

## With Every Note, I Felt God's Presence

Leontyne Price remembers a memorable night.



Singing is a very personal art form. An instrumentalist has to deal with, and touch, other objects—a violin, a piano, etc. However, singers are the object of the art, and singing is the most personal way to express it. It is you, and you are it. The breath that is involved with singing is a technical thing. It is part of the training that helps to produce the voice in the best form possible. But breath, in terms of the Spirit of God, is really about the sense I get of being in the hands of God when I sing. I really do feel I am in touch with something much higher than myself, and much higher than the performance I am

### Edgecombe cont. ....

In major crimes, we have a one unsolved homicides, 100% clearance rate in rapes and statutory offenses, 88 % clearance rate in armed robberies and a 30% clearance rate in breaking/entering and burglaries. The detective division has recovered for Edgecombe and surrounding counties in excess of \$900,000 worth of property.

Along with searches and search warrants, the narcotics division has made 200 arrests involving 250 drug charges. The Narcotics Division has been busy training and is preparing to gear up for the continuing fight on drugs. We hope to see the number of drug arrests and charges increase over the next year.

There are 53 detention officers and supervisors and two public health nurses assigned to the detention facility. The average daily inmate population managed by detention personnel is 230. The number of federal inmates being housed in the Edgecombe County Detention Center increased to 100. We have collected \$1,397,280 in revenue from January 2004 to April 2005 for housing federal and state inmates.

A new computer system has been added in the detention center that monitors inmates' telephone calls (the system advises them that the calls may be monitored). With this system in place, we have cleared several cases and have recovered stolen property.

An additional CAD workstation has been added to Telecommunications. This workstation will serve as backup if one of existing stations becomes inoperable. It will be manned in the event the Emergency Operations Center is activated.

Through grant funds and matching funds from the county, we have continued our quest to technologically outfit the Edgecombe County Sheriff's Office with state of the art equipment. We have continued to upgrade our computerized records management system, added five additional Mobile Data Terminal (MDT's) to patrol vehicles, equipped each patrol vehicle with cages, purchased additional digital cameras, bulletproof vests and further updated our catalog of surveillance equipment.

The Sheriff's Office has two K-9 Units. With drugs being a major concern within the county and abroad, the K-9 units will be used to assist in searches and executing search warrants.

Courthouse security has been tightened with the hiring of two additional deputies that serve as courthouse security. An X-ray machine was donated to the sheriff's office by the federal government, which is in full operation at the courthouse along with a metal detector.

We have implemented and equipped a MIRT Team that will respond to natural disasters when requested by other agencies to assist with manpower needs.

This past year has been a year of extensive training for the Sheriff's Office, especially with the SRT Team. We hope to use this renewed knowledge to better serve the citizens of Edgecombe County.

giving. I am in the hands of God, who guides me far beyond any technical expertise I may have. A

I never go out onto the stage without praying. I have to have that moment before I go onstage, because I will not go out without letting God know I need his strength. One night, I was supposed to perform, and I

was very ill. This happened in Dallas. It was the opening of the wonderful new hall there, in 1989. My recital was supposed to be the first one held there. As always, I took time to pray before, and somehow I was able to get to the stage. I leaned on the piano because I was very weak and ill, and I prayed silently after each note, as if saying to God, "It's really not up to me alone.

It's up to you and me." I will always remember that night, because I probably did the best singing I have ever done. With every note, I felt God's presence. After the performance, I was taken to a hospital and diagnosed with diverticulitis.

I think all artists are vessels and we are guided in the way we express our art. I feel so grateful

to God that He gave me the gift of being able to sing. I cannot believe that any artist does not acknowledge that his or her art was a gift from God. It has been said of the composer Giuseppe Verdi that he was an agnostic. I do not believe you can compose the Verdi Requiem and be an agnostic. Whenever I sang the Requiem, my own experiences and my total belief in the omnipo-

tent merged so completely. Conductors have told me it seemed as if I were having an out-of-body experience when I sang it—that I was someplace else, though of course, always in the music, but outside the notes. In every performance I have ever done of Verdi's Requiem, it felt as if God wrote every note.

