WASHINGTON (AP) - Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (pictured) told an international conference on Liberia Tuesday that the United States plans to forgive that country’s $391 million (euro300 million) debt to the United States.

“We will cancel that debt, all of it,” Rice said in a speech to a World Bank gathering of international development experts and delegates from at least 20 countries.

With Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf seated nearby, Rice said the reduced debt burden should enable Liberia to devote more resources to reconstruction and development.

The country’s $3.7 billion (euro2.8 billion) overall debt is something that “today’s leadership and today’s people of Liberia do not deserve,” Rice said, a pointed reminder that it is a burden that authoritarian rulers of the past quarter century were responsible for.

Turning to Sirleaf, Rice said, “We have every intention of helping you succeed.”

In her remarks to the gathering, Sirleaf warned that unless the international community does not act quickly to assist her nation, armed conflict could return to her country if the international community does not act quickly to assist her year-old government in broad-based reconstruction efforts.

“Time is pressing. The risk of return to war in post-conflict society is high,” she said.

Sirleaf has made debt relief among her highest priorities. She also listed job creation, road construction, education and institution building among other key targets.

Warning that her West African nation is “not out of the woods yet,” she said the next period will decide Liberia’s fate. If the international community loses its focus on Liberia’s needs, “the future will be much worse,” she said.
Boy’s project shines spotlight on pioneering black doctor

FREDERICK, Md. (AP) - Black history was not on 10-year-old Sam Williamson’s mind when he decided to research the life of Ulysses Grant Bourne for a student essay contest.

Sam, who is white, said he picked Bourne, the first black doctor in Frederick County, for a simple reason. On the list of local figures offered by the county historical society, “he had the coolest name.”

But Sam became enthralled by Bourne’s early 20th-century achievements, which included founding the county’s NAACP chapter, establishing a hospital for blacks in the then-segregated city of Frederick and, nearly as impressive to the basketball-crazed kid, bringing the Harlem Globetrotters in to play in a Frederick church basement and eat dinner at the doctor’s house.

Sam won $100 in the contest last school year, but he didn’t stop there. He went on to raise $19,000 for a bronze bust of Bourne that will be placed later this year at Frederick Memorial Hospital.

“I wanted the whole world to know what he did and how good of a role model he was,” said Sam, a fifth-grade student at Ballenger Creek Elementary School.

Sam also gained an honorary grandmother - Bourne’s 83-year-old daughter, Dr. I. Blanche Bourne, who is tickled by the attention Sam’s efforts have brought to her father’s work.

“He’s quite a boy,” she said.

Sam’s mother, Leslie, a middle-school math teacher, joked that Sam, the youngest of the four Williamson children, knows more about Bourne’s family than he does about her Jewish heritage or his father Jeff’s Irish and Welsh ancestry.

But ethnic and racial distinctions don’t matter much to Sam, whose school is 77 percent white and 14 percent black, with a smattering of Hispanic and Asian students.

“He’s quite a boy,” she said.

Sam’s dedication.

He learned that Bourne delivered about 2,600 babies, black and white, from 1903 to 1953. Sam was surprised that the doctor allowed his patients, most of whom were white, to pay for his services with fruits and vegetables.

Bourne’s generosity extended to education, Sam learned: “He paid for someone to go to college, and when they graduated from college, they would pay him back.”

Because black patrons weren’t allowed in the local opera house, Bourne and his friends built their own elegant music venue, the Pythian Castle in Frederick. Bourne and a nurse did public health work around the county, Sam learned.

Bourne, a native of Calvert County, Md., who attended Leonard Medical College in Raleigh, N.C., founded the statewide Negro Medical Society in 1940. He also ran as a Republican for the state House of Delegates, and worked behind the scenes for local political candidates, Sam learned from Bourne’s daughter.

“He was quite a community-minded person, very open and soft-spoken and was quite comfortable with everything around here in a quiet way,” said Blanche Bourne, a retired pediatrician who is the youngest of Bourne’s three children.

Sam’s fundraising campaign for a Bourne memorial includes letters to local political leaders and speeches to civic groups including the NAACP, which gave $1,000.

“Anyone talking to him about the project was moved by this young man who knew exactly what he wanted to achieve,” said Gay P. Dyoken, the NAACP chapter president.

The biggest single donation, $11,000, came from the Mid-Maryland Musculoskeletal Institute, a medical practice composed of 11 physicians. Chief Operating Officer Quinten M. Davis, who is black, said he was touched by Sam’s dedication.

“The zeal with which this young fellow has approached this goes far beyond just a school project,” Davis said. “It would be nice if there were more people who worked to understand the different cultures within our community.”

Sam’s work isn’t done. He still needs about $1,500 for a pedestal on which to place the bust that artist Steven Weitzman is making. The sculpture should be finished this summer, Leslie Williamson said.

A new study titled: Perspectives on Eminent Domain Abuse - Eminent Domain & African Americans. What is the Price of the Commons? by Mindy Thompson Fullilove, MD has been released this month. For more information on the report goto: http://www.castlecoalition.org/publications/index.html.

