

GRAPEVINE

SUMMER 2003

www.caaao.net

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"How can my organization
join CAAO?"

CAAO

- ▲ Consortium of African American
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- ▲ This Newsletter is published
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Connie Atkins
"CAAO Looks, Listens
and Links."

Good News!

There is so much good news to share that it is difficult to choose a starting point.

First, I would like to thank our **CAAO volunteers**. CAAO has several regular volunteers: Art Beasley, Alfie Walter, Jacinda Walker, Liz Pirnat, Gwen Davis, Tony Brooks, Linda Kerr, and Albert Mathews; but three who actively participate in daily operations, Chataun Moore, research and fund development, Fatima Karriem, office hours and special projects such as the Leadership Retreat, and Bridgette Lewis, office hours and fundraising projects. Their combined assistance to CAAO has been extremely important in the growth and development of CAAO.

Second, I want to congratulate the **CAAO Partners of the Year**, Case Western Reserve University, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, and Alltel. These CAAO sponsors not only support us financially, they actively recruit employees via the CAAO website, sponsor other CAAO organizations, invite CAAO staff and volunteers to be their guests at community functions

and events, and do business with CAAO entrepreneurs by seeking vendors and consultants via CAAO's online business database. They work with CAAO four different ways, and their combined direct monetary economic impact in the African American communities of greater Cleveland via CAAO is over \$500,000 for the year 2003.

Third, I would like to congratulate the **three business collaboratives** that have developed over the past year: The Corporate Image Group (6 companies came together to offer full service marketing, public relations, awards, incentives, web development, and printing). The Nile Technologies Solutions (8 IT companies focusing on technology solutions for non profit organizations and HIPAA requirements for the medical industry). An accounting collaborative called I-cubed which focuses on delivering free tax services to qualified individuals and accounting services to non-profits.

Please join me in giving the CAAO volunteers, partners, and collaboratives a resounding BRAVO! ❖

MEMBER ORGANIZATION



Sankofa
Fine Art Plus

www.sankofafineartsplus.org

If you are interested in
joining Sankofa, contact
Donna Faithwalker
at 216-791-2437

Sankofa Fine Arts Plus

Sankofa Fine Arts Plus is one of CAAO's newest member organizations. Sankofa Fine Art Plus is a Cleveland based non-profit organization established in January 1999. Sankofa is dedicated to the education, preservation and distribution of "Fine Ethnic Art." They seek to develop opportunities that create, promote, educate, expose and encourage the distribution of fine ethnic art in the greater Cleveland area.

Sankofa's purpose is to contribute to the art and culture of the African-American community and other ethnic groups through a climate that will recognize diversity in ethnic art and its artistic expressions. Louise J. Gissendaner is the organization's founder and President. The executive director, Donna Johnson Faithwalker, is responsible for operations and development. Below is information on one of the many events Sankofa took part in this year.

4TH ANNUAL CLEVELAND FINE ART EXPO

Sankofa Fine Art Plus presented its 4th Annual Cleveland Fine Art Expo on May 16, 17 and 18, 2003 at Cuyahoga Community College's lovely eastern campus. Nearly 4,000 people attended this annual cultural event that included over

50 artists from across the country. In addition to the many artists' booths, the Expo offered art activities and storytelling for children and teenagers at the Children's Village and a Poetry Corner that featured local poets and an open mic.

Featured artist, John Holyfield attracted many art collectors to the Expo and gave presentations to art students at two local high schools during his visit. Cleveland Contemporary Dance Theatre presented a dance performance inspired by Holyfield's painting "The Righteous Path" during the Expo weekend.

On Saturday evening, Sankofa Fine Art Plus presented its first Emerging Artist award to local artist, Sequoia Versillee. She received a \$500 scholarship and a Sankofa bird statue that was created by local sculptor, Edward Parker. Shannen Wilson received an honorable mention and \$100 scholarship for art supplies. Other awards were presented to Cuyahoga Community College and United Black Fund, Inc. of Gr. Cleveland for their ongoing support of the CFAE. Following the awards presentation, vocalist, T.C. Carson and his jazz quartet conducted by jazz pianist, Patrice Rushen, entertained 500 concertgoers in Tri-C's Performing Arts Theater.

