



# Presidents' Round Table Newsletter

A National Network of African American  
Community College CEOs

February 2010

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The PRT is an affiliate organization of the National Council on Black American Affairs (NCBAA). Founded in 1983, the PRT is the national organization of African American community college chief executive officers.

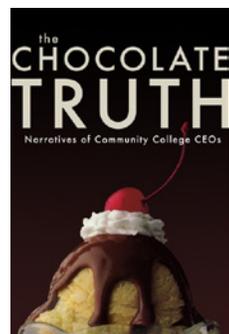
### Officers

- Dr. Helen Benjamin,  
Convener
- Dr. Andrew Jones,  
Secretary
- Dr. Thelma Scott-Skillman,  
Treasurer
- Dr. Charlene Dukes,  
Lakin Institute Coordinator
- Dr. Ken Atwater,  
Membership Chair and  
Directory Coordinator

## PRT Mid-year Meeting a Success

Twenty-five members of the PRT gathered in Dallas the weekend of January 29-31, 2010, to engage in a discussion of the future of the PRT. Hosted by the Dallas County Community College District, the meeting yielded positive results.

Topics covering a broad range of areas were discussed. The strategic planning team, chaired by Dr. Ernest Thomas (TX), conducted a charette, and will use the results to complete the strategic plan for presentation at the April meeting in Seattle. Drs. Seabrooks and Pollard received consensus on a working title for the PRT publication, *The Chocolate Truth: Narratives of Community College CEOs*. The call for manuscripts is attached. Please respond as soon as possible if you would like an essay included in the book. Publishers are showing interest in the book.



The following tasks were also identified and will be shared in detail at the next meeting:

- Art Tyler, Deputy Chancellor, Houston Community College, will research obtaining a 501(c) 3 for the organization;
- a letter will be sent to the chair of AACC indicating the characteristics the PRT would like to see in the next CEO of that organization;
- Dr. Lorenzo Esters, VP of Access and Advancement of Public Black Universities for the Association



Dr. Jennifer Wimbish, president, Cedar Valley College; Dr. Andrew Jones, Dallas CCCD executive vice chancellor for academic affairs; and Dr. Sharon Blackman, Dallas CCCD senior associate vice chancellor of educational affairs served as hosts for the mid-year meeting.

tion of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), will arrange a meeting between the executive committees for PRT and APLU to finalize an MOU between the two organizations;

- Dr. Joe Seabrooks (MO) will establish a social networking site for the PRT;
- the nominating committee was appointed to present a slate of officers for the 2010-2012 period;
- criteria for honorary and lifetime memberships will be presented at the April meeting; and
- a two-day program for first time presidents will be planned to coincide with the Lakin Institute in 2010.

The meeting was very productive and ended with the decision to send a letter to President Obama offering the assistance of the PRT in his efforts in Haiti. That letter, composed by Dr. Gordon May (MI), is included in this publication.

**Please attend the PRT meeting at the AACC convention in Seattle**

Sunday, April 18, 2010  
7:30 to 9:30 a.m.

**Sheraton Seattle Hotel  
Issaquah Room**



## Special Mid-year Meeting!

Deputy Chancellor Art Tyler of Houston Community College and Lakin Convener Helen Benjamin pose with Geoffrey Howland, Business Development Manager, Chevron Energy Solutions Company at the mid-year meeting. Chevron Energy Solutions became PRT's second corporate partner.

The CEOs pictured below received their appointments after the PRT directory was published in January 2009.



**Dr. Dale Nesbary**  
**President**  
**Muskegon CC, MI**

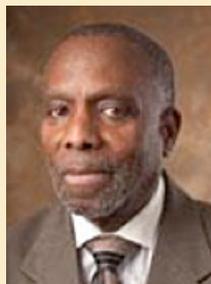


**Dr. Jonathan Gueverra**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**of the Community**  
**College of the District**  
**of Columbia**

**Dr. Michael Townsend**  
**President**  
**Denmark Technical**  
**College, SC**



**Dr. Sandra Robinson**  
**President,**  
**Wayne County**  
**Community College**  
**District**  
**Eastern Campus**



**Dr. Elmer Haymon**  
**Campus President**  
**Community College of**  
**Allegheny County**  
**Allegheny Campus**



**Dr. Marcia Hardney**  
**Provost**  
**Belle Glades Campus**  
**Palm Beach Community**  
**College**  
**Belle Glade, FL**

**Dr. Charlene Newkirk**  
**Campus President**  
**Community College**  
**of Allegheny County**  
**South Campus**



**Plan now to attend the**  
**Fall 2010 Presidents' Round Table meeting**  
**in Houston, TX**  
**October 15-17, 2010**

Lakin Institute will be held jointly with the NCBA Mid-level Managers Institute from October 10 through 17, 2010, in Houston, TX.