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Waterloo area residents can learn about personal finances at free event

U.S. Bank and Ambassadors for Christ Church in Waterloo are partnering for a free event where local residents can find out about a variety of personal finance topics including budgeting, homebuying, credit counseling, managing a bank account, student loans, predatory lending, working through collections and how to protect themselves from identity theft. The event takes place Saturday, Feb. 24 from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. at the Ambassadors for Christ Church at 1701 Mulberry St.

“We are very joyous about this event,” said Pastor Faye Scott, Ambassadors for Christ Church. “A cruise-ship vacation is the theme, with fun-filled games, free on-site child care, assorted prizes and lots of laughter. The day will be topped off with a free fabulous buffet meal.”

“The U.S. Bank team wants to do all it can to help promote financial literacy and home ownership in the Cedar Valley area,” said Steve Brewer, regional president for U.S. Bank. “The U.S. Bank team will answer people’s questions about personal finance. Other local nonprofit groups will host tables and offer their personal financial expertise as well.”

Other participating organizations are: Waterloo Housing Partnership, Waterloo Housing Authority, ISED Ventures, Iowa Heartland Habitat for Humanity, Consumer Credit Counseling Service of NE Iowa, The CBE Group Inc., Family Management Credit Counselors, Inc., Operation Threshold, Iowa State University Extension of Black Hawk County, Allen Memorial Hospital and University of Northern Iowa Center for Urban Education (UNI-CUE).

Preregistration is not required. Additional information about this event can be obtained by calling U.S. Bank at (319) 235-2328.

U.S. Bancorp (NYSE: USB), with $219 billion in assets, is the parent company of U.S. Bank, the 6th largest commercial bank in the United States. The company operates 2,472 banking offices and 4,841 ATMs, and provides a comprehensive line of banking, brokerage, insurance, investment, mortgage, trust and payment services products to consumers, businesses and institutions. Visit U.S. Bancorp on the web at www.usbank.com.

Haitians celebrate cultural legacy during Black History Month

MIAMI (AP) - Abolitionist Frederick Douglass and writers Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston are among the heroes celebrated every February during Black History Month. Shadowed in history, however, are their ties to Haiti, the first free black republic.

That relationship is being examined this year by the founders of Black History Month. The Association for the Study of African American Life and History designated this year’s theme as “From Slavery to Freedom: Africans in the Americas,” encouraging people to explore the emancipation of slaves and their struggles for equality in the 19th century in Jamaica, Brazil, Haiti and the United States.

It’s about time, says Haitian-Americans who want the Caribbean country to be recognized as a foundation of U.S. civil rights history, instead of only as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

Douglass, who had been appointed the first U.S. minister to Haiti, tried more than a century ago to educate Americans about Haiti’s influence on their struggle for independence.

“We should not forget that the freedom you and I enjoy today ... is largely due to the brave stand taken by the black sons of Haiti 90 years ago,” he said, addressing the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago - a city that traces its birth to a Haitian, Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable.

Douglass was referring to a slave rebellion led by Toussaint L’Ouverture that led to Haiti’s break from France.

“Toussaint L’Ouverture was not just the father of Haitian independence,” said Eveline Pierre, president of the planned Haitian Heritage Museum in Miami. “He was the father of freedom from slavery,” Pierre said this week. “When you think of African-American history, there is no possibility of Black History Month without connecting the dots between Haitian culture and black history.”

Few monuments help illustrate those connections, though a Miami society is looking to change that. The Haitian American Historical Society is planning a monument in Savannah, Ga., to honor the Haitians who fought alongside colonial soldiers in the siege of Savannah during the American Revolution. At least 500 free black men from the French colony that became Haiti volunteered with American colonists and French soldiers in October 1779 in an unsuccessful attempt to drive the British from the coastal Georgia city.

Their little-known contribution to America’s struggle for independence is a point of national pride in Haiti. After returning home, Haitian veterans of the Revolutionary War led their own rebellion and won Haiti’s independence from France in 1804.

“That kind of symbol is not only going to be for the Haitians but also to all people who are African-descended,” said historical society chairman Daniel Fils-Aime. “A symbol for people who call us ‘Frenchie’ or ‘boat people,’ that we shed our blood for this country.”

Pride in the slave revolt that established the first independent black nation and a culture that preserves its African traditions prompts many Haitian-Americans to identify themselves as Haitian first, black second.

“It’s about time that Haitian independence is a point of national pride in Haiti. After returning home, Haitian veterans of the Revolutionary War led their own rebellion and won Haiti’s independence from France in 1804,” said Patrick Marcelin, the U.S.-born son of Haitian immigrants who raps in Creole and English as “Mecca a.k.a. Grimo.” “I just happened to be born in America, but really I’m a Haitian.”
Annual ‘State of the Black Union’ draws thousands to Hampton Univ.

Tavis Smiley to host presidential forum

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Tavis Smiley will moderate two presidential forums later this year, the Public Broadcast- ing Service announced.

PBS said Thursday the TV and radio host will moderate a Democratic forum on June 28 at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and a Republican forum on Sept. 27 at Morgan State University in Baltimore.