Excerpted from *Inspired: The Breath of God* by Joanna Laufer and Kenneth S. Lewis.

# Gary Moore Scholarship Fund (PCC)





# The Success of Violence

By: Tim Butler

Just about everybody on planet earth knows the story of gangsta rap star 50 Cent and his rise from obscurity to the world stage of entertainment. Even if you don't listen to rap music, there's a good chance that you know 50 was a former drug dealer who was shot nine times and lived to tell the tale. A burgeoning music artist, from the very beginning of his rap career 50 Cent (real name Curtis Jackson) built a name for himself by getting into feuds with other more established rap stars. That formula, along with America's continued fascination with hip hop culture, has made 50 Cent into one of the biggest rap music superstars in the world.

Whether it's selling his own albums, producing other artists, creating controversy, or hawking his G-unit clothing line, the name 50 Cent is forever emblazoned in the public's mind. And now comes what is sure to be one of the biggest movies of this year. This weekend, the story of 50 Cent's rise to fame and fortune comes to the big screen in the form of the Paramount Pictures release *Get Rich or Die Tryin'*.

Six-time Oscar-nominated Jim Sheridan brings to life the story of an orphaned street kid who makes his mark in the drug world, only to leave that environment behind in favor of establishing himself as a rapper. For the film, art imitates life — much as it does in 50's top-selling records.

The movie parallels Jackson's own life, in which Marcus (50 Cent) always knew he was going to be a rapper. When his mother is murdered, he turns to selling drugs to make ends meet. Thanks to some influential people in his life — including his grandmother (Viola Davis), Marcus becomes grounded and is able to maintain some sanity as his world begins to spiral out of control.

Living in a virtual hell of his own making, a tragedy that nearly kills him forces Jackson to turn his life around for the better.

But before you think that *Get Rich or Die Tryin'* is completely a copy of 50 Cent's real life, think again. According to the rapper, the movie is a story that is centered around incidents similar to some of those that happened to him in real life.

50 Cent burst onto the scene when his debut album, also titled *Get Rich or Die Tryin'*, set the record for the all-time best debut with 900,000 units sold in its first week. Subsequently, the project went on to be certified six-times platinum. His follow-up album *The Massacre* debuted at number one and went on to sell four million units to date. With *The Massacre*, 50 Cent became the first artist to have four songs in the top ten of Billboard's Hot 100 since the Beatles in 1964.

For the movie, director Sheridan (*My Left Foot*, *In America*) views the ultimate story as being one that runs to a deeper level. Center to the story for him is that the characters all face enormous challenges — including illness, poverty, and racial bigotry. For him, the movie is more about the whys in life: Why, there are more single mothers in the Black community than any other community in America. Why is rap music the way it is? Why was Marcus forced to do what he had to do?

Producers wanted Sheridan for the job because he understands the concept of struggle — whether it struggling in Jamaica, Queens or the Bronx — or in the tougher districts of different colors, but the struggles of trouble, despair, and violence is the same everywhere.

Terence Winter (*The Sopranos*) wrote the script for the movie. Producers felt the two-time Emmy winner for the HBO mob series was most appropriate for the job, considering the parallels between the Italian gangsta world and the urban gangsta culture. The result was a gritty dramatic screenplay about a young man's survival in a world against him.

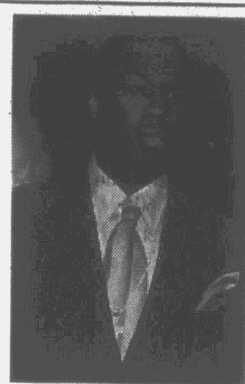
The film's main producer Chris Lighty says the movie's title says it all. For the movie makers, *Get Rich or Die Tryin'* is all about the universal need to excel and live the good life. On other levels, it's about getting out of the 'hood by any means necessary without getting killed or ending up in jail. "I think every stock broker on Wall Street is living that life," says Lighty. "Every American is trying to buy a Mercedes; we're all trying to get rich or die tryin'." This is just 50's version of it.

