's Day By: Darlene Tart

Ever wonder how **Father's Day** came to be celebrated? Well, here are the facts!

Father's Day became a recognized celebration of fatherhood and male parenting in the early twentieth century as a complement to Mother's Day. It is also celebrated to honor and commemorate our forefathers. *Father's Day* is celebrated on a variety of dates worldwide and typically involves gift-giving, special dinners for fathers, and family-themed activities.

The first observance of *Father's Day* is said to have been held on June 19, 1910 through the efforts of Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington. After attending a sermon at the Central Methodist Episcopal Church in 1909 about the newly recognized Mother's Day, Dodd felt strongly that fatherhood needed recognition. She wanted an observance that honored fathers like her own father, William Smart, a war veteran who raised his family alone after his wife died in childbirth. With the help from the Spokane Ministerial Association, Dodd and young members of the YMCA went to church wearing roses; a red rose to honor a living father, and a white rose to honor a deceased one. They traveled through the city bearing gifts to shut-in fathers.

It took many years to make the celebration official. In spite of the support it received, *Father's Day* was met with less enthusiasm than Mother's Day and was often met with laughter. The notion of Father's Day got attention alright, but for the wrong reasons. It was the target of much satire, parody and derision, including jokes from the local newspaper. Some people thought it was the start of the practice of filling the calendar with mindless promotions.

The first bill to nationally recognize *Father's Day* was introduced in Congress in 1913. In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson spoke in Spokane at a Father's Day celebration and wanted to make it official, but Congress resisted. In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge recommended that Father's Day be observed by the nation, but stopped short of issuing a national proclamation. Two earlier attempts to formally recognize the holiday had been defeated by Congress. In 1957, Senator Margaret Chase of Maine wrote a proposal accusing Congress of ignoring fathers while honoring mothers, thus "singling out just one of our two parents." In 1966, President Lyndon Johnson issued the first presidential proclamation honoring fathers, designating the third Sunday in June as **Father's Day**. In 1972, President Richard Nixon signed it into law to make the day a permanent national holiday.

International Men's Day is celebrated in many countries on November 19th for men and boys who are not fathers.

Spotlight on Health: Don't Get Burned-Skin Cancer Can Happen to You! By: Barbara Andrews

If you think African Americans can't get skin cancer, you're wrong—dead wrong. Contrary to popular belief, no one is immune to skin cancer. Many people mistakenly believe that because people with darker skin produce greater amounts of the skin pigment called melanin, they are invulnerable to skin cancer. Everyone is at risk; people of all races and skin colors, including African Americans, can develop skin cancer. Tragically, among African Americans, the consequences of skin cancer are often much more severe than for other groups.

Although the incidence of melanoma is lower for African Americans than for others, the survival rate is also lower. The lower survival rate is due in part to the fact that African Americans are often diagnosed when the disease is more advanced and has already spread to other parts of the body. Skin cancer in African Americans is often missed because the lesions are sometimes harder to see on darker skin, can look different and appear in different places than people with light skin. Also, because skin cancer is relatively rare among those with darker skin, skin changes are sometimes overlooked—even by medical providers!

Skin cancer is caused by exposure to UV (ultraviolet) radiation which can damage the genes in your skin cells. There are two types of skin cancer: melanoma and non-melanoma. Melanoma is the most dangerous type of skin cancer. Basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas are the two most common types of non-melanoma skin cancer. For African Americans, melanomas occur primarily in

Continued on page 8

Spotlight on Region VI: Father-Daughter Summit 2010 By: Elma Z. Goodwin

The National Center for Fathering hosted its fourth Father-Daughter Summit in Dallas on April 24, 2010 at Mt. Hebron Missionary Baptist Church Garland, TX. ACF Region VI staff received the following letter of gratitude (minimal edits to religious references have been made):



May 13, 2010

Dear Friend,

You have been instrumental in bringing the Father-Daughter Summit to Dallas. It is with great joy and gratitude that I share with you the results from our fourth Dallas Father-Daughter Summits!

Since 2006, 1,120 fathers and daughters have participated in the Dallas Father-Daughter Summits and 123 have made a [spiritual] commitment. These results confirm that when the hearts of fathers and daughters are turned toward each other, relationships are restored.