Also Thursday, Smiley announced a partnership with AEG, the sports and entertainment conglomerate, to produce a museum exhibit, a day of national discourse and an awards show honoring the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

The exhibit will feature art, music, books and memorabilia reflecting blacks’ contributions to the nation. It will start in 2008 and tour for five years throughout museums in the United States.

Later this year, Smiley’s communications firm will organize “Table of Free Voices USA,” in which 113 prominent participants will spend the day answering questions posed by the public.

The awards program, called “Living The Dream,” will be broadcast live next year from the Apollo Theater in New York.

“This project promises to be one of the most thought-provoking events we’ve ever done,” Smiley said in a statement.

Smiley hosts the PBS show, “Tavis Smiley” and Public Radio International’s “The Tavis Smiley Show” and is the author of 11 books.

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Merry Christmas to all of you and health for the New Year.

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PUT IT BEFORE THEM BRIEFLY so they will read it, clearly so they will appreciate it, picturesquely so they will remember it and, above all, so they will be guided by it’s light.”

~ Joseph Pulitzer
James Brown honored posthumously at Grammys

NEW YORK (AP) - James Brown, given scant attention from the Grammys when alive, was paid slight tribute Sunday night.

While the Eagles were honored with a three-song medley, the late Godfather of Soul was remembered with a performance by Christina Aguilera that managed to hit all the wrong notes, even while staying pitch-perfect.

Dressed in a totally white suit and meticulously made-up, Aguilera sang “It’s a Man’s Man’s World” at one point nearly becoming enveloped in white fog. She has an undeniably good set of pipes, but it seemed somewhat sacrilegious to honor the Soul great with a singer bereft of the stuff.

That was followed by a tap-dancing routine while black-and-white footage of Brown dancing played on a giant video screen above. Brown’s glittering red robe was then brought out and poetically hung on the microphone stand. It had been customary for the legendary singer to be taken off stage shielded and cloaked in such a robe once he had sweated everything out.

And so the man who meant so much to soul, funk and pop music for half a century was honored by the Grammys without a word, without any notable attempt verbally or musically to express what Brown meant to music. Instead, we were given an octave-hitting pop princess and some tap.

For the Recording Academy, this was nothing new. Before Brown passed away on Christmas day, he was given three Grammy awards, and only one in his heyday (in 1965 for “Papa’s Brand New Bag” as best R&B recording).

In 1991, his box set “Star Time” was honored for best album notes. In over four decades, Brown put out 48 singles that were either top ten hits on the Billboard Hot 100 or the R&B chart - songs like “Cold Sweat,” “There Was a Time,” “Super Bad,” “Soul Power,” “Make it Funky” and “I Got the Feelin’.” Unfortunately, the Grammys’ tribute to Brown had no feelin’.
Charles Langford, lawyer in key civil rights battles, dies

MONTGOMERY, Alabama (AP) - Charles Langford, the former state senator who fought in key civil rights legal battles as a lawyer for Rosa Parks and the organization that launched the historic Montgomery bus boycott, died Sunday. He was 84.

Langford passed the Alabama Bar exam in 1953 and opened a law practice in Montgomery. He became involved in legal battles that shaped Alabama, including representing Parks after she was arrested in 1955 for refusing to give up her Montgomery bus seat to a white man.

Her arrest inspired the Montgomery Improvement Association led by Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. to launch the boycott and pursue litigation that led to the Supreme Court ending desegregation on public transportation.

Langford represented Ailam Carr Jr. in a 1964 suit that desegregated Montgomery’s public schools, and he represented black legislators in a lawsuit that ended the flying of the Confederate battle flag on the state Capitol dome in 1993.

Langford was elected to the Alabama House in 1976 and went to the Senate in 1982, where he served five terms before retiring in 2002.
I am more than
my arms.
My back.
My sweat.

I am a fighter.
Mother.
Survivor.
Crusader.

I am one.
I am many.
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SLAVERY
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Sunday, February 25 at 1 p.m.
Obama’s path to power typical of new generation of black political leaders

U.S. Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill. and his wife Michelle wave to the crowd after he announced his candidacy for president of the United States at the Old State Capitol in Springfield, Ill., Saturday, Feb. 10, 2007. (AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast)

CHICAGO (AP) - Roger Wilkins was there at the dawn of the civil rights movement. He was there, fighting for the Voting Rights Act of 1965, marching in Washington with the Rev. Martin Luther King and so many other black heroes.

Barack Obama was not there. He was just a child in 1965. But that is OK with Wilkins. In Obama and a new generation of black political leaders - a generation that never fought off Bull Connor's dogs, or desegregated lunch counters - Wilkins sees a promise fulfilled.

“They are what we wanted to happen,” said Wilkins, a professor at George Mason University, as Obama prepared to launch his presidential campaign on Saturday.

“You’re getting some of the real fruits of the civil rights movement. I don’t view them as in opposition to us, but people born in 1961 see the world differently than people born in 1931 - and it should be that way.”

