

Announcing:

BEAM Website!!

For the latest on news, events, and membership information, we will be available online in June 2008.

BEAM Newsletter

Membership Meeting

May 22, 2008, 4:30pm
12th Baptist Church
150 Warren Street,
Roxbury

BEAM Mission

It is the mission of the Black Educators' Alliance of Massachusetts to provide support to Black educators and to improve academic performance of all children, but particularly, students of color.

BEAM Officers

Nora L. Toney
President

Johnny R. McInnis, II
Vice President

Nancy Dickerson
Treasurer

Robert Marshall
Parliamentarian

Deborah Dancy
Corresponding Secretary

John Garner
Recording Secretary



President's Welcome Message

Recommitting to Eliminating the Achievement Gap

Our conference theme charged each one of us to recommit to the compelling goal of eliminating the achievement gap between Black and Latino students and their peers. We must transform our practices into more effective and skillful instruction affording all students academic as well as social, emotional and spiritual success!

At this year's conference I welcomed all members of the educational community who teach and nurture all children, but particularly children of color who have experienced opportunity gaps that manifest itself in the form of the achievement gap. I especially welcomed our parents, with whom we must partner and build strong relationships to support the education of our students. Lastly, I was pleased to welcome our high school students who will become our future leaders. Thank you to all who attended. BEAM is committed to working collaboratively with you to eliminate the gap.

In this Issue

Welcome Message

P. 1

2008 BEAM Annual Conference

P. 2

Education Is A Civil Right

P. 3

Dancing on the Water Cruise

P. 4

The Annual Conference aimed to achieve the following:

- ❖ Continue to provide opportunities for committed individuals to focus on solutions and strategies that will assist students in achieving excellence;
- ❖ Examine the notion of how individuals and or school teams can courageously address the negative impact that centuries of systemic and attitudinal racism has had on all children of color, and in particularly African American children;
- ❖ Analyze and discuss crucial factors that support and recognize our youngsters' cultural learning styles; and
- ❖ Inspire all of us to continue to lift our individual and collective voices to ensure that all students are provided an equitable and academically rigorous education.

Thank you to our speakers and corporate sponsors for their continued support of BEAM's initiatives and events. Hats Off to all of you for making this year's conference a success!

Nora L. Toney
President

BEAM Membership Continues to Grow Statewide

We had two successful membership drives at our recent events. Our members are located as far west as Springfield and from various educational institutions: Coalition for Essential Schools, Randolph Public School District, Boston Renaissance Charter School, Boston Plan for Excellence, Simmons College, and Harvard University just to name a few.

BEAM Memberships are 12-month memberships; opportunity for renewal will be available at our next membership meeting.

Exciting Opportunities for BEAM Members

There are various working committees where members' knowledge, skills, and expertise are needed to continue to provide, promote, and advocate for all children to have access to a relevant, culturally responsive, quality education. These committees include the following:

- ❖ Administrator Caucus
- ❖ Educational Issues
- ❖ Fundraising
- ❖ Membership
- ❖ Scholarship
- ❖ Teachers

2008 BEAM Annual Conference Highlights

Eliminating the Achievement Gap Renewing Commitment, Transforming Practices, Getting Results

Designed to revitalize our commitment to eliminate the achievement/opportunity gap between Black and Hispanic students and their peers, participants were challenged and inspired from the start of the conference to critique current practices that will result in measurable student achievement. This year's BEAM Annual Conference was lengthened to host an opening evening reception. The reception was filled with activity as colleagues and friends reacquainted themselves and opened their arms to receive and welcome new faces.

Dr. Adelaide Sanford graced BEAM Conference attendees with her captivating, spellbinding oration along with her wealth of historical experiences and insight, as the keynote presenter for the evening.



Dr. Adelaide Sanford, Vice Chancellor of the State University of New York's Board of Regents and Dr. Carol Johnson, Superintendent of the Boston Public Schools at the opening reception.

Through her work in shaping educational policy, Dr. Sanford impacted the lives of students at every level of New York City's school system.

Her opening address challenged many to reevaluate their position, strategies, and commitment to improving the academic performance

of students of color that have been denied access to quality education for generations. "Our students are able to achieve if given the appropriate access to educational resources," she summarized the call to be more appropriately stated, "Eliminating the Access Gap"!

The Next Chapter in Our Journey



Dr. Carol Johnson, Nora Toney, and Dr. Mary Bacon

Dr. Mary Bacon is no stranger to BEAM or the Boston Metropolitan area. Conference attendees were fortunate to reflect on BEAM's long road to achieving proficiency for all. As an active

member of this process, Dr. Bacon brings the respected perspective of what steps BEAM and others must take to transform practices and get results in *Eliminating the Achievement Gap*.

In her keynote address, Dr. Bacon reminded all of those in attendance of the work that is still left to be completed. Through her humorous affect, she sobered the audience of its complacency to inactions when a policy is not fully implemented. Dr. Bacon brings this reality home with her expertise and knowledge on what school districts, leaders, educators and parents have to overcome to recommit themselves and continue to stay on the journey of result-oriented advocacy for young people of color in our schools and communities. She relentlessly reminded, encouraged, and challenged all to continue to stay the course.