We save all of the feedback that we receive from dads and daughters. Following are just a [few responses or comments] to encourage you:

- “The Summit created a bond that we did not know how to do on our own.”
- “Daddies are very important in a daughter’s life, even if it is a step-dad; and today was the 1st day ever to call him Daddy.”
- “This day was just for the two of us, and we did it together. We had conversation we wouldn’t have anywhere else.”
- “My dad made me feel important and loved. We were able to open up about things I have not felt comfortable talking about in the past. This will help with my dad and all future relationships.”

We have been blessed to cross denominational and cultural lines having support from Assemblies of God, Baptist, Bible, Catholic, Chinese, Community, Church of Christ, Episcopal, Hispanic, Lutheran, Messianic, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches. Also, very strategic are our growing relationships with local laborers in the field of fathering: Administration for Children and Families, A.M. Morgan, Baptist General Convention, Byron Ricks, Cristian Proano, Dallas Dads, Dynamic Dads and Healed Without Scars Ministries. We have also been blessed by the support of Liberty Institute, formerly Free Market Foundation, who first shared in the vision of a Dallas Father-Daughter Summit back in fall of 2003.

The Summit is in a revamping stage; as we build upon the strong foundation that has been laid, it will be exciting to see how The Father continues to use this ministry in Dallas, in America and around the world.

It has been a privilege to witness fathers and daughters connect in ways that result in healing within the relationship and increased understanding of the Heavenly Father’s love. None of this would have been possible without your faithful prayers and support. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

**For Daughters and Dads,
Lucy Bloom
Director, Father-Daughter Summit**



Director

Regional Operations

Diann Dawson
Diann.Dawson@acf.hhs.gov
(202) 401-4802

Regional Specialists

I (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT)
Josephine Hauer
Josephine.Hauer@acf.hhs.gov
(617) 565-1123
Marilyn Lasky
Marilyn.Lasky@acf.hhs.gov
(617) 565-1151

II (NJ, NY, PR, VI)

Barbara Andrews
Barbara.Andrews@acf.hhs.gov
(212) 264-2890, ext 101
Daniel Hekman
Daniel.Hekman@acf.hhs.gov
(212) 264-2890, ext 110

III (DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV)

Darlene Tart
Darlene.Tart@acf.hhs.gov
(215) 861-4060

IV (AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)

Bridget Minor
Bridget.Minor@acf.hhs.gov
(404) 562-2903
Gwendolyn T. Johnson
Gwendolyn.Johnson@acf.hhs.gov
(404) 562-2835

V (IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)

Elizabeth Hailey-Smith
Elizabeth.Haileysmith@acf.hhs.gov
(312) 886-5340
Vander Green
Vander.Green@acf.hhs.gov
(312) 886-4914

VI (AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)

Larry McDowell
Larry.McDowell@acf.hhs.gov
(214) 767-7327
Elma Goodwin
Elma.Goodwin@acf.hhs.gov
(214) 767-8821

VII (IA, KS, MO, NE)

Karen Elliott
Karen.Elliott@acf.hhs.gov
(816) 426-2799

VIII (CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)

Sandy Naatz
Sandy.Naatz@acf.hhs.gov
(303) 844-7346

IX (AZ, CA, HI, NV, AS, FM, MP, GU, MH, PW)

Callen Kurpinsky
Callen.Kurpinski@acf.hhs.gov
(415) 437-7571

X (AK, ID, OR, WA)

Janice Holt
Janice.Holt@acf.hhs.gov
(206) 615-2552
Lewissa Swanson
Lewissa.Swanson@acf.hhs.gov
(206) 615-2573

Youth Insights!

Looking for Summer Employment? Here Are a Few Tips for Finding a Job! By: Elma Z. Goodwin

Personal Contacts. Use the network of people that you know like friends, family, teachers and former co-workers to get information about employment opportunities that may not be advertised. Making calls and hitting the pavement to meet people in your community is one of the best ways to connect with potential employers.

School Career Planning and Placement Offices. High school and college placement offices are great places for students and alumni to prepare for, and find jobs. These offices typically offer hands-on assistance to help you search for jobs and assistance preparing your resume and other materials. They may know about local openings and job fairs. Placement offices also usually have a list of part-time, temporary and summer jobs available right on campus. They may have lists of jobs for regional, nonprofit and government organizations, too.