## New coordinator hired for the AAMI

Lance Williams, Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Assistant Director of the Jacob H. Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies at Northeastern Illinois University has been hired as the coordinator of the PRT's African American Male Initiative. Dr. Williams has been hired to perform two tasks by the end of this fiscal year: (1) develop a proposal for a national institute for African American male community college students; and (2) conduct a survey of best practices of ten community colleges and develop the results in a compendium of best practices to use as a basis for grant



Lance Williams, Ph.D.

funding and replication of those programs in other regions.

Dr. Williams has conducted extensive research on urban issues, including interventions aimed at reducing high-risk health behaviors in marginalized communities; and cultural intervention and perceptions of violence-related behaviors. He holds a Ph.D. in Public Health Sciences from University of Illinois-Chicago; an MA in Inner City Studies Education from Northeastern Illinois University; and a B.A. in Applied Behavioral Science from National-Louis University, Chicago, IL.

## New Moraine Valley science hall named for Dr. Vernon Crawley



On November 7, 2007, in Palos Hills, Illinois during a groundbreaking ceremony for Moraine Valley College's \$89 million campus expansion project, the chairman of the Board of Trustees declared: "Now therefore, be it resolved that the new science building will be named the Dr. Vernon O. Crawley Science Hall." The board then unanimously approved the resolution. The new two-story 100,000-square-foot facility opened in August 2009. Dr. Crawley thanked colleagues and friends who attended a reception before the dedication and open house of the campus expansion program Oct. 18, 2009. Dr. Crawley's portrait was unveiled during the reception and hangs in the main lobby of the Crawley Science Hall. "This has been so exciting," said Dr. Crawley, whose academic work has been in science and mathematics. "I am just thrilled with what we have been able to provide our current students and generations of students to come."

# Presidents' Round Table of African-American CEOs

An Affiliate of the National Council on Black American Affairs  
of the American Association of Community Colleges

*A Nationwide Network of African-American Leadership and Expertise*



#### **Convener**

Dr. Helen Benjamin  
Chancellor  
Contra Costa Community  
College District

#### **Secretary**

Dr. Andrew C. Jones  
Executive Vice Chancellor  
of Educational Affairs  
Dallas County Community  
College District

#### **Treasurer**

Dr. Thelma Scott-Skillman  
President  
Folsom Lake College

#### **Thomas Lakin Institute Coordinator**

Dr. Charlene Dukes  
President  
Prince George's  
Community College

#### **Membership Chairperson**

Dr. Kenneth H. Atwater  
President  
South Mountain  
Community College

#### **NCBAA Liaison**

Dr. Carolane Williams  
President  
Baltimore City  
Community College

#### **Past Conveners**

Dr. Charles A. Green  
Dr. Richard Turner, III  
Dr. Earl Bowman  
Dr. Eileen Baccus  
Dr. Roy Phillips  
Dr. Belle Wheelan  
Dr. Jack E. Daniels, III  
Dr. Janis M. Hadley  
Dr. Charles A. Taylor

February 5, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

I trust that this communiqué finds you and the First Family doing quite well.

I write you this letter on behalf of the 125 members of the Presidents' Round Table. The Presidents' Round Table was founded in January, 1983, to bring together African American community college leaders for the purpose of ensuring their success as campus leaders. The group initially focused on advocacy for each other and mentorships to ensure African American legacy in campus leadership positions. Other priorities included successful matriculation of African American students and employment opportunities for African Americans in community colleges across the nation, with special emphasis on grooming future presidents.

Last week, over 40 of our members attended a Mid-Winter Meeting in Dallas, Texas to discuss strategic planning in preparation for our annual meeting at the American Association of Community College National Convention (scheduled for April 2010 in Seattle, Washington) where a vast majority of our members will convene.

It became quite evident early in our meeting in Dallas that the Presidents' Round Table should avail itself to assist our brothers and sisters in Haiti following their tragic earthquake. We understand that the vast destruction has brought Haiti's educational system to its collective knees.

Mr. President, building (and re-building) educational programs, systems, and processes is what we do extremely well. We seek your direction and advice on how our organization may help. Whether we engage (or be engaged by) Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, or someone else in your administration is your decision. Should a small, but effective, team from the Presidents' Round Table be invited to Haiti for educational planning and assistance, we would welcome a modest amount of financial support to help offset institutional and personal expenses.

As we anxiously await your reply, Mr. President, please let Haitian governmental leaders know that our thoughts and prayers remain with them and their citizens.

Please do not hesitate in calling me at 925.229.1000, ext. 1210 if you have any questions or desire any clarifications.

