



Photo by Yvonne Kemp

Field 502

(right) celebrated her one year anniversary at Garfield Avenue. Cogs is seen with some of the socks, wash-

Highlights baseball



CBC forum focuses on the challenge of reaching more of Milwaukee's jobless



By Angela Simmons

A panel of individuals on the front lines of Milwaukee's workforce development discussed the challenge of reaching more people in need of jobs during a recent Community Brainstorming Conference forum at St. Matthew CME Church.

On the panel was U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, Milwaukee Area Workforce Funding Alliance Director Tim McMurty II, Earl Buford, President and CEO of Employ Milwaukee, India McCaane, State Program Director for the Corporation for National & Community Service, Mark Kessenich, President and CEO of WRTP/BIG STEP, and Ralph Hollomon, President and CEO of Milwaukee Urban League.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the national unemployment rate is 4.9% as of August 2016. The unemployment rate in Wisconsin is 4.2%. Milwaukee has the highest Black male unemployment rate in the country, at 54.8 according to a UW-Milwaukee report. For Whites, the city unemployment rate is 4.7%.

An article by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel found that in 2015 Wisconsin's Black unemployment rate was twice that of the national unemployment rate at the height of the recession—9.9%. That figure is based on the number of African Americans receiving unemployment benefits and thus is inaccurate. It does not include people who have dropped out of the labor market.

McMurty spoke about Milwaukee being at a crossroads, stating that there is an economic boom happening in Milwaukee and he wants individuals seeking employment to have the right information when it comes to gaining access.

McMurty compared the current economic development to Milwaukee's manufacturing boom—which declined in the 1970s—but allowed many African Americans access to employment during the great migration when, from 1916 to 1970, more than 6 million African Americans moved from the rural South—drawn to jobs in industrial cities where they faced a more subtle form of racial discrimination.

McMurty said the employment opportunities have shifted, but many of the obstacles are still the same, adding the process for obtaining employment needs tweaking. At the same time, those seeking employment have to put forth a solid effort at all stages in the

In August, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Secretary Raymond Allen was joined by city and state elected officials as he talked about the mobile job centers that will soon drive into Milwaukee neighborhoods. That same month, Gov. Scott Walker announced the state would spend more than \$4 million to spur workforce development on the north side. Walker said some of the money will pay for mobile response job centers to set up in zip codes where unemployment is high and access to resources is limited. The mobile center will be run by the Department of Workforce Development. This is just one of the initiatives introduced to meet the job needs of Black Milwaukeeans.

—Photo courtesy of Bonnie Petrie, WUWM.com

Child advocate Wanda Montgomery to receive Community Brainstorming James Howard Baker Award

Highly regarded Black Children's advocate Wanda Montgomery, is the 2016 Community Brainstorming Conference (CBC) James Howard Baker Award recipient.

The award, given annually by the CBC in honor of the late James Howard Baker, is to recognize the contributions and commitment of the recipient to the political and economic empowerment of African Americans in the community as exemplified by Baker.

Montgomery has dedicated her life to the pursuit of excellence in the fields of child education, child welfare and community engagement.



Wanda Montgomery

She holds a Masters Degree in Educational Policy and Leadership and a Bachelors in Community Education, and has spent decades in putting knowledge into action in her professional career, community involvement, and committee work.

She serves as the First Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the National Black Child Development Institute, and is a Charter member, and current President of the Black Child Development Institute-Milwaukee Affiliate.

Her accomplishments have been demonstrated and recognized by many throughout Wisconsin and nationally.

Her awards and recognition's are far too numerous to mention here, suffice it to say that Montgomery is an extremely accomplished individual and certainly an asset to our community and fully deserving of the Baker award.

The award will be presented at the 27th Anniversary of the CBC Dinner at the Radisson North Shore Hotel, 7065 North Port Washington Road, on Friday October 14 at 6:30 p.m.

The Honorable Keith Ellison, U.S. Representative from the Fifth Congressional District of Minnesota will

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... because he was fully human and, yet, fully divine, feeling the spiritual and nature pain of the people? Was it from his humanity and divinity, where he felt love, disappointment, loss, grief and sadness—every human emotion that evokes tears from the heart?

