



Birmingham Chapter

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GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

There is a season that calls us to pause amid the clamor of noise, the busy agitation of life and invites us to wonder. It is spring, which is a symbol of the renewal of life and of hope for the future. I cannot help but believe that it is not by chance that Easter, which celebrates the Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior, is in the spring. For with the wonder and beauty of spring everything changes.

As we move forward into a new programming year, let us continue to rekindle how we serve our community and our organization so that we can leave it better than we found it. I have no doubt that with over 2,500 documented service hours by members this programming year alone, that each of you are indeed committed to making our community and the world a better place than you found it. I am so proud to serve with women who know the true meaning of *Leading with Excellence – Serving with Grace*. I pray that you and your family have a blessed and Happy Easter.

With abiding friendship and love,

Link Vanessa



PUTNAM MIDDLE SCHOOL JAMS STUDENTS MEET THE HARLEM STRING QUARTET

Putnam Middle School band students were recently selected to participate in the Joining Music and Artists in the Schools (JAMS) Signature Project of the Birmingham(AL) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated. The signature project is designed to promote student interest and broaden exposure to the

many genres of music and related arts programs.

The Harlem String Quartet offered a myriad of African American and Latino music selections during its performance at the Alys Stephens Center. The one-hour informal performance allowed students to ask questions and learn about the musicians' educational and artistic training, instruments of choice, life working as music professionals and musical style.

"I enjoyed watching them perform so professionally one minute then talk with us and answer our questions like we were their friends the next" said student Michael Lewis. Noah Logan said "although I will stick with the drums, the performers were great and played songs I did not know could be played with violins."

The JAMS students also attended "Reflect and Rejoice: A Tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. concert through the Alys Stephens "Meet The Artist" series, where they were afforded the opportunity to meet Symphony conductor, Mr. Roderick Cox and renowned composer, Dr. Henry Panion. The students were excited to see such a young man serving as conductor of the orchestra and were pleasantly surprised when Dr. Panion discussed his love of all music including some selections of rap.

The Birmingham (AL) Chapter of the Links, Incorporated, believes music mastered through the minds of children produces not only a high level of knowledge and intellect but also an enriched sense of values and superb ability. The Chapter looks forward to continuing and expanding its JAMS enrichment program.



LINKED IN HEALTH: BECAUSE WE ♥ YOU

Over 100 community residents braved the brisk, cool Saturday, February 16 morning to take advantage of a series of health screening tests, as well as, educational and medical information services. The “Linked in Health: Because we ♥ You: Health Fair, sponsored by the Birmingham Chapter’s Health and Human Services Facet, was held at the Bridge of Faith Chapel Christian Center. Undergirding one of the many national initiatives of the Links, Inc., the Health and Human Services Facet sought to assist the community in maintaining good health and increasing awareness on how to eliminate chronic health disparities.

From 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., physicians were available to provide those in attendance with healthy tips on topics such as eye, heart, dental, urology and women’s health. Additionally, forty-four community agencies and organizations discussed nutrition, STD’s, AARP benefits, legal services, diabetes, AIDS, mental health, domestic violence, chiropractic wellness, alcohol and drug abuse treatment and much more. Furthermore, Lab Corps provided cholesterol and blood pressure checks, while The UAB School of Optometry supplied free eye screenings. There was something to assist everyone!

Exercise became the flavor of the day when Links members and residents of the community moved to the fast paced rhythm of music in the Zumba class conducted by licensed instructor, Torrie Chatman. Although children could not participate in Zumba, they moved to the beat of their own music in the Faith Chapel children’s area. While parents concentrated on obtaining information and participating in screenings, children enjoyed, face painting, dancing, balloons, a clown and the recreation arena.

Healthy snacks and “Linked in Health” gift bags were made available to each participant. The Fair proved to be beneficial and informative for all.



BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVE



On January 29, 2013, members of the Birmingham Chapter of the Links, Inc. partnered with Lewis Elementary School for the first anti-bullying installment of “*Being Fit, Inside and Out*”. Third, Fourth, and Fifth grade students learned about the four types of bullying from Alabama State Department of Education Area 4 Board Member, Dr. Yvette Richardson. They learned of the dangers associated with relational, verbal, physical and cyber bullying.

In addition, the students were addressed by Birmingham Municipal Court Presiding Judge Andra Sparks. Judge Sparks discussed the ABC’s of good decision making. He challenged the students to be A- absolute, B- bold and C- consistent in their choices. The young participants listened intently and remained engaged throughout the session. At the end of the session, the students were given healthy snacks.

Thanks to the concerned and caring members of the Birmingham Chapter, Lewis Elementary students are truly fit, inside and out!



VANESSA FALLS RECEIVES BEST IN MINORITY BUSINESS AWARD

Chapter President Vanessa Falls received a *Best In Minority Business* Award in the category of Non-Profit Leadership for outstanding leadership of The Birmingham (AL) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated.

A retired counselor of the Alabama School of Fine Arts, Vanessa Falls is involved in many aspects of non-profit leadership. As president of the Birmingham Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, an international volunteer civic organization of concerned, committed and talented women of African ancestry, she advocates for causes that are meaningful and impactful. Falls also serves on the Board of Directors for the Shades Valley YMCA and previously served on the board of the Women's Fund. She is also a Boule' member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and a member of the Advance Roundtable Toastmasters. Link Vanessa Falls has served two terms as president of the Birmingham (AL) Chapter.

The Best in Minority Business Awards began in 2007 to celebrate the spirit, creativity and resourcefulness of Birmingham's brightest minority and female business leadership. This event is a powerful networking tool and a reminder of the need to recognize diversity and inclusiveness.