For 50, his plunge into the drug trade started after his mother's death. He went to stay with his grandparents, who did what they could to keep him on the straight and narrow. "But I didn't feel like I was where I should be at, so I turned to the people that appeared to have it all with no problem," says the rapper. "They were people from my mother's life — from when she used to hustle. And they would look out for me, and do things for me. So that's how I started. They were helping me to provide for myself."

50 Cent says it was the birth of his son that changed his life. Once he was born, his priorities changed. The way he saw it, he couldn't be of much help to his son if he was locked up in jail. So he changed his direction and pursued a musical career.

The music for *Get Rich or Die Tryin'* came about as a result of the film. Situations for the movie drove the music, not the other way around. It was a film project first, then music was added to it. In fact, when he wasn't in front of the camera, 50 Cent was in a mobile studio writing the songs for the film's soundtrack. He made the music as he moved through the film. As a result, the storytelling in these songs is markedly different from that of 50's other music.

For Sheridan, the movie is all about the evolution of a kid who thinks he has no alternative but to go and stand on the corner and be an entrepreneur. And it's about the change from that into becoming a superstar rapper. The producers say that even if you're not a fan of hip hop music, you should see this movie because ultimately it's a story about a culture and the drive of a child into becoming a man.



Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson arrives to a screening of his movie, "Get Rich or Die Tryin'," Monday, Nov. 7, 2005, in New York. The rapper turned actor said he was saddened by the fatal shooting at a Home- stead, Pa., theater where his movie was playing on Wednesday night. "I feel for the victim's family in this situation," 50 Cent said on ABC's "The View" on Friday, Nov. 11, 2005. (AP Photo/Diane Bondareff)

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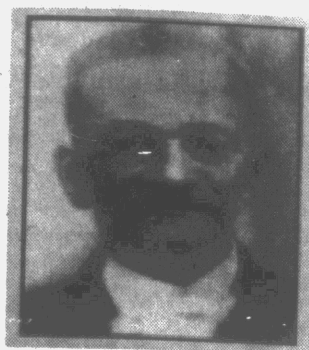


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# HAPPY THANKSGIVING FROM THE STAFF AND MANAGEMENT OF THE MINORITY VOICE NEWSPAPER AND WOOW 1340 AM

## LEGENDS OF THE PAST.....

By: Yussuf J. Simmonds &  
Dr. Brenda Flanagan



**Lewis Adams .....**  
**Tuskegee's**  
**Real Founder**

did not contain a pot, pan, shoe or tin roof made by him. Adams provided work for several Black carpenters who were hired to roof local businesses, and he taught his skills to many young African-American men.

He was a member of AME Zion Church where he taught Sunday school to his 16 children as well as those who had attended church. There was a shortage of teachers because Tuskegee was a farm community. However, Adams was determined to provide an education for Black children so in his Sunday school besides religion, he also taught the three r's: reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic. Still he wanted more for Black people.

White children in Tuskegee had decent and well-kept schools to go to; Blacks (children and adults) had to travel elsewhere for a decent education. Apparently Adams believed that the state senate and house elections would usher in an era of change. The Democrats were in trouble and Wilbur Foster, the Macon County Democratic Committee chairman and a former confederate officer was in danger of losing his seat in the Alabama Senate. Adams knew that Black voters outnumbered White voters three to one in the Macon County. So when Foster approached him about Black support in the county, Adams struck a deal. When Foster asked Adams, "What would you want for securing the Black vote for me?" Instead of asking for money, Adams told Foster that he wanted an educational institution for his people.