Media coverage was prevalent throughout the Expo weekend. The Plain Dealer ran a feature article in its Friday! Magazine for the second consecutive year. Two local radio stations and a local television station did live on-air broadcasts during the Expo. While Philadelphia's October Live provided onsite interactive internet chats and interviews. ❖



*Charles A. Bibbs, Reminiscence
Commemorates the Cleveland Fine Arts Expo 2000*

Current Member Organizations

- ▲ African American Chamber of Commerce of North East Ohio
- ▲ African American Faculty and Staff of CWRU
- ▲ Black Data Processing Associates
- ▲ Black Professionals Association
- ▲ Blacks in Government
- ▲ Blacks in Management
- ▲ CSU Black Alumni Organization
- ▲ Cleveland African American Library Association
- ▲ Cleveland Women's Council of National Association of Real Estate Brokers
- ▲ Forest City Dental Society
- ▲ Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.
- ▲ Minority Links Inc.
- ▲ NAACP
- ▲ National African American Speakers Association
- ▲ National Alliance of Market Developers
- ▲ National Association of Black Accountants
- ▲ National Black MBA Association
- ▲ National Society of Black Engineers
- ▲ National Technical Association
- ▲ North Coast Black Bass Anglers
- ▲ President's Council
- ▲ Sankofa Fine Arts Plus
- ▲ Urban Financial Services Coalition
- ▲ Women Entrepreneurs of America



Artwork created by Synthia Saint James for PowerNetworking 2003

PowerNetworking 2003

by William Holdipp, Jr.

The PowerNetworking Conference 2003, a date to mark down in the history books. It was an electrifying event. Connie Atkins and I attended the conference representing CAAO and its 23 member organizations. Connie Atkins, executive director of CAAO, had a very important part to play in this conference. She was selected to be on the panel for the town hall power meeting, a panelist in the

“Marketing your Nonprofit” workshop, and a guest on a live nationally syndicated radio show. Below is a summary of some of the events I attended.

Town Hall Power Meeting

“Building Collaborative Organizations and Networks that Build Black Businesses and Communities”, was the theme for the town hall meeting on Thursday, June 19th. George honored CAAO by adding Connie Atkins to the panel. Ed Gordon was the moderator. The panel also included Ron Daniels, Executive Director Center for Constitutional Rights, Tommy Dortch, Chairman, 100 Black Men of America, George Frame, Executive Director, Ford Motor Company, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Founder, Rainbow/PUSH, Harry Johnson, President, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., Bev Smith, Host, The Bev Smith Show, Julianne Malveaux PhD. Economist, Author, Lecturer, and Dennis Rahim Watson, Executive Director National Black Youth Leadership Council, and L. Londell McMillian, entrepreneur.

After the memorable panel introductions, Ed Gordon kicked off the discussion. The discussion was lively. I was a bit disappointed with the lack of examples of organizations that are effectively using collaboration to build black businesses. Harry Johnson gave an example of how Alpha Phi Alpha has partnered with Churches Chicken to make way for its members to open up Churches Chicken locations. He also mentioned a similar partnership in the early stages with Wyndham Hotels. When Ed Gordon finally gave Connie permission to talk she did Cleveland proud! She talked about the strong collaborative nature of CAAO and how it has managed to have a \$5 million economic impact in the African American community in Greater Cleveland in less than 2 years. For all of you who

did attend this event I am sure you know the web site address of CAAO by now. The town hall meeting will be aired on the Word Network throughout the year. Thanks George for giving CAAO such national exposure. Through your kindness, CAAO has now been asked to set up franchises in over 20 cities!

BEV SMITH SHOW LIVE

After the town hall meeting, Connie was ushered off to the Marriott Hotel Lobby to speak live on the Bev Smith Show. Connie was on the show along with L. Londell McMillian. The discussion was on the family breakdown in the African American community. They discussed issues like the effects of welfare on the black community and what needs to be done to strengthen the black family. The show ended at 1:30 am. It was time to get some rest to prepare for the next day.

WORKSHOP 1: B2B DOING BUSINESS IN THE CORPORATE WORLD

This workshop was the first of many workshops that I attended. Reggie Williams, CEO of Procurement Resources, Inc. was the presenter of this workshop. Reggie, a consultant to corporate management, is credited with coining the term "Supplier Diversity". Reggie discussed buying power. He mentioned that the buying power of African Americans is \$572 billion, \$452 billion for Hispanic Americans, \$253 billion for Asian Pacifics, and \$34 billion for American Indians.