Obama, 45, offers a portfolio - lawyer, educator, state lawmaker, U.S. senator - that reflects both a shifting landscape and a changing of the guard for black political leaders in America.

Decades ago, many black politicians shared similar roots: They studied at historically black colleges, became ministers, teachers and activists and made their names fighting racial injustice - braving death threats, police dogs and water hoses along the way.

These days, many black political leaders have similar resumes: They have Ivy League degrees and have worked as lawyers and legislators. They know their way around the towers of high finance and can raise money everywhere from Hollywood to Wall Street.

Their ranks include Cory Booker, mayor of Newark, New Jersey; a former Rhodes Scholar, Yale Law School graduate and Stanford football star; Deval Patrick, the new governor of Massachusetts who was the Justice Department’s top civil rights official in the Clinton administration and counsel for Texaco and Coca-Cola; and Artur Davis, an Alabama congressman and Harvard law graduate, who like his former classmate, Obama, is eyeing a higher office.

“What you’re getting is black people who come into politics the way most of the white guys do - you’re interested in public policy, you go to law school, you do some local stuff, you run for office,” Wilkins said.

Add to that “juniors” who’ve taken up the family business. They include U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., the 41-year-old son of the civil rights activist and two-time presidential candidate, and Harold Ford Jr., who followed in his father’s footsteps to the U.S. House. After losing a Senate race in Tennessee last year, Ford, 36, recently took the helm of the centrist Democratic Leadership Council.

Both men, incidentally, are products of St. Albans School, where Washington’s mandarin families have been grooming their sons for leadership for decades. (Former Vice President Al Gore also is a graduate.)

This younger generation is not without its own civil rights bona fides: Jackson Jr. - born while his father was in Alabama demonstrating for voting rights - spent his 21st birthday in jail after being arrested in an anti-apartheid protest. Obama was a community organizer registering minority voters in Chicago. Patrick worked for the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund.

But when it comes to issues, younger black leaders do not always march lockstep with those who preceded them.

“They’re less liberal than the earlier generation of black politicians,” said David Bositis, an analyst at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a black think tank. “That doesn’t mean they’re conservative.”

Bositis said the younger leaders tend to be more business friendly. Some, including Booker, also are more receptive to programs such as school vouchers. The idea is attractive to many black constituents disappointed by the failures of big-city public schools.

Ron Walters, a political scientist at the University of Maryland, does not see any great generational split on issues but does sense friction on who speaks for the black community.

“It is going to be members of Congress or civil rights leaders?” he asks. “That tension is going to be there as long as there’s a leadership class.”

Perhaps the biggest difference for younger black politicians is in the growth of opportunity.

“For an African-American politician born in the 50s or the 40s, Congress was the highest aspirational level,” said Davis, the 39-year-old Alabama congressman. “That was the most that you could be if everything went well in your career, or possibly the head of a Cabinet office like HUD.”

Civil rights hero John Lewis, brutally beaten during the “Bloody Sunday” voting rights march in 1965 in Selma, found a home in Congress, where he has served Georgia for two decades. Andrew Young, a minister and lieutenant of the Rev. Martin Luther King, became mayor of Atlanta and ambassador to the United Nations.

Julian Bond, a civil rights activist, was a longtime Georgia legislator. With his telegenic looks and mellifluous voice, he seemed destined for higher office - he did lose a congressional bid - but he said he sensed there was a limit to his political ambitions.

“I had no expectation - none at all - I could aspire to the U.S. Senate,” said Bond who teaches civil rights at American University and the University of Virginia.

Bositis, the think tank expert, said some young black politicians now feel they have the experience and skills to reach beyond Congress.

“In terms of House races, the situation is “been there, done that,” he said. “They want to win statewide office. They want to be governor, senator and eventually president. ... They think that the opportunity is there.”

But few have made the leap.

Michael Steele, the first black statewide elected official in Maryland, lost his U.S. Senate bid last year. But the 48-year-old former Republican lieutenant governor said younger black politicians are not going to “wait in line” to seek office.

“We’re going to step outside of our comfort zone and push the envelope,” he said.

Obama, from Illinois, is the only black member of the U.S. Senate and just the third in modern history, following Carol Moseley Braun, also of Illinois, and Edward Brooke of Massachusetts.

Patrick of Massachusetts is the second elected black governor; L. Douglas Wilder served a term in Virginia in the 1990s.

But the number of black members of Congress has grown dramatically in recent decades, largely because of redistricting that followed the 1990 and 2000 censuses.

Before that, most black members of Congress represented overwhelmingly minority districts in the North; the South had just a handful of black lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

The Congressional Black Caucus has tripled in size since the 1970s - it has 43 members - and Davis, the Alabama congressman, said in nearly half those districts, the constituencies are less than 60 percent black.

“As a practical matter,” he said, “to get re-elected, you have to develop an appeal broader than just your race.”

Cory Booker, who won the top job in Newark last year, said that “just as true in his heavily minority city. Nearly 40 years ago when Kenneth Gibson became Newark’s first black mayor, he said, “you feel among many blacks was: ‘Let’s get somebody who looks like us.’”