Another politician, Arthur L. Brooks, a local newspaper publisher, was also in jeopardy of losing his seat in the House of Representatives and went to Adams for the Black vote. As with Foster, Adams wanted money for an educational center for Black people. Foster and Brooks both won their seats with solid backing from the Blacks in Macon County and Brooks introduced a bill to fund a college for Blacks shortly he returned to office. In February 1881, Rufus W. Cobb, the governor of Alabama, signed a law appropriating \$2,000. a year for a school for Black teachers. It was called Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute and it was administered by three commissioners - two Whites and a Black, Lewis Adams. On the recommendation of General Samuel Armstrong of Hampton Institute, and the good reputation of Lewis Adams, Booker T. Washington got the nod and was appointed to the helm.

In his autobiography, Up From Slavery, Washington said the following about Adams, "I've always felt that Mr. Adams, in a large degree, derived his unusual power of mind from training given his hands in the process of mastering well three trades during the days of slavery." Lewis Adams taught classes at Tuskegee for many years. Had he not understood, early on, the need for higher education for Blacks and had he not finally understood the potential strength of the Black vote, there might never have been a Tuskegee University. He died in church on a Sunday at 63 years old.

quality of life improvement, support of business and economic development and humanitarian issues.

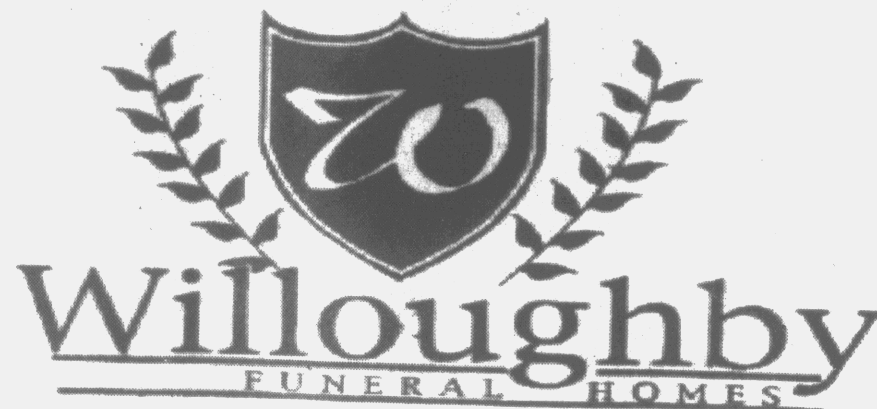
Nomination forms are available at the Chamber office and must be submitted by January 6, 2006. the award will be presented at the Annual Membership Celebration, to be held on January 26, 2006.

Greenville-Pitt County community. Presented at the Chamber's Annual Membership Celebration, the award represents a prestigious recognition by the community of the recipient's commitment and dedication to the advancement of the Greenville area.

To be considered for the award, the nominee should be someone who enjoys a reputation for continuous community service in areas such as civic involvement,

- November 2005  
The Chamber is now seeking nominations for the 2005 Citizen of the Year. Citizens and Chamber members are encouraged to nominate persons they feel are deserving of this recognition. The Greenville-Pitt County Chamber of Commerce annually presents its CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD to honor a man or woman who has made significant contribution to the

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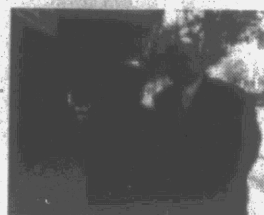


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Lola is an ordinary woman with an extraordinary determination to make a difference. She has God's people on her mind and God's business in her heart. She is a woman with purpose. Her mission is to encourage individuals and families to live life with a purpose by making a Divine Connection with your Creator, yourself, and your family in order to achieve



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**Lord We Praise You On High...** Mother Palmer gives praise to God in one of the Sunday services at the Philippi Church of Christ. We can almost hear her say in the picture "God Bless You Children"

photo by Michael Adams



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# Medicare changes to impact poor and elderly .....