Reggie also talked about how we as African Americans must stop thinking that Corporate America does business with us because it the good thing to do. They do business with us because it is economically the best thing to do. He used the analogy of "Mashed Potatoes and Gravy" The items he listed under the category "Mashed Potatoes included:

1. Cost Competitive
2. Value added Services
3. Meets quality standards
4. Good track record
5. Good turnaround

Under "Gravy" he listed under utilized business owner. Reggie stated that gravy is no good by itself. You must have mashed potatoes with your gravy to business with corporate America.

Francis Wright, VP Diversity and Ethics for Wendy's International did a power point presentation on what is required to do business with Wendy's and Delbert Gray, President of Michigan Minority Business Development Council, talked about how his organization has become the number one minority business development council in the nation.

EVENING OFF INSPIRATION, MOTIVATION AND POWER

This was a very spiritual evening. The evening started off with a few gospel acts from Cleveland. This included gospel singing to spiritual dance. CeCe and Vickie Winans performed next. This was my first time seeing them in concert. CeCe and Vickie's performance were in contrast of each other. CeCe was more laid back, while Vickie was powerful in voice and presence. Vickie just about wore herself out on just her first song. After the gospel singing, Dr. Juanita Bynum blessed us with her word.

continued on page 6

*Photo of Stedman Graham, Connie Atkins,
and Rev. Hilton O. Smith*

CAAO's Strategic Partner

Enterprise
Development, Inc.

CAAO's Fundors

Cleveland
Foundation

The George Gund
Foundation

21st Century
Foundation

Supporting Members

Northeast Ohio
Regional Sewer
District

Acme Express

Case Western
Reserve University

National City Bank

Neighborhood
Centers Association

Huntington
National Bank

Fifth Third Bank

Alltel



**WORKSHOP 2:
CULTIVATE YOUR ETHICAL
LEADERSHIP STYLE**

In this workshop, the speaker and panelists talked about ethically based leadership principles that can enrich your work relationships, build teamwork, gain the cooperation of others, foster integrity and ignite productivity in your organization and community group. The speaker was Dr. Marilyn French Hubbard, Senior Vice President, Henry Ford Health Systems. The panelists included Jylla Foster Moore, Author, Coleman Peterson, Senior Vice President, Wal-Mart Stores, and Lisa Evans, Asst. Federal Public Defender, District of New Jersey. I was able to network with Jylla before the session started and found out she is a member of the National Black MBAA in Chicago. She was interested in finding a way to start a CAAO in Chicago. If you are a business owner who is interested in doing business with Wal-Mart, this was the place to be. The entire back of the room was full of top decision makers of Wal-Mart, and Sam's Club. I was able to network with some of them. As a result Wal-Mart mailed CAAO information for its entrepreneurs, on how do business with Wal-Mart and Sam Club was interested in using CAAO to assist in finding executive level employees.



*Sankofa Fine Arts
Commemorates the
Cleveland Fine Arts
Expo 2000*

**AFRICAN AMERICAN
BUSINESS HALL OF
FAME GALA**

The African American Business Hall of Fame Gala took place at the Renaissance Hotel. It started off with a private reception where I was able to talk to Steve Minter who recently retired as President of the Cleveland Foundation. After the private reception, Connie and I were delighted to find out that we were going to sitting at the Black Voices table with Barry Cooper, Founder, President and Chief Executive Officer,

BlackVoices.com Connie and I met Barry at the first Power Networking Conference. He was delighted to find out that Connie and I met via the internet. Barry was inducted into the African American Business Hall of Fame and Museum this year. Barry was awarded the Reginald F. Lewis Award for Entrepreneurial Excellence. Connie and I are hoping to work with Barry to assist CAAO with its national expansion.

At the Business Hall of Fame Dinner, I was honored with the opportunity to meet one of my heroes, Earl Graves, founder of Black Enterprise Magazine. My love for research came about after reading Mr. Graves' book, 'How to do Business Without Being White'. He was kind enough to allow me a few minutes to take a picture with him. This picture now hangs on my wall of fame at the CAAO office.