All the best to you and the First Family,

Helen Benjamin, Ph.D.  
Convener, Presidents' Round Table  
Chancellor, Contra Costa Community College District

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## PRESIDENTS' Round Table

A National Network of African American Community College CEOs

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### Call for Manuscripts

The Presidents' Roundtable, the premier national network of African American community college CEOs, is preparing for publication of a collection of personal narratives and reflections of African American CEOs to assist individuals in successfully navigating the path to the presidency and to inspire others who want to follow the path to the presidency. Using first-person narratives, candid reflections, and insightful advice, this landmark publication will chronicle the journey and leadership of community college CEOs of African descent from their own voice describing their own experiences. The editors seek contributors who will offer candid and authentic reflections of their stories in their African American CEO journey.

Manuscripts should focus on telling the unique, humorous, and authentic stories of African American community college CEOs while informing and inspiring readers. Designed for a diverse audience, manuscripts should provide engaging and relevant insights that are both entertaining and provocative. Writers should take care to tell their stories authentically while also protecting confidences where appropriate.

The publication will be organized around the following broad chapter titles and topics. Each chapter will also contain a summary "response" highlighting the significant learning from the stories presented and offering a "toolkit" for readers regarding the themes of the chapter.

#### ***Chapter I: Skinny Jeans Ain't Right for Everybody: Finding the Institution That's Right for You***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: institutional culture, search processes, networking, and/or organizational "fit")

#### ***Chapter II: Culture, Crew, Cash, and the Colonized Mind: Leading Not Managing***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: leadership, organizational dynamics of leading a minority-majority college, and/or African American leadership development)

#### ***Chapter III: Can You Lead Like a Lady and Be Respected Like A Man?***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: women's leadership, sexism, and/or professional comportment)

#### ***Chapter IV: The Faculty: Friends, Foes, or Who the Hell Knows?***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: faculty roles and responsibilities, leading faculty, collective bargaining lessons, and/or balancing faculty expectations)

#### ***Chapter V: If You Are in Trouble, Why Don't You Know You Are In Trouble?***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: learning and reading organizational culture, managing internal relationships, self-assessment and performance management, communication strategies, and/or career management)

#### ***Chapter VI: Who's the Boss? Understanding How to Leverage the Expectations of Your Board***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: contract negotiations, being evaluated by your Board, maintaining boundaries, roles and responsibilities of Board members and the CEO, responding to community needs via your Board, and/or deciphering expectations)

### ***Chapter VII: Managing the Threesome: You, Your Significant Other, and Your Blackberry***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: work/life balance strategies, roles and responsibilities of spouses/significant others, developing boundaries between work and home, and/or the power and challenge of technology in managing the presidential persona)

### ***Chapter VIII: 24/7: Life Under the Microscope***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: managing media, balancing campus and community expectations, and/or responding to personal challenges in public)

### ***Chapter IX: Putting On Your Game Face: Fake It Until You Make It***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: professional development, growth experiences, managing your career, and/or professional networks)

### ***Chapter X: Oh, No, They Didn't!: Life After a Vote of No Confidence***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: handling a vote of no confidence, responding to Board and community inquiries, and/or discussing votes of no confidence in future job searches))

### ***Chapter XI: Leaving on that Midnight Train to Georgia: Knowing When It's Time to Go***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: reading organizational dynamics, transitioning out of an organization, managing a job search while currently seated as a CEO, and/or announcing your exit to the college, Board, and community)

### ***Chapter XII: Navigating the Obama Drama: Managing the Myth of a Post-racial Society***

(Suggested subject areas include but are not limited to the following: responding to issues involving race on your campus and in your community, understanding race and its dynamics in the hiring process, leading a majority institution as a minority, and/or educating others about racial identity development)

In addition to the above chapters, the editors may consider other chapter titles and topics that are appropriately aligned with the spirit and intent of this project. For other topics to be considered, please contact the editors directly to obtain approval prior to submission.

#### **Submission Eligibility**

- Current Presidents' Roundtable members
- Submissions may have more than one author

#### **Submission Requirements**

- Maximum length of pieces is **20 double-spaced pages** in 12-point type, standard margins (1" on each side, 1" top and bottom).
- Compose a title (up to 12 words) that informs the reader about the spirit and content of the manuscript.

#### **Submission Process**

Interested contributors are asked to submit their manuscript by May 1, 2010 to the editors. **Please submit one copy of the manuscript to each editor** as email attachments in MS Word, including a title page that contains the names (in the order in which they should appear), mailing addresses, telephones, faxes, and emails of all authors. **Name the file starting with the last name of the lead author**, e.g.: Smith CompleteMS, Smith MaskedMS, with "PRT Submission" in the subject line.

**Email submissions by May 1, 2010 to both editors at the following addresses:**

DeRionne Pollard, Ph.D.: [dpollard@laspositacollege.edu](mailto:dpollard@laspositacollege.edu) and Joe Seabrooks, Ph.D.: [joe.seabrooks@mckc.edu](mailto:joe.seabrooks@mckc.edu)