By Kenneth Mallory  
Special to the AFRO

A new change to national health insurance policies promulgated by a federal act could have positive or dire ramifications for millions of African Americans, according to recent information provided by health policy experts. Officials at the private, nonprofit research group the Kaiser Family Foundation held a conference call to discuss a pivotal change in the federal Medicare health insurance program brought on by the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003.

At the start of next year, Medicare, a federal medical insurance program that generally covers Americans over age 65, will, for the first time since starting in 1965, offer prescription drug coverage via private health insurers. The new plan will purportedly save many medically

indigent people and African Americans money on prescription drugs.

However, some might lack knowledge about the drug coverage plan and experience difficulties receiving coverage when it is launched.

Under the new policy, the federal government will provide drug insurance under Medicare by a "standardized" system in which beneficiaries of the program share a certain percentage of drug costs, based on the total drug costs they incur. According to the Kaiser Foundation, most people participating in the program will have to pay a monthly premium of about \$30.

The Kaiser Foundation projects that more than 30 million Americans will enroll in the new drug plan in the coming year, but voiced concerns that many are still

confused about the new policy, which takes effect Jan. 1.

"A lot needs to happen in a very short timeframe," said Michelle Kitchman Strollo of the Kaiser Foundation.

Kaiser contends that there are about 43 million Americans — almost 4 million of them African Americans — receiving Medicare who might need help switching to the new program and enrolling and choosing among the many private plans participating in the program. In literature provided by the Kaiser Family Foundation, it is estimated that "beneficiaries in most states will have a choice of about 40 Medicare prescription drug plans."

The experts say the change may greatly affect Americans receiving Medicare in addition to Medicaid drug prescription benefits — more than 6 million Americans, accord-

ing to the Kaiser Family Foundation — because they must switch to Medicare drug plans if they want federally subsidized drug coverage.

Medicaid, funded jointly by the federal government and the states, generally provides medical insurance for the nation's poor. "Their Medicaid is ending Dec. 31 of this year," Dr. Linda Elam, who serves on Kaiser's Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, said of those who must switch to Medicare coverage.

"They are going to have to have a smooth transition to ensure that they have continuity of coverage." Elam said the federal government is taking extra steps to ensure that those who receive Medicaid drug coverage are notified of the changes. Mailings, she said, were sent to these beneficiaries.

According to information from Medicare, potential beneficiaries can enroll for 2006 between Nov. 15 and March 15, 2006.

The National Caucus and Center on Black Aged has taken up the charge of educating and assisting those affected by the new Medicare drug plan. Daniel Wilson, director of policy development for the Caucus, said the organization will

