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LUBBOCK BRANCH

MISSION & VISION OF THE NAACP

The Mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is to secure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons.

The Vision of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure a society in which all individuals have equal rights without discrimination based on race.

In this issue:

President's Corner
Milton Lee, Pg. 2

Have You Ever...
Jessica Holidai, Pg. 2

Health Corner
Tammy Moriearty, Pg. 4

LGBTQ & the NAACP
Nick Harpster, Pg. 7

The President's Corner

By Milton Lee

Now is the time to be a member of the Lubbock NAACP. This branch is working hard to address the many areas of inequality facing African Americans and other minority groups here in Lubbock, Texas. The Lubbock chapter has some of the best members in the state who are qualified to answer the call-in economic sustainability, education, health, legal redress, criminal justice, and voting rights.

The Lubbock NAACP invites every person and organization who believes in equality for all people to partner with us. You deserve clean air, clean water, and clean soil. Together, we will change the way toxic energy industry pollutes Black communities and other communities.

Membership in the NAACP is open to all people. We invite you to join us in this good fight. A Membership Campaign will be held on October 12, 2019, from 4:00 pm until 7:00 pm, at Mae Simmons Community Center. Drinks and refreshments will be available, plus a table set up for questions and answers.

What can you do?

YOU, as an individual, and WE,as a community, must work together to promote a more equitable society that improves the lives of all Americans. Go to: www.lubbocknaacp.org to become a member or call (806) 787-2479 for an application.

Lubbock NAACP Meetings are held the 3rd Saturday of each month at 8240 Boston Ave. at 11 a.m.

Have you ever...

By Jessica Holidai

Have you ever, envisioned your life one way, then “life happens”, and life as you know it changes forever? One day you are going to work, having drinks with your friends and co-workers, taking vacations to Jamaica or anywhere else you please. You love your job, your bills are paid and life is WONDERFUL!! Then, that dreaded life happens and suddenly life moves in slow motion and soon stops altogether.

Most of us do not realize what that person in line at the grocery store or at the stop light, are going through. Maybe they are sick, just left the doctor’s office or ended a relationship. Whatever the issue, there are sometimes dire and catastrophic outcomes.

LUBBOCK BRANCH

When you are diagnosed with any type of life changing illness, you go through things that make no sense to those around you. All they see is you have changed and "you aren't as nice as you used to be". That may very well be true because at first, during the "pity party" stage, anger creeps in and changes your perspective.

Most do not realize that, even though they do not look "sick", (what exactly does "sick" look like?) they have just been diagnosed with stage 4 cancer? Stage 4!!! Wow! What a feeling! The sense of loss, regret, doubt, and fear. Even when your faith in God is strong, these little pin pricks leak in, maybe for just a moment before you come back to your belief that God is in control. Then you pick yourself up off the floor, dust yourself off and try to return to "normal". You start on the course set to hopefully save your life, but the treatment is almost worse than the cancer. You are sick, all the time, smells make you want to lose your stomach, all the time, your body hurts, all the time, not to mention the loss of your taste buds and then after you feel most unattractive already, your hair falls out! When you decide to rock that baldness, you then discover what the shape of your head really looks like!!

When you are going through this, you try your best to remain steady and strong, you have those days when you are not as strong as you feel you should be, so you cut yourself off from others because you feel their expectations of you are so high that they would not understand that you are having a bad day. It is not because of what someone else made you feel, it is just that YOU feel that way. You hesitate to tell anyone you are flawed in any way. You celebrate the small reprieve when you have finished your treatment, and everything looks clear! Then, a year or more later, you go for tests only to learn that you have another spot and you need new treatment. You may go through this several times, during your life, since your first diagnosis, and each time you become more and more reclusive. You get to the point where you just stop sharing, because people get tired of hearing that you are sick again. They begin to treat you like you are your cancer. Like you have already died. Sometimes, you must look deeper.

Depression is something that comes and goes, during any type of cancer treatment. There are two things not generally discussed in communities of color. Depression and Cancer. We must open these topics up for discussion so that we can grow as a community. These are areas of life that people of color suffer, silently, through because they don't realize that neighbor or church member, you hug every Sunday, is going through. If we open the lines of communication within our communities, we can find cures to prolong or even cure these and many other illnesses.