Employers. Temporary or staffing firms serve many professions and offer people with relevant skills part-time employment assignments. Talk to the owners of local stores and restaurants next time you visit, express how much you like their products/food, let them know how much you would like to work for them and ask if they have any openings.

Internet. The Internet provides a variety of information, including job listings and job search resources and techniques. Be creative and be prepared to conduct multiple searches to find what you need. Most of the major job sites also offer lots of tips and samples to help you prepare your resume, write cover letters, and find and apply for jobs. **LOOK OUT!** Never pay to apply to a job. Be wary of web sites with lots of advertising pop-ups and job postings that seem "too good to be true."

State Employment Offices. The State Employment Service (sometimes called Job Service) operates in coordination with the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. Local offices help job seekers find jobs at no cost.

Community Organizations. Nonprofit organizations and community agencies are an excellent place to apply your energy and skills, gain professional experience and start preparing for your future career. These organizations often need hardworking people who believe in their mission and are willing to be of service. In addition, if you are unable to immediately find a paying job, local service organizations can be the single best place to volunteer. You will gain connections and valuable experience while serving your community. It's a wonderful feeling!

REMEMBER-Landing a job can be a full-time job. Good Luck!

All Around ACF

Family Bridges Hosts Community Forum on Responsible Fatherhood By: Vander Green



Pictured (left to right): Dr. Kirk Harris, Joe Jones, Acacia Bamberg Salatti, Dr. Alicia La Hoz, Vander Green, Deondre Bedgood, Rev. Walter Jones, and Andrew Lyke.

Family Bridges of Chicago, Illinois hosted their 4th annual community forum at the Salvation Army Red Shield Center. The purpose of the forum was to develop awareness about the importance of responsible fatherhood, as

well as brainstorm about innovative strategies for reaching fathers.

Acacia Bamberg Salatti, Deputy Director of the Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), shared four priorities of the Obama administration: (1) strengthening the role of community organizations in economic recovery and poverty reduction; (2) promoting responsible fatherhood and healthy families; (3) reducing unintended pregnancies and supporting child and maternal health and (4) fostering interfaith dialogue and collaboration with leaders and scholars around the world and at home. She reiterated that the administration appreciated the efforts of community organizations.

Joe Jones, Founder and CEO of the Center for Urban Families, spoke on the roles of fathers and mothers, particularly how they complement each other. He also reiterated how the social services delivery system had traditionally focused on women and children with very little regard for men. Mr. Jones closed by encouraging "all community organizations to create environments where men feel welcome, comfortable and safe to access the help and support they need."

Besides a variety of workshops on responsible fatherhood, the forum included a panel session for questions and answers regarding responsible fatherhood. The panel members were: **Deondre Bedgood** from Circle of Parents, **Dr. Kirk Harris** from the National Fatherhood Leaders Group, **Rev. Walter Jones** from Fathers Who Care and **Jeffery M. Leving**, Attorney and Chair of the Council on Responsible Fatherhood.

Facts from this article were retrieved from the Family Bridges Community Forum newsletter published on April 23, 2010.

A Message to Hampton Graduates from President Barack Obama

By: Elma Z. Goodwin

The **African American Healthy Marriage Initiative** extends congratulations and best wishes to the thousands of graduates receiving degrees across the nation from higher-learning institutions this spring. As you journey to the next step, remember learning is a continuous process and is summed up best in the words of Arie Pencovici, “Graduation is only a concept. In real life every day you graduate. Graduation is a process that goes on until the last day of your life. If you can grasp that, you’ll make a difference.” In recognition of this event, we are sharing President Obama’s commencement address delivered May 9, 2010 at Hampton University:

“To all the mothers in the house: As somebody who is surrounded by women in the White House – grew up surrounded by women, let me take a moment just to say thank you for all that you put up with each and every day. We are so grateful to you, and it is fitting to have such a beautiful day when we celebrate all our mothers. Thank you to Hampton for allowing me to share this special occasion – to all the dignitaries who are here, the trustees, the alumni, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins – that’s a cousin over there. Now, before we get started, I just want to say, I’m excited the Battle of the Real H.U. will be taking place in Washington this year. You know I am not going to pick sides. But my understanding is it’s been 13 years since the Pirates lost. As one Hampton alum on my staff put it, the last time Howard beat Hampton, the Fugees were still together.”