"FROM THE PAGE TO THE STAGE" PRESENTED BY ARTS COMMITTEE

The Birmingham Chapter's Arts Committee presented "From the Page to the Stage," featuring writings by young poets of Phillips Academy on Friday, March 8th in the School Auditorium.

The Arts Committee was excited to showcase Fourth Grade Students from the classes of Ms. Groves, Ms. Johnson, and Ms. Fields, who participated in the Poet's Corner Workshops in the fall. The students are now published

poets. The Arts committee compiled an impressive poetry booklet that featured their poems. Each student was presented with a copy.

The workshops were taught by Musician/Songwriter/Poet Sharrif Simmons and made possible by a partnership between the Birmingham Chapter and the Alys Stephens Performing Arts Center.



Chapter members and parents, as well as the principal and some staff members at Phillips Academy were there to support and celebrate the exceptional young poets as they took their words "From the Page to the Stage." A very nice reception was held after the performances for all of the participating students, their parents and teachers. Reception attendees also celebrated the birthday of Sharrif Simmons. Link Gaynell Hendricks baked him a special pound cake and the students sang Happy Birthday to him.

Many thanks to all involved, including Arts Committee Chairman, Gaynell Hendricks, Co-Chairman, Carnetta Davis, Malena Cunningham, Anne Hooks, J. J. Johnson, Debra Weston-Pickens, Daagye Hendricks and Cathy Bradford.



LINKS SPONSOR JUNA UNITED NATIONS ASSEMBLY

The Birmingham Chapter of The Links, Inc. sponsored two teams from Phillips Academy in the 2013 JUNA United Nations Assembly held at Birmingham Southern College. JUNA stands for Junior United Nations Assembly of Alabama and is a student-led mock United Nations Assembly

"It's an amazing opportunity that exposes the students to different world views and multiple perspectives on how to solve a global issue." said John Mark Edwards, faculty sponsor. "It expands horizons and opens students'

minds”. JUNA is a chance to invest in the next generation. The Links sponsorship of two student teams supports the International Trends and Services global platform to strengthen its work with the United Nations. Model UN programs engage grade school and college students to become informed and active citizens of this changing world.

Ten students were given the chance to participate as problem-solvers and world leaders. A group of five students represented *Zimbabwe* and wrote a resolution that called for an action plan to fight extreme poverty by educating the young people of Zimbabwe.



Five other students represented *Israel* and wrote a resolution that called for environmental sustainability in dry climate zones around the world. The students who represented Zimbabwe won the following awards: Most Outstanding Resolution Award, Mini-Grant Award, Outstanding Female Delegate Award, and Leadership Award.

The Birmingham Chapter of The Links, Inc. supported the teams with scholarships for each team member to participate in the activity. In addition, International Trends and Service Committee Members: Samuetta Nesbitt, Cheryl Kidd, Martha Emmett, Rhonda Cantelow. Deveta Peoples, Ronda Bell and Marva James with the support of other Link members conducted a workshop that focused on the history of the United Nations. Committee and other Link members also supported the team in practice sessions and provided the costumes for both teams.

The International Trends and Services Committee would also like to thank Principal Mark Sullivan for his support in this great partnership.

Link to pictures of all the teams <http://www.flickr.com/photos/junaofalabama>

AREA STUDENTS AWARDED CASH PRIZES



The Birmingham (AL) Chapter of the Links, in partnership with The Birmingham Urban League Inc., held its annual Black History Month Essay Competition on February 28. Six finalists, representing area schools, presented their essays before a panel of judges and were awarded cash prizes.

From left: *Antaneshia Jones, Julian Davis, Dasia Primus, Shea Glaster, Bernard Ball, Caviana Hall*

MIDDLE SCHOOL FINALISTS
Grand Prize - Dasia Primus, \$300.00
1st Runner up - Bernard Ball, \$200.00
2nd Runner up - Julian Davis, \$100.00

HIGH SCHOOL FINALISTS
Grand Prize - Antaneshia Jones, \$300.00
1st Runner up - Caviana Hall, \$200.00
2nd Runner up - Shea Glaster, \$100.00



Birmingham Chapter Links President, Vanessa Falls, accepts Certificate of Appreciation



Link **Monique Gardner Witherspoon** made her theatrical debut in the Chocolate Nutcracker on December 14, 2012 at the Boutwell Auditorium.

Link **Martha Emmett** was appointed to the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute Board of Directors.

Selections from the Art Collection of Link **Carnetta** and Connecting Link **Norm Davis** are on exhibit at The Hunter Museum of American Art in Chattanooga, TN until mid-March. The couple gave a talk on their collection and collecting in general at the Hunter on February 7.

Link **Mia Cowan** received a *Best In Minority Business Award* in the category of **Outstanding Young Professional** at a ceremony at The Club on February 21.

Link **Mia Cowan** was selected as the Shades Valley Ys Adult Volunteer of the Year.

Link **Nyya Hudson** and Connecting Link **John Hudson** will co-chair the Birmingham Museum of Art's 2013 Museum Ball in May at the Birmingham Museum of Art. This event is an annual major fundraiser for that institution.

The Birmingham Business Journal (2/11/13) recognized Link **Vanessa Falls'** family business, Falls Facility Services as Birmingham's largest black-owned business, topping the list with the most employees.

Link **Bonika Wilson** was honored on March 8, 2013 with a Girl Scouts East Central AL Women of Distinction Award, a tribute to women who have made a special contribution to their community through civic, academic or professional efforts.

Link **Bonika Wilson** was recognized by *The Birmingham Business Journal* (2/8/13) as among the "Top 40 Under 40" as the CEO of her firm, WCM, for its consistent revenue and profit growth.



SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2013
7 P.M.
OLD CAR HEAVEN

[Click for Invitation](#)