2008 BEAM Annual Conference Participants' Reflections



Mychal Wynn has published 17 books including, **Don't Quit, Test of Faith, Increasing Student Achievement,** and **The Eagles Who Thought They Were Chickens.**



I learned strategies to use immediately. Extremely insightful, real and motivating!! Thanks for my medicine!

The conference was productive and provided new insights as well as a great network of concerned educators



Dr. Tyrone Howard, Associate Professor in Urban Schooling at the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at UCLA.

Filiberto Santiago-Lezardi is widely recognized as an accomplished teacher and leader. Known as a master teacher, he serves as a Teacher Mentor for the MA Dept. of Education and is the recipient of many honors and awards. *No Photo Available.*

I absolutely love this conference. Thank you for providing "Real" professional development!



This was awesome!
Inspirational! Motivating!
Relevant! Practical!

Thank You...Thank You...
Thank You!!!



Meizhu Lui co-author of **The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the Racial Wealth Divide**



Great! You gathered the best to begin this conference and to end it. We need to continue to hear from these people who care about the education of our kids!!



Please extend this information to everyone who educates our children. The messages presented are of outmost



Chike Akua an educator, lecturer and author. *Ebony Magazine* listed him as one of its '50 Leaders of Tomorrow'.

2008 Awardees

Carlos Flores
Concord Carlisle High School

Orville Joseph
Health Careers Academy

Eraj Mashmasarmi
Health Careers Academy

Aaron Maund
Roxbury Latin School

Zakiyyah Sutton
Boston Arts Academy

Student Voices Heard

Professor Charles Ogletree, Jr., the founding and executive director of the Charles Hamilton Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School moderated a panel of students that shared perceptions and realities about their education experience.

The discussion was thought-provoking and allowed conference attendees to reflect on their own practices and behaviors to *Eliminating the Achievement Gap*. The student panelists shared common experiences and Professor Ogletree summarized those at the conclusion of the workshop, as follows:

- ❖ Students are aware of how they are classified, i.e. good vs. bad student.
- ❖ Mentors are important to students' academic motivation and success.
- ❖ Friends and peers play a significant role in their decision-making process.
- ❖ Students are aware of their environments and what are the expectations.

Students Achieve



BEAM is very fortunate this year to offer five \$1,000 scholarships to outstanding students attending a college or university in the fall of 2008. Congratulations to our BEAM Scholarship Fund recipients!

Thank you to all who made contributions to the BEAM Scholarship Fund at the conference.

Education Is A Civil Right: NABSE and Ogletree Declare



“Education is the most important thing in our society. It is our foundation for citizenship,” shares Professor Charles Ogletree at the conference’s closing plenary. He is not alone in pushing for a national movement that would result in liberty and justice for all citizens through quality education. The National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE), BEAM’s national affiliate, insists for the country to establish a zero tolerance policy on illiteracy, dropout and failure and urges all citizens to take action.

The debate is grounded in the fundamental right of all citizens to a free and appropriate public education. Ogletree argues, “[With] the right teachers, the right resources and right commitment, the result would be quality education.” He also shared with audience members what he learned as a moderator for a panelist of students earlier in the conference, “Students ask that educators see every child as a person.”

NABSE concurs with Professor Ogletree’s position. As stated in their *Education Is A Civil Right Agenda*, “It is also essential to recognize that it is a disadvantage to all, if a significant group of Americans remains consistently mis- and under-educated.”

NABSE seeks to target four primary areas to impact the educational outcomes for African-American students and families in K-12 education:

1. Implement educational policies and practices (including personnel assignments, training and evaluation) that advance and promote educational excellence for all African American students.
2. Improve high school graduation rates for all African American students.
3. Improve the educational progress and status of African American male and female students by understanding and coping with gender-specific needs. A special focus must address the causes of, and solutions to, the underachievement of African American male students.
4. Provide support for parents and families of underachieving African American students.

Continue to follow the developments of this national movement at www.NABSE.org. Let us align our membership and most importantly our practices by taking action to ensure that the nation commits to education as a civil right.

End of the School Year Event

Join the Black Educators' Alliance of Massachusetts at the *Dancing on the Water Cruise*. This is an opportunity for members, friends, and colleagues to celebrate this year's accomplishments, welcome the summer, and support the BEAM Scholarship Fund!!

Enjoy Boston's harbor skyline, while you mix and mingle, enjoy cocktails and conversation to soft jazz or just take in the ocean's summer breeze as you dance the night away!

Tickets on Sale!!

Proceeds to Benefit the BEAM Scholarship Fund

Dancing on the Water Cruise

Saturday, June 21, 2008

8:30pm – 12:00am

Aboard the *Majestic Princess*

Donation: \$40 in Advance

\$45 on Board

For ticket information call:

(617) 445-2088 or (617) 510-2281

Board at 8:30pm

Cruise from 9:00pm until 12:00am

Dancing, Cash Bar, Hors d'oeuvres