One doesn't have to be dead to grieve death and dying. Grieving calls us into an experience of raw immediacy that is often devastating. In *A Grief Observed*, a collection of reflections on the experience of bereavement, author C.S. Lewis reveals that "No one ever told me that grief was so much like fear."

Tears, the lachrymal gland, responds to the emotion of awe, pleasure, love and, yes, sorrow. They are the fluids that rest in the ducts that can cause you to lose sight and can run down into your nose, all because of sorrow not joy.

And, when the heart weeps it is beyond the liquid into the small channels that flow into the tear sac. It is a pain that is likening to the sound of sorrow from the mothers, fathers, family members, who have lost their loved ones in the midst of these murders and executions.

"I am not afraid, but the sensation is like being afraid. The same fluttering in the stomach, the same restlessness, the yawning. I keep on swallowing."

As an African American man, I can relate to Lewis because seemingly everyday my life is at risk. I swallow grief and fear that I, or one of my brothers, our children, or mothers, are next.

It was the sorrow of a suffering people that gave cause to ecumenical faith leaders becoming the catalyst for a civil rights movement for a "Righteous America."

These faith leaders used their sa-

... Jehovah, Allah, the Buddha, and ...
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Number 414-270-1700. Cost is \$40.00.

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for Veteran services," said Buford, who Board by completing an intake at an Access Point, Employ Milwaukee can recruit from that pool of people when employers or training programs make contact seeking eligible candidates.

Hollman also touched on the need to reach more people. "We have so many people in our community that need help and support, and we have a number of programs that are in existence right now. But, we need to take them to scale so that we can reach more people."

The MUL president and CEO, who is retiring in December, said there are not enough resources to meet the number of people in the community who need help, and pushed the idea of transitional job programs. He also supports Sen. Baldwin's Stronger Way Act.

Kessenich told the forum audience that WRTP/BIG STEP is in the business of making connections, something he knows to be critical when transitioning from a job to a career. "It's not just about jobs, it's about careers," said Kessenich, who stressed that without a career path and without direction, individuals are at the risk of losing their job and being back in the same position they started from.

"Nowadays, we have to prepare individuals to think not 'where am I working today,' but 'where am I working [at] the next step,'" he said. "If you don't have the next step in place, all you've done is churn people through the same [trying to] get the first job over and over again. Which I think is the experience (happening now) in this community in particular."

In addition to the question: "Where are the jobs", community members during the question and answer portion of the forum pressed the panel specifically on what seems to be the reason for the lack of employment opportunities for African Americans in Milwaukee, and what they plan to do about it?

McMurry, the only panelist to respond, said the Milwaukee Area Workforce Funding Alliance is working directly with companies, compelling them to hire African Americans; minus the support of the city attorney.

"We get it, and we're trying to push it both from a legislative standpoint, as well as from a private sector standpoint," McMurry said. "And that's probably at the crux of what's going on in Milwaukee given the history of racial (polarization). You have people that are here that care about that. We saw the fires burning in Sherman Park. We're not trying to have that be repeated."

key. "Black Nativity is becoming a new holiday musical tradition in Milwaukee, and we're proud to continue showcase the incredible talent in the community" says Co-Producer Barbara Wanzo. In addition to Stample Black Nativity 2016 features several fresh young performer faces and three cast members returning from last year. "We think this modern take on the Hughes' classic will be appealing to the entire community and in particular youth, young adult professionals and families. We need their support for the future sustainability of African American arts our community" adds Wanzo.

"The Marcus Center for the Performing Arts understands the importance of African American arts in our community for the ENTIRE community" says Marcus Center President and CEO, Paul Mathews. Mathews continues, "As the community's performing arts center, it is our vision for the Marcus Center to provide the setting for outstanding cultural experiences like Black Nativity, where the arts come to life for future generations."

Black Nativity runs December through December 11th, Thursday through Sunday. Saturday and Sunday matinees available. Community Preview Nights feature special pricing for adults and children Wednesday, November 30th and Wednesday, December 7th performances only. Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased in person at the Marcus Center Box Office at 910 North Water St. by phone at 414-270-7206 or online at MarcusCenter.org or Ticketmaster.com. Groups of 10 or more should call Group Sales at 414-273-7121 x210 or x213. For more information, visit MarcusCenter.org.