That attitude has disappeared, he said. “The black-white American landscape is no longer. We’re representing more diverse constituencies,” said Booker, who learned Spanish so he could converse with many Newark residents.

Mayors face tight budgets, shrinking job bases and demands that make skin color irrelevant, he said. “Even my black constituents are now saying we’re not electing you because you’re black,” he said. “But few have made the leap.”

Booker said, “we’re electing you because we want very specific things.”

Black mayors also are nothing new: Over the decades they have presided in cities including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Philadelphia.

But City Hall and the White House are worlds apart.

Ever since Obama started mulling a presidential campaign, pundits have raised the inevitable comparisons to the Rev. Jesse Jackson’s bids for the White House in 1984 and 1988.

But there’s a vast difference in the two candidacies beyond the generation that separates them.

Jackson had never held political office before his campaign.

He had served as a lawyer on the state and national level.

As a civil rights activist, no one expected Jackson to be the Democratic nominee, Bositis said, but Obama “is not going to be running to make a statement. He is going to be running to win.”

Can he? No one won’t harm Obama’s chances, Bositis said.

“I wouldn’t say the playing field is even but it is even enough,” he said, “and if he’s the exceptional candidate that many people think he is, he could be elected.”
Schools find recruiting minority teachers tough

KOKOMO, Ind. (AP) - Dan Hogan was one of a handful of black teachers in the district when he began teaching at Kokomo High School in 1978. Now a middle school principal, he knows how difficult it is to hire minority teachers, especially men.

Many don’t want to live in a small city with fewer amenities for young people, he said. Others are recruited away by higher-paying jobs, in and out of education, because people of minority background with education are highly sought-after.

“One of the things that is very clear is, across the educational community, your students are becoming more diverse, but our teaching staffs and our administrators are becoming less diverse. That’s a trend that’s happening nationally,” said Hogan, principal of Maple Crest Middle School.

Statewide, about 23 percent of students are minorities, but minority teachers make up only 5 percent of the state’s teaching force. It is important for children of all backgrounds to see people of diverse backgrounds in their classrooms and principals’ offices, Hogan said.

“All kids, but in particular minority kids, need to see people who look like them in leadership roles. There are so many negative perceptions. When I was a kid, good guys wore white and bad guys wore black. These things get internalized.”

At several north central Indiana school districts, many students could graduate from high school without ever having a minority teacher. Of nine school corporations with data available, only four - Peru, Northwestern, Tipton and Kokomo - reported having minority teachers, the Kokomo Tribune reported Sunday.

Peru Superintendent Thomas McKaig said recruiting any teacher is difficult in some subject areas.

“Finding high-quality minority applicants wishing to consider teaching in a small town is even more difficult,” McKaig said.

Tipton Superintendent Robert Schultz said he searches widely for staff, but does not make a special effort to recruit minority staff members.

“Personally, we feel it’s good for our students to have diversity among the staff. We like to do that if we can. We generally don’t get a lot of applicants that would be considered ethnic minorities,” Schultz said.

Pennye Sieffert, director of human resources for the Kokomo-Center School Corp., said district officials have gone to recruitment fairs targeted at minorities in the past, but many such events are held far from Indiana and they find few candidates willing to move to Indiana.

Even in-state recruitment fairs have few minority candidates.

Kokomo-Center officials now are focusing on home-grown talent, tracking students from the Kokomo area who major in education in college in the hope the district might entice them to return home to teach.

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The position is available now so please apply if you believe you would be a great Guest Services Manager. Applications will be reviewed February 15, 2007. Please apply online to – C. Browning and include a copy of your resume. The salary is in the 30s with good benefits.
Partnership for Better Health Launches in Iowa

In this photo provided by the Iowa Progress, Andy McGuire, left, Democratic candidate for Lieutenant Governor, chats with Hannah Garden-Monheit and Freeda Brook at Grinnell University outside a main classroom building on April 28, 2006, in Des Moines. (AP Photo/Iowa Progress)

Today, the cost of chronic care amounts to $4,700 for every man, woman and child in the United States. That means three out of every four dollars spent on health care goes towards diseases that can be prevented or better managed. As an Iowa-based network of health care organizations, providers, advocates and consumers announced that it has launched an effort to bring people in Iowa an excellent opportunity to influence the nation’s health care agenda. “As candidates for the White House visit Iowa, we look forward to hearing their ideas on health care and sharing our ideas,” she said. “Together, we can make a difference on an issue that impacts everyone in this nation.”

Activities that the Partnership for Better Health will be involved with leading up to Iowa’s precinct caucuses include: Engaging the Presidential campaigns with information about the Prevention-Intervention-Innovation proposal. Mobilizing the 100,000 members of Partnership for Better Health organizations to attend candidate events and the precinct caucuses. Conducting public outreach to inform Iowans about the Prevention-Intervention-Innovation proposal and the benefits to them. Surveying Iowans on health care issues. Conducting community health screenings, health education and similar programs to raise awareness about chronic disease management and prevention. Introducing resolutions at the precinct caucuses in support of the Prevention-Intervention-Innovation proposal.