I hope from the information above you can see how important this Power Networking Conference was for Cleveland and its business owners. Thanks George for having this powerful event in Cleveland. There was better attendance at the conference from Clevelanders this year. I hope to see more Clevelanders in attendance next year. For more information on the 2004 conference go to www.frasernet.com. ❖



*Town Hall Meeting
Power Networking Conference 2003*



Corporate Image Group LLC (CIG), One-stop marketing communications firm

New collaboration of companies offering an array of image and marketing communications services.

The companies and their services include: The Engravable Idea/ Presentedto.com, awards-Recognition promotional products; Visibility Marketing Inc., advertising public relations and Marketing communications; LA. Business Services, desktop publishing; FMDInc, graphics and Web design and Graffiti Print Shop, silk-screen apparel and banners.

"It's important that we offer our clients integrated marketing and communications services so that we can better service our clients," said Stanley Miller Jr., owner of The Engravable Idea. "They can come to us for

a variety of services without having to use multiple organizations for their marketing campaign or special event."

CIG received its jumpstart from the Consortium of African American Organizations (CAAO), and umbrella consulting organizations for African American professional organizations of Greater Cleveland. CAAO serves as a conduit and referral source to existing resources for entrepreneurial development, professional development, and leadership empowerment for its member organizations and their members.

"I saw there was a gap in this industry and pulled a group of highly skilled professionals together to maximize their potential in the marketplace," said Connie Atkins, executive director of CAAO. "With the many years of professional experience coupled with the expertise and professionalism of its principles, CIG will soon be a driving force in the field of marketing communications and image consulting."

In eight short months, CIG list Case Western Reserve University, The Black Pages, National Alliance of Market Developers, Neighborhood Centers Association, Colman Spohn, Loncoleman Corp, and NOMBC as its clients.

For more information about CIG visit www.cig-group.com or contact info@cig-group.com ❖

CAAO's Mission

To utilize the resources of greater Cleveland African American professional organizations to promote economic development in African American communities and to enhance career and entrepreneurial opportunities for African Americans.

Collaborative Members

Northern Ohio
Minority Business
Council

Cleveland Bridge
Builders

Cleveland
Convention and
Visitors Bureau

ANNOUNCEMENT

NCA Now Offers Copying Services

Neighborhood Center Services, a Division of Neighborhood Centers Association (NCA) is proud to announce our new copy service.

This great priced, fast service is available from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at 1761 East 30th Street. For more info, call 216-298-4429.

- High Quality Copies
- Color and Black & White
- Best Prices in Town
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- All major credit cards accepted ❖

CAAO CORNER

Got Questions?

The CAAO Corner will highlight frequently asked questions about CAAO and their answers.

- Q.** How can my organization join CAAO?
- A.** If your organization is majority African American, has at least ten paid members, has been in existence for two or

more years, is located in greater Cleveland, and your mission does not conflict with CAAO's mission, just complete our membership application, have it signed by two officers of your organization, and fax it to CAAO at (216) 774- 2279. Your application will be reviewed by the CAAO board and put to a vote. The application can be found at www.cao.net/applications.asp ❖

CAAO EMAIL LIST

Check the website!

In an effort to enhance the efficiency of our communications with CAAO member organizations and friends of CAAO, CAAO is utilizing an email service. This service will permit us to send you the information that interests you as well as give you the opportunity to update your contact information as things change.

Just click onto the address below to add yourself, make changes or qualify which type of information you would like to receive from CAAO:
<http://lb.bcentral.com/ex/manage/subscriberprefs.aspx?customerid=8041>. ❖

CAAO VOLUNTEERS

Thank you!

Iwant to take time to acknowledge all the volunteers who have assisted in the growth of the CAAO programs. Your assistance has been greatly appreciated.

These volunteers include:

- ▲ **Art Beasley**—Facilitator of the CAAO Entrepreneurial Empowerment Circle
- ▲ **Elizabeth Pirnat**—Assisting CAAO with website development

- ▲ **Fatima Karriem**—Special Projects
- ▲ **Alfie Walter**—Facilitator of the CAAO Non Profit Empowerment Circle
- ▲ **Bridgette Lewis**—Special Projects
- ▲ **Chataun Moore**—Fundraising
- ▲ **Jacinda Walker**—Design and Layout

If you are interested in becoming a CAAO volunteer please send me an email at cao_cleveland@yahoo.com. ❖