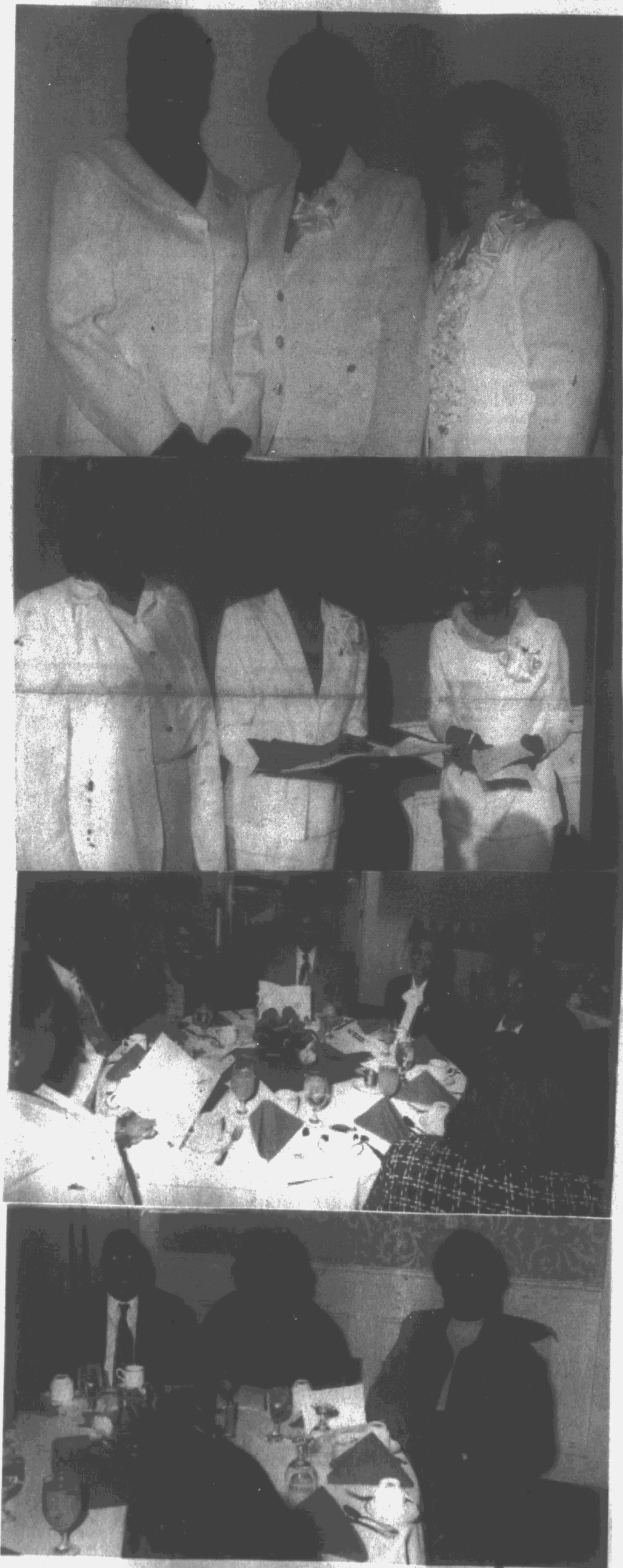
begin aiding seniors who need help enrolling.

"We will be hitting the ground, hitting the streets running, doing education, outreach and enrollment across the country."

The faith community, Wilson said, will be mobilized to aid the Caucus' outreach efforts.

The conference call was moderated by Denise Rolark Barnes, publisher of the *Washington Informer*. For more information, visit the Medicare Web site at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or call 1-800-MEDICARE. For more information on the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, visit [www.ncca-aged.org](http://www.ncca-aged.org).

## "White Breakfast" at Bennett College



"Honoring Our Historically Black Colleges..." Shown above at the "White Breakfast" honoring historically black college Bennett College located in Greensboro, NC, was the honorable President Johnetta Cole of Bennett College, Ms. Renee Purvis, Ms. Elaine Tyson, Ms. Hazel Brown, Mrs. Imogene Dupree, along with other guests and friends that were on hand to honor our historically black "only women" college. We want to honor and congratulate Dr. Cole for all the hard work, time and energy she has put into turning around Bennett College to be one the best historically black colleges today. Live on Bennett College !!!!!

(Jim Rouse Photo)

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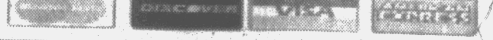