Not talk, not anything, just sit with us. Just be there!

LUBBOCK BRANCH

Health Corner

By Tammy Moriearty

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. And while white women and black women get breast cancer at roughly the same rate, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), black women die from breast cancer at a higher rate than white women.

Although deaths from breast cancer are going down among both black and white women – especially among younger black women – breast cancer death rates are still 40% higher among black women than white women.

Some Facts:

- Compared with white women, breast cancer incidence rates were higher among black women who are younger than 60 years old, but lower among black women who are 60 years old or older.
- Breast cancer was more likely to be found at an earlier stage among white women than among black women.
- Among women who were 60 to 69 years old, breast cancer death rates dropped 2% per year among white women, compared with 1% per year among black women. This was the largest difference by race.
- Black women are more likely than white women to get triple-negative breast cancer, a kind of aggressive breast cancer that often returns, even after treatment. It has the highest mortality rate and is the only breast cancer sub-type that does not have a therapy to prevent recurrence.

Why is this Happening?

According to Sisters Network, Inc., a national African American breast cancer survivorship organization (www.sistersnetworkinc.org), higher death rates among black women indicate that:

- Black women are not taking action when it comes to breast cancer prevention. While 92% of black women agree breast health is important, only 25% have recently discussed breast health with their family, friends, or colleagues. And, only 17% have taken steps to understand their risk for breast cancer.
- Black women are often at a more advanced stage upon detection.
- Black women may not have access to health care or health insurance so may have lower frequency or longer intervals between mammograms.
- Because they may not have insurance, black women may not follow up on abnormal mammogram results because they can't afford the diagnostic testing.
- Black women do not get the same prompt high quality treatment compared to white women.

LUBBOCK BRANCH

How to Take Action:

The Black Women's Health Imperative (www.bwhi.org), an organization at the forefront of women's health with 35 years of experience working for health equality for black women, recommends the following action plan:

Get regular mammograms. The general recommendation is to begin getting annual mammograms at age 45, but, depending on your risk level, your doctor may advise starting earlier. This is because the sooner breast cancer is found, the sooner treatment can begin.

Try to get your mammograms done at an accredited mammography screening center. The American College of Radiology has an accreditation program, and you can search for the nearest accredited mammography center: (https://www.acraccreditation.org/accredited-facility-search).

Accredited Mammography Screening Centers in Lubbock:

University Medical Center
UMC Breast Imaging Center
602 Indiana Avenue
Lubbock, TX 79415
806-775-8660

Arrington Comprehensive Breast Center
4102 24th Street
Lubbock, TX 79410-1894
806-725-7908