The Partnership for Better Health receives financial and administrative support from GlaxoSmithKline, working in conjunction with its partner organizations in Iowa.

PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS

AFSCME, Iowa Alzheimer’s Association, Greater Iowa Chapter American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association of Iowa, Arthritis Foundation Iowa Chapter, Community Blood Centers of Iowa Network, Clean Air for Everyone, Citizens Action Network, Community Health Charities of Iowa, Des Moines Women Heart, Easter Seals of Iowa, Epilepsy Foundation of North Central Illinois, Iowa and Nebraska, GlaxoSmithKline, Iowa Biotechnology Association, Iowa Nurses Association, Leukemia and Lymphoma Chapter of Iowa, Lupus Foundation of Iowa, Mercy Medical Center, Prevent Blindness US Too, Greater Quad Cities Prostate Cancer Support Group, Wellness Council of Iowa.

HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Physicians and other health care providers will be better enabled to prevent and actively manage chronic disease to improve quality of life and avoid costly medical complications.

HEALTHCARE PAYORS

Employers, insurance companies, government, and others who pay the nation’s health care bills will be encouraged to invest in programs that prevent and better manage chronic disease.

“This approach will lead to a healthier Iowa and a healthier nation, while at the same time saving millions upon millions of dollars,” said Atchison. “For example, if just 1 in 10 Iowans started a regular walking program it would not only make those people healthier but also save $43 million each year on heart disease.”

McGuire added that the first-in-the-nation precinct caucuses give people in Iowa an excellent opportunity to influence the nation’s health care agenda. “As candidates for the White House visit Iowa, we look forward to hearing their ideas on health care and sharing our ideas,” she said. “Together, we can make a difference on an issue that impacts everyone in this nation.”

“Together, we can make a difference on an issue that impacts everyone in this nation.”

-- Dr. Andrea McGuire --
Veridian Credit Union Presents
Children & Families of Iowa’s Kidfest

Children & Families of Iowa’s 2007 Kidfest event is rapidly approaching. Our 15th annual event will be held Friday, March 9th, 6pm-9pm, Saturday, March 10th, 9am-6pm, and Sunday, March 11th-10am-4pm, at the Iowa State Fairgrounds Varied Industries Building.

Kidfest is a child-friendly, family-centered event that allows children and families to learn, laugh, explore and enjoy exciting activities together. The weekend is chock-full of activities, entertainment, information, and fun. There’s something for everyone at Kidfest.

More than 100 businesses and organizations offer an excellent mix of fun and learning rolled into one weekend.

Join your favorite cucumber and tomato…Veggie Tales Stage Shows, Friday at 7:15pm and Saturday and Sunday at 1:1pm and 3:45pm. Experience the thrills of STOCK CAR RACING like never before! Take part in the famous Piggy Bank Hunt, games and prizes from Veridian Credit Union. Meet CURIOUS GEORGE at the IPTV booth. Meet SNOOPY at the Iowa Financial Booth. See dozens of live butterflies and learn about their habitat at the Live Butterfly Exhibit…Pamper your child at the Hairy Tales Spa presented by Trahlve Fretairae Studios and La'James International College. Featured appearances are scheduled for Spiderman (Saturday and Sunday 10:30am-2:30pm).

Kids will be a star at a Channel 13 news anchor…sample food items from Fareway Stores…get a laminated ID card from Safe-T-Kidz booth sponsored by Wells Fargo Bank…play carnival games at the GuideOne games area… and save time to slide down the big slide.

Admission is $7 per person, per day. Kids under age 2 get in free all weekend, and you can get $2 off discount tickets for Saturday and Sunday activities at Fareway stores and Veridian Credit Union. Tickets are available at the door all weekend.

The greatest thing about Kidfest is that it is truly an event where kids can help kids. By purchasing a ticket to Kidfest, your family is having a direct impact in the lives of some of Iowa’s most-at-risk children and families.

Because Kidfest expenses are underwritten by area businesses, Children & Families of Iowa is able to put 100% of the profits to helping the kids and families we serve. For more information, contact Susan Jones, Event Manager, at (515) 288-1981, ext. 361.

For information about our services, please visit our website at www.cfio.org.

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U.S. university dedicates dorm in honor of slave, poet

CHAPEL HILL, North Carolina (AP) - A dormitory at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has been named for a black slave who became a published poet.

The George Moses Horton Residence Hall, dedicated Monday, is the first building at the university named after a slave.

Horton, who lived from 1798 to 1883, would recite love poems for students who bought them for their sweethearts. He later became the first black man in the South to publish a book of poetry. Horton’s themes included the cruelty of slavery, Civil War-era politicians and campus life.

Chancellor James Moeser and a few of Horton’s descendants were on hand for the ceremony at the 276-bed dorm. They unveiled three plaques with Horton’s biography and two of his poems, which will be hung in the dorm’s lobby.

“Think George Moses would be very amazed and emotional to see this,” said Marion Horton, whose great-great-grandfather is thought to have been a brother, cousin or nephew of George Moses Horton.