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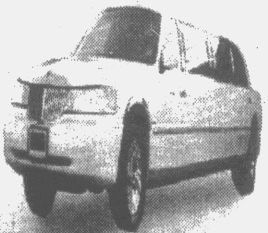
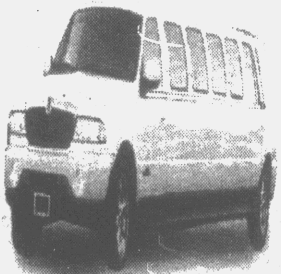
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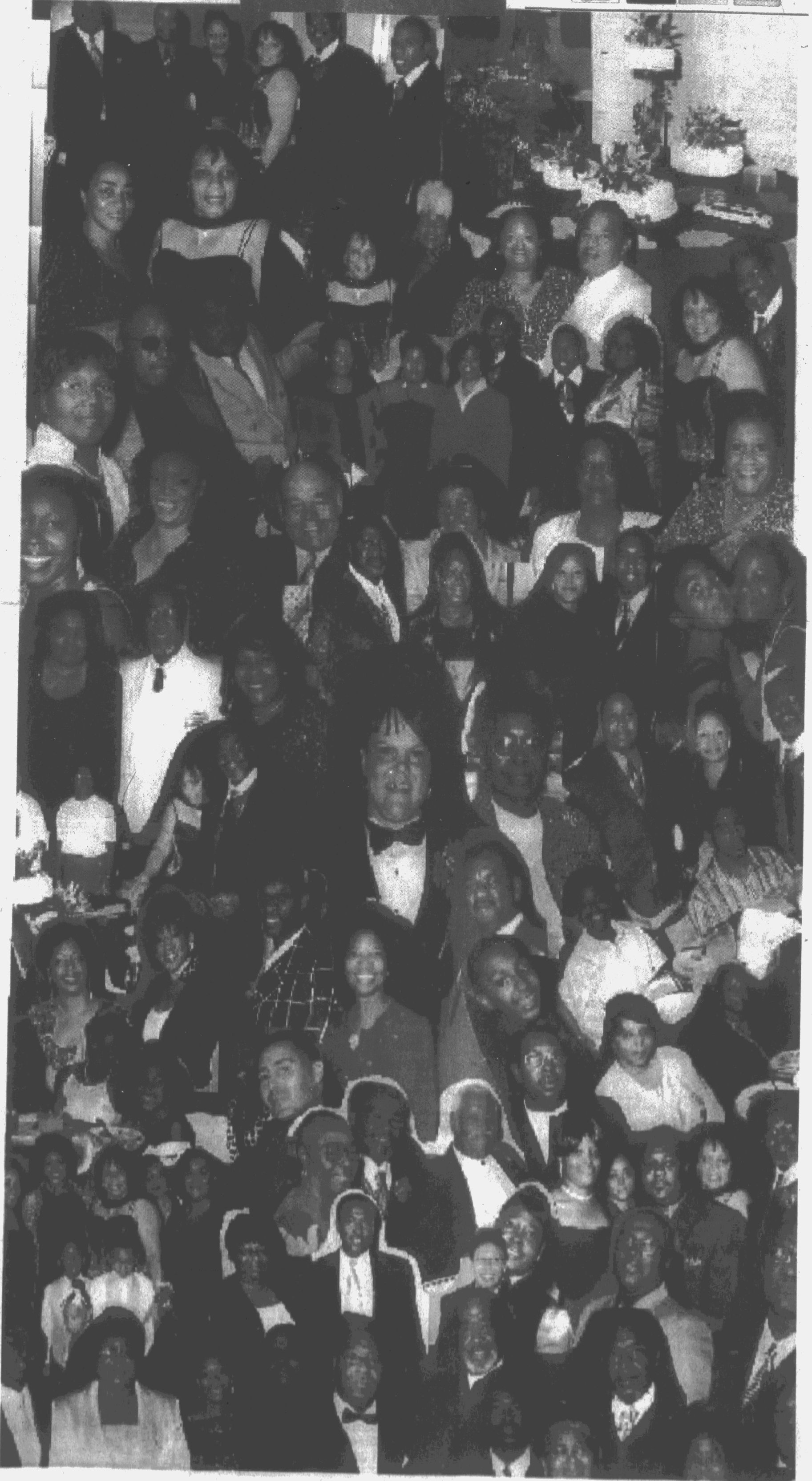
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# First woman president in Africa

By GORDON JACKSON,  
The Dallas Examiner

Under the international microscope recently has been the small West African country of Liberia. Looking into that microscope are several Americans, including those of Liberian descent living in North Texas. Roots run deep in a nation founded by ex-slaves from America.