“Well, let me also say a word about President Harvey, a man who bleeds Hampton blue. In a single generation, Hampton has transformed from a small Black college into a world-class research institution. And that transformation has come through the efforts of many people, but it has come through President Harvey’s efforts, in particular, and I want to commend him for his outstanding leadership as well as his great friendship to me.”

“Most of all, I want to congratulate all of you, the Class of 2010. I gather that none of you walked across Ogden Circle. You did? Okay.”

“You know, we meet here today, as graduating classes have met for generations, not far from where it all began, near that old oak tree off Emancipation Drive. I know my University 101. There, beneath its branches, by what was then a Union garrison, about 20 students gathered on September 17th, 1861. Taught by a free citizen, in defiance of Virginia law, the students were escaped slaves from nearby plantations, who had fled to the fort seeking asylum.”

“And after the war’s end, a retired Union general sought to enshrine that legacy of learning. So with a collection from church groups, Civil War veterans, and a choir that toured Europe, Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute was founded here, by the Chesapeake – a home by the sea.”

“Now, that story is no doubt familiar to many of you. But it’s worth reflecting on why it happened; why so many people went to such trouble to found Hampton and all our Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The founders of these institutions knew, of course, that inequality would persist long into the future. They were not naïve. They recognized that barriers in our laws, and in our hearts, wouldn’t vanish overnight.”

“But they also recognized the larger truth; a distinctly American truth. They recognized, Class of 2010, that the right education might allow those barriers to be overcome; might allow our God-given potential to be fulfilled. They recognized, as Frederick Douglass once put it, that “education...means emancipation.” They recognized that education is how America and its people might fulfill our promise. That recognition, that truth – that an education can fortify us to rise above any barrier, to meet any test – is reflected, again and again, throughout our history.”

“In the midst of civil war, we set aside land grants for schools like Hampton to teach farmers and factory-workers the skills of an industrializing nation. At the close of World War II, we made it possible for returning GIs to attend college, building and broadening our great middle class. At the Cold War’s dawn, we set up Area Studies Centers on our campuses to prepare graduates to understand and address the global threats of a nuclear age.”

“So education is what has always allowed us to meet the challenges of a changing world. And Hampton, that has never been more true than it is today. This class is graduating at a time of great difficulty for America and for the world. You’re entering a job market, in an era of heightened international competition, with an economy that’s still rebounding from the worst crisis since the Great Depression. You’re accepting your degrees as America still wages two wars – wars that many in your generation have been fighting.”

Continued on next page

“And meanwhile, you’re coming of age in a 24/7 media environment that bombards us with all kinds of content and exposes us to all kinds of arguments, some of which don’t always rank that high on the truth meter. And with iPods and iPads; and Xboxes and PlayStations – none of which I know how to work – information becomes a distraction, a diversion, a form of entertainment, rather than a tool of empowerment, rather than the means of emancipation. So all of this is not only putting pressure on you; it’s putting new pressure on our country and on our democracy.”

“Class of 2010, this is a period of breathtaking change, like few others in our history. We can’t stop these changes, but we can channel them, we can shape them, we can adapt to them. And education is what can allow us to do so. It can fortify you, as it did earlier generations, to meet the tests of your own time.”

“And first and foremost, your education can fortify you against the uncertainties of a 21st century economy. In the 19th century, folks could get by with a few basic skills, whether they learned them in a school like Hampton, or picked them up along the way. As long as you were willing to work, for much of the 20th century, a high school diploma was a ticket into a solid middle class life. That is no longer the case.”

“Jobs today often require at least a bachelor’s degree, and that degree is even more important in tough times like these. In fact, the unemployment rate for folks who’ve never gone to college is over twice as high as for folks with a college degree or more.”

“Now, the good news is you’re already ahead of the curve. All those checks you or your parents wrote to Hampton will pay off. You’re in a strong position to out-compete workers around the world. But I don’t have to tell you that too many folks back home aren’t as well prepared. Too many young people, just like you, are not as well prepared. By any number of different yardsticks, African Americans are being outperformed by their white classmates, as are Hispanic Americans. Students in well-off areas are outperforming students in poorer rural or urban communities, no matter what skin color.”