Horton’s poetry is still taught today, and officials said Horton is one of the most distinguished authors with ties to the university and the state.

“It is well past time for this university to honor our native son, and to help ensure that, at least within the Carolina family, he is a known name and figure,” said Nelson Schwab, chairman of the university’s Board of Trustees.

Horton read discarded spelling books and learned to write with help from a professor’s wife. He sat in on classes at UNC Chapel Hill but remained a slave until the Civil War’s end in 1865.
Ottumwa student charged with hate crime

OTTUMWA, Iowa (AP) - An Ottumwa High School student is accused of committing a hate crime by hanging a dead opossum and a note insulting blacks and Hispanics in a school bathroom, police said.

Matthew A. Lanman, 17, was charged with fourth-degree criminal mischief after the opossum and note were found on Tuesday.

Police Chief Jim Clark said hanging the opossum in the bathroom would have brought a fifth-degree criminal mischief charge, but Iowa law allows the charge to be enhanced if a hate crime was committed.

The note qualifies as a hate crime, Clark said.

“Fourth-degree criminal mischief is punishable by up to one year in jail and a fine of up to $1,500,” he said.

“I can tell you we’re following district policy,” he said.

Fourth-degree criminal mischief is punishable by up to one year in jail and a fine of up to $1,500.

Lanman said he will check school board policies and school codes of conduct to see what rules have been violated.

“We need results not in six years but six months,” he said.

Louis Michel, European Union commissioner for development and humanitarian aid, told reporters that Sirleaf "has a clear vision, a strong will, and the credit of the international community."

He predicted that parties to this week’s Liberia conference are ready to make aid commitments.

Amid the plaudits for Sirleaf, Amnesty International issued a report saying the Liberian government has been remiss in not prosecuting those responsible for mass murders, rapes and torture during Liberia’s 14-year armed conflict.

The report also faults the government for ignoring victims’ suffering by withholding reparations.

When Sirleaf was in exile from her homeland, she was a World Bank economist, developing the kind of nation-building expertise needed by Liberians still suffering from the effects of two decades of war, devastation and misrule.

In two public appearances Monday, she said her country has been moving ahead since she took office as Liberia’s elected leader a year ago.

She conceded, however, that “the challenges are still enormous.”

Sirleaf told a news conference at the World Bank Monday that most of the country’s debt is owed to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank.

The debt limits Liberia’s ability to borrow additional money, thus slowing the recovery process, she said.

Seated next to Wolfowitz, Sirleaf told reporters the country has made headway in rehabilitating roads, getting children back in school and fixing budgetary chaos.

“Most of all, we’ve restored hope to our people,” she said.

Wolfowitz said Sirleaf had nothing to do with Liberia’s huge debt. He said the blame rests with predecessors, “who are infamous for good reason.”

He referred to former presidents Samuel Doe and Charles Taylor, who dominated the country’s politics in the mostly chaotic 1980-2003 period.

“With those emergency funds run out, and hundreds of millions still needed to rebuild the country, the forum seeks to secure international approval and support for the country’s reconstruction and development strategy, and explore new funding possibilities,” the statement said.

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Church Listings & Weekly Schedules

Burns United Methodist Church
Rev. Dr. Curtis DeVance, JD, MDiv, Pastor
811 Crocker Street
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: Church 515-244-5883

Church Schedule:
- Sunday Morning Worship: 11:00 a.m.
- Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
- Wednesday Bible Study: 12:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.

Corinthian Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. Lee Zachary Maxey, Pastor
814 School Street
Des Moines, IA 50309-1207
Phone: 515-243-4073

Church Business Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Transportation to Sunday School and Morning Worship Service Available.

Verna Smith: 515-243-8470
“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in time of comfort and convenience but where he stands in time of challenge and controversy.” Martin Luther King.

Church Schedule:
- Sundays - Christian Education at 9:30 a.m.
- Sundays - Worship at 10:45 a.m.
- Wednesday Bible Study: 12:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.

Des Moines, IA 50316
1552 Maple Street

St. Paul A.M.E.
Rev. Derek E. Bastian, Pastor
St. Paul A.M.E Church
1201 Day Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50314
Ministry Days & Times

Sundays 9:00 a.m.
- Sunday school
- Praise & Worship
- New Membership Class
- Training or Minister/Evangelist

Church Schedule:
- Sundays - Worship at 8:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
- Sundays - Christian Education at 9:15 a.m.
- Mondays - Boy Scouts & Cub Scouts at 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesdays - Intercessory Prayer at 5:30 p.m. & Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.
- Thursdays - Spiritual Support Group at 7:00 p.m.
- Saturdays - Knitting Class at 12:00 p.m.
- Esther Circle Mission Society - 1st & 3rd Tuesday of Every Month 1:00 p.m.
- Busy Bee Mission Society - 2nd & 4th Saturday of Every Month 10:00 a.m.
- Health Clinic - Third Tuesday of Every Month 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

King of Kings Missionary Baptist Church
Rev. Irvin Lewis, Sr., Pastor
619 S.E. 15th Street
Des Moines, IA 50317-7611
Phone: 515-282-3425

Church Schedule:
- Sundays - Worship at 11:00 a.m.
- Sundays - Christian Education at 9:15 a.m.
- Wednesdays - Intercessory Prayer at 5:30 p.m. & Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.
- Thursdays - Spiritual Support Group at 7:00 p.m.
- Saturdays - Knitting Class at 12:00 p.m.
- Esther Circle Mission Society - 1st & 3rd Tuesday of Every Month 1:00 p.m.
- Busy Bee Mission Society - 2nd & 4th Saturday of Every Month 10:00 a.m.
- Health Clinic - Third Tuesday of Every Month 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Mission Statement: Our mission is to win the lost, build the believer, and controversy. Martin Luther King.