Liberians living in the United States took the lead in monitoring the results of the Nov. 8 runoff election that pitted former finance minister Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf against former soccer hero George Weah. The two rose from 22 total candidates in the primary election held in mid-October.

The people have spoken and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf is their "man," having amassed almost 60 percent of the vote in an election that hopes to restore democracy to the civil-war ravaged nation.

Johnson-Sirleaf becomes Africa's only female president and one of the few woman heads of state in the world.

"It's a big task. I'm aware of the enormity of this," Johnson-Sirleaf said in an interview according to The Associated Press. "But I also think that I'm up to the task."

So does Hurst resident and Liberian American James Coleman.

"I think Ellen is prepared from her day of swearing in to communicate with President Bush and with the people of Liberia in a manner to bring the people back to their feet," said Coleman. "I'm happy to see Liberia actually take the lead in promoting democracy for all of Africa."

Eric Nimely, president of the Liberian Community Association-DFW, also felt that Johnson-Sirleaf was the best possible candidate to represent Liberia.

"Ellen Johnson is very credible to the international community. She has us looking good to the world economy," said Nimely, but he recognizes the challenges before her.

"I have no doubt that she has a lot to prove," he said. "If jobs are not created and families not able to put food on the table, she can lose control right away."

Having lived in America since 1978, Coleman, 52, has watched with pain his homeland go through several stages of civil unrest since he left.

"We have not been happy with the way things have been going over there," said Coleman, whose great-great grandfather, William Coleman was Liberia's president from 1896-1900.

The country's 19th president, William Tolbert, was overthrown and assassinated by Samuel Doe in 1980, the first time the usually peaceful country went under military rule. Doe himself would be assassinated in 1990, his regime replaced by military warlord Charles Taylor. That put Liberia into a civil war with Taylor fighting off different factions. An election was held in 1997 with Taylor easily defeating Johnson-Sirleaf, but many say Taylor intimidated his way to the win because many citizens feared death if they voted against him. Rebels finally defeated Taylor, forcing him into exile in Nigeria in 2003 and enabling the country to set up a caretaker government and the recent elections, where former President Jimmy Carter served as one of the election monitors. Johnson-Sirleaf was Tolbert's finance minister and barely escaped death herself when the coup took place. She left the country briefly but returned and was jailed by Doe for being critical of him while running for a senate seat. Although losing to Taylor in 1997, her courage for standing up against him earned her the nickname of "Iron Lady."

Both Nimely, a respiratory care practitioner at Cook Children's Hospital in Ft. Worth, and Coleman, manager of the supplier diversity program with Verizon, looked at Johnson-Sirleaf's gender as a plus.

"She's a good role model for females to show that they can lead as well," said Coleman.

"People look at Africa as a male-dominated society," said Nimely. "This paves the way to open more doors not only for women in Liberia but all of Africa."

Liberia was founded by freed slaves sent over from the United States between 1822 and 1847.

The country's capital, Monrovia, is named after James Monroe, the United States' sixth president.

Nimely and Coleman gave several recommendations to what would be Johnson-Sirleaf's next critical steps. Developing relationships with neighboring countries to better avoid insurgencies, drawing in foreign investment and uniting all Liberians by establishing a government of inclusion were

among the suggestions.

Liberia has ways to go. Almost all of the country has no electricity nor running water, with the exception of a relatively few citizens with gasoline generators. Much of the infrastructure such as electric power lines and water systems were destroyed during the war. Unemployment is at 80 percent, illiteracy at 50 percent.

African Americans are encouraged to help, said Nimely. Donated items such as used textbooks and computers may be one man's trash but Liberia's treasure.

"Things that we're throwing away here could be of very good use in Liberia," said Nimely.

Coleman would like to see the City of Dallas adopt Monrovia as a sister city.

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