“Globally, it’s not even close. In 8th grade science and math, for example, American students are ranked about 10th overall compared to top-performing countries. But African Americans are ranked behind more than 20 nations, lower than nearly every other developed country.”

“So all of us have a responsibility, as Americans, to change this; to offer every single child in this country an education that will make them competitive in our knowledge economy. That is our obligation as a nation.” (Applause.)

“But I have to say, Class of 2010, all of you have a separate responsibility. To be role models for your brothers and sisters. To be mentors in your communities. And, when the time comes, to pass that sense of an education’s value down to your children, a sense of personal responsibility and self-respect. To pass down a work ethic and an intrinsic sense of excellence that made it possible for you to be here today.”

“So, allowing you to compete in the global economy is the first way your education can prepare you. But it can also prepare you as citizens. With so many voices clamoring for attention on blogs, and on cable, on talk radio, it can be difficult, at times, to sift through it all; to know what to believe; to figure out who’s telling the truth and who’s not. Let’s face it, even some of the craziest claims can quickly gain traction. I’ve had some experience in that regard.”

“Fortunately, you will be well positioned to navigate this terrain. Your education has honed your research abilities, sharpened your analytical powers, given you a context for understanding the world. Those skills will come in handy. But the goal was always to teach you something more. Over the past four years, you’ve argued both sides of a debate. You’ve read novels and histories that take different cuts at life.”

“You’ve discovered – see, I got a little “Amen” there, somebody – you’ve discovered interests you didn’t know you had. You’ve made friends who didn’t grow up the same way you did. You’ve tried things you’d never done before, including some things we won’t talk about in front of your parents.”

“All of this, I hope, has had the effect of opening your mind; of helping you understand what it’s like to walk in somebody else’s shoes. But now that your minds have been opened, it’s up to you to keep them that way. It will be up to you to open minds that remain closed that you meet along the way. That, after all, is the elemental test of any democracy: whether people with differing points of view can learn from each other, and work with each other, and find a way forward together.”

“And I’d add one further observation. Just as your education can fortify you, it can also fortify our nation, as a whole. More and more, America’s economic preeminence, our ability to out-compete other countries, will be shaped not

just in our boardrooms, not just on our factory floors, but in our classrooms, and our schools, at universities like Hampton. It will be determined by how well all of us, and especially our parents, educate our sons and daughters.”

“What’s at stake is more than our ability to out-compete other nations. It’s our ability to make democracy work in our own nation. Now, years after he left office, decades after he penned the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson sat down, a few hours’ drive from here, in Monticello, and wrote a letter to a longtime legislator, urging him to do more on education. And Jefferson gave one principal reason — the one, perhaps, he found most compelling. “If a nation expects to be ignorant and free,” he wrote, “it expects what never was and never will be.”

“What Jefferson recognized, like the rest of that gifted founding generation, was that in the long run, their improbable experiment — called America — wouldn’t work if its citizens were uninformed, if its citizens were apathetic, if its citizens checked out, and left democracy who those — to those who didn’t have the best interests of all the people at heart. It could only work if each of us stayed informed and engaged; if we held our government accountable; if we fulfilled the obligations of citizenship.”

“The success of their experiment, they understood, depended on the participation of its people — the participation of Americans like all of you. The participation of all those who have ever sought to perfect our union.”

“I had a great honor of delivering a tribute to one of those Americans last week, an American named Dorothy Height. And as you probably know, Dr. Height passed away the other week at the age of 98. One of the speakers at this memorial was her nephew who was 88. And I said that’s a sign of a full life when your nephew is 88. Dr. Height had been on the firing line for every fight from lynching to desegregation to the battle for health care reform. She was with Eleanor Roosevelt and she was with Michelle Obama. She lived a singular life; one of the giants upon whose shoulders I stand. But she started out just like you, understanding that to make something of herself, she needed a college degree. So, she applied to Barnard College — and she got in. Except, when she showed up, they discovered she wasn’t white as they had believed. And they had already given their two slots for African Americans to other individuals. Those slots, two, had already been filled. But Dr. Height was not discouraged. She was not deterred. She stood up, straight-backed, and with Barnard’s acceptance letter in hand, she marched down to New York University, and said, “Let me in.” And she was admitted right away.”