Church Schedule:
- Sundays - Christian Education at 9:15 a.m.
- Sundays - Worship at 8:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
- Sundays - Christian Education at 9:00 a.m.
- Sundays - Worship at 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
- Wednesdays - Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.

Maple Street Missionary Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. Lee Zachary Maxey, Pastor
Address: 1552 E. Maple Street • DSM, IA 50316
Phone: 515-262-1931
Pastor: Rev. Keith A. Ratliff, Sr.
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.

Mount Hebron Missionary Baptist Church
Address: 1338-9th Street • DSM, IA 50314
Phone: 515-280-9163
Pastor: Rev. Bobby Young
Sunday Morning Worship: 11:00 a.m.
Sunday Church School: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday Prayer Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Philadelphia SDA Church
Address: 1639 Garfield Avenue • DSM, IA 50316
Phone: 515-262-7467
Pastor: Rev. Martin T. Perkins, Sr.
Sabbath (Saturday) Morning Worship: 11:00 a.m.
Sabbath (Saturday) School: 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday Prayer Meeting Service: 6:30 p.m.
Sunday Radio Ministry: 9:00 a.m., Praise 940 AM
Email Address: sdaphiladelphia@msn.com

St. Paul A.M.E. Church
Address: 1201 Day Street • DSM, IA
Phone: 515-288-4419
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Henry I. Thomas
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship: 11:00 a.m.
Tuesday Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday Prayer Meeting at 7:00 p.m.
I’m a Haitian brother. And Haiti is the direct daughter of Africa.”

But the Black History Months he remembers studying never mentioned Haiti’s history, even though Haiti was a destination for black Americans searching for their cultural roots. Marcelin now also teaches in the Haitian Heritage Museum’s school outreach program, exposing students to the American history he never learned. For example, when talking about writers from the Harlem Renaissance, Marcelin points out that Zora Neale Hurston wrote her novel “Their Eyes Were Watching God” in Haiti in the 1930s, and the poet Langston Hughes wrote admiringly of the Haitian peasants who walked down mountain roads barefoot, balancing baskets on their heads, to sell their wares.

“They should have been teaching this in school, that soldiers from Haiti came to fight in the American Revolution,” Marcelin said. “I read about Frederick Douglass in the history books but I don’t remember anything about him being the ambassador to Haiti. Or that the founder of Chicago was a Haitian brother.”

The study of black history in the U.S. is evolving to include political and social struggles for equality in Haiti and other black communities, said Dhyana Ziegler, a journalism professor and assistant vice president for academic affairs at Florida A&M University.

“We share a history, we share a struggle. It is indeed very appropriate that Haitian history is part of black history,” Ziegler said.

But while Haitian-Americans may identify with their ethnic heritage first and American black history second, most people won’t see them that way because they share a skin color, Ziegler said.

Haitians have to balance their need for recognition with the larger community’s continuing struggle for equality, she said.

“On the one hand you are creating your community, on the other hand you have to assimilate with the wider community,” Ziegler said. “You want to keep your culture, your arts, your music. At the same token, you want to be part of the world.”

Jim Clyburn says he will not endorse primary candidate

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) - House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn, one of the most powerful blacks in South Carolina politics, will not endorse a Democratic candidate during the 2008 primaries as part of a promise made months ago to party leaders.

“I’m staying out of it,” Clyburn told The Associated Press this week as several Democratic White House hopefuls prepared to visit his home state.

Clyburn did much of the arm twisting that landed South Carolina’s January 2008 primary ahead of every other state except Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada.

“I used a lot of political capital keeping that primary in South Carolina when two other states went after that,” Clyburn said. “I promised people at that time that if they were to come to South Carolina and participate in that primary I would not participate in any effort.” He said he wanted to ensure all candidates “have a fair shot at winning the state.”

An endorsement from the former U.S. House Black Caucus leader and the state’s senior member of Congress could carry a lot of weight in South Carolina, where 49 percent of primary voters are black. It did not help much in 2004 however, when Clyburn endorsed Dick Gephardt before his longtime colleague left the race; he then threw his support to John Kerry. Former Sen. John Edwards, a South Carolina native, won the primary here.

Clyburn said an endorsement from him would do little to help a state party that’s struggled to raise money and get candidates elected. Both chambers of the Legislature, the governor’s office and two-thirds of the congressional delegation - including both Senate seats - are controlled by Republicans.