“I want all of you to think about this, Class of 2010, because you’ve gone through some hardships, undoubtedly, in arriving to where you are today. There have been some hard days, and hard exams, and you felt put upon. And undoubtedly you will face other challenges in the future.”

“But I want you to think about Ms. Dorothy Height, a black woman, in 1929, refusing to be denied her dream of a college education. Refusing to be denied her rights. Refusing to be denied her dignity. Refusing to be denied her place in America, her piece of America’s promise. Refusing to let any barriers of injustice or ignorance or inequality or unfairness stand in her way. That refusal to accept a lesser fate; that insistence on a better life, that, ultimately, is the secret not only of African American survival and success, it has been the secret of America’s survival and success.”

“So, yes, an education can fortify us to meet the tests of our economy, the tests of our citizenship, and the tests of our times. But what ultimately makes us American, quintessentially American, is something that can’t be taught — a stubborn insistence on pursuing our dreams.”

“It’s the same insistence that led a band of patriots to overthrow an empire. That fired the passions of union troops to free the slaves and union veterans to found schools like Hampton. That led foot-soldiers the same age as you to brave fire-hoses on the streets of Birmingham and billy clubs on a bridge in Selma. That led generation after generation of Americans to toil away, quietly, your parents and grandparents and great-grandparents and great-great grandparents, without complaint, in the hopes of a better life for their children and grandchildren.”

“That is what makes us who we are. A dream of brighter days ahead, a faith in things not seen, a belief that here, in this country, we are the authors of our own destiny. That is what Hampton is all about. And it now falls to you, the Class of 2010, to write the next great chapter in America’s story; to meet the tests of your own time; to take up the ongoing work of fulfilling our founding promise. I’m looking forward to watching.

“Thank you, God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.”

Continued from page 2

parts of the body that are not highly pigmented, such as the palms of the hand, the soles of the feet, the skin under finger and toe nails, and the mucous membranes around the mouth.

You can help prevent skin cancer by limiting your exposure to UV radiation. The amount of UV exposure depends on time and intensity. Sunlight is the major source of UV rays. Other factors that can heighten risk include having burns or scars on the skin, a weakened immune system, previous exposure to radiation therapy, and chronic skin diseases like lupus.

To protect yourself: cover up; apply and reapply sufficient sunscreen; wear a hat that shields your neck and ears and limit exposure to the strongest of UV rays—typically from 10am-4pm. UV rays reach the earth all year round and both sand and sun reflect sunlight, which can increase the intensity of your exposure. Use broad-spectrum UVA/UVB sunscreen that has a sun protective factor (SPF) of at least 30; the higher the number, the more protection. Finally, regularly examine your skin, including your scalp, for any new growths or changes in existing lesions. Get checked by a doctor and make sure you call attention to any particular concerns.

More information is available at these sites: National Cancer institute – www.cancer.gov (or phone 1-800-4-CANCER); American Cancer Society – www.cancer.org ; American Academy of Dermatology – www.aad.org

Remember, protect yourself; African Americans get skin cancer and it can be fatal!

African American Healthy Marriage Initiative
Administration for Children and Families
Co-Sponsors
Hampton University, National Center
on African American Marriages and Parenting (NCAAMP),
and the Annie E. Casey Foundation

5th Annual Connecting Marriage Research to Practice Conference:
Preparing Resilient Families for the New Decade
June 22 - 24, 2010
Location: Hampton University
Hampton, VA

Visit www.AAHMI.net to view the proceedings from the 2009 conference and additional information on the initiative.

ATE • SAVE THE DATE • SAVE THE DATE • SAVE THE DATE

Youth & Young Adults Explore

LIFE Empowerment Health
finances Real Talk healthy relationships

Join Us...
African American Healthy Marriage Initiative
Connecting Marriage Research
to Practice Conference:
Preparing Resilient Families for the New Decade
June 22 - 24, 2010

Please send comments or questions to Darlene Tart
Darlene.Tart@acf.hhs.gov