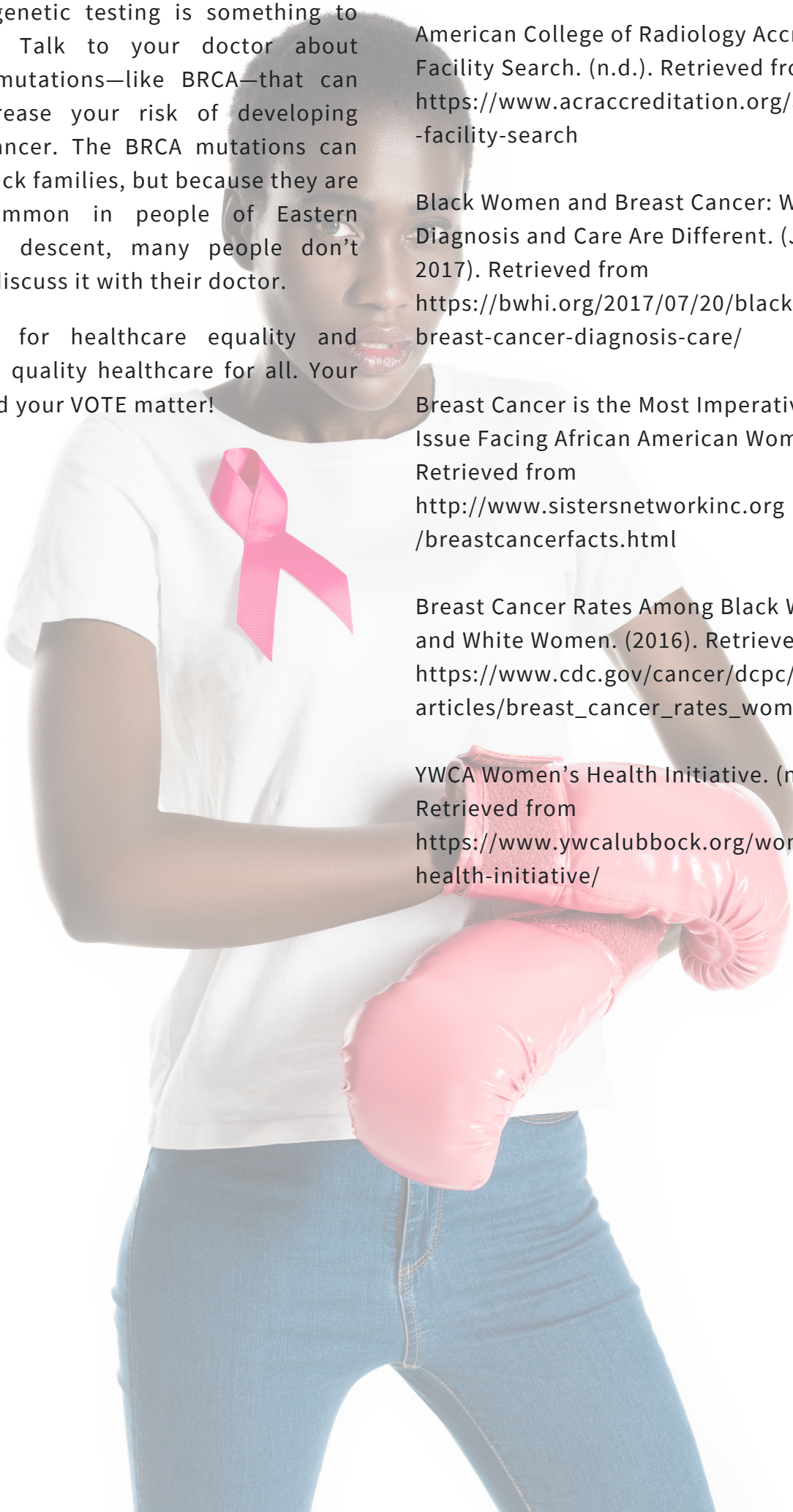
Covenant Mobile Mammography
4102 24th Street
Lubbock, TX 79410
806-725-8062

Financial Assistance for Mammograms in Lubbock:

The YWCA Women's Health Initiative (www.ywcalubbock.org/womens-health-initiative):

- The Women's Health initiative provides financial assistance for breast and cervical cancer screenings to uninsured and underinsured women and men who meet program guidelines. WHI serves more than 1,000 women annually with mammograms, diagnostic mammograms, biopsies and cervical cancer screenings, and is the only Department of State Health Services Breast and Cervical Cancer Services (BCCS) program contractor in the South Plains.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about your personal risk factors and ask for recommendations as far as when and how frequently to begin screenings. This is important even if breast cancer doesn't run in your family.
- Know your own breasts and body—and report changes like lumps or nipple discharge. If you have any changes in your breasts, talk to your doctor right away.
- New moms should also be aware of changes in their breasts after giving birth. Your breasts go through extreme changes during and after pregnancy—and lumps and bumps might arrive. You'll want to make sure they aren't cancerous. Also, breastfeed if you can—for up to 12 months if possible, according to American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations. Studies suggest that this can reduce your breast cancer risk later, on top of benefiting your baby's health.

- If you have a family history of breast cancer, genetic testing is something to consider. Talk to your doctor about genetic mutations—like BRCA—that can also increase your risk of developing breast cancer. The BRCA mutations can run in Black families, but because they are more common in people of Eastern European descent, many people don't think to discuss it with their doctor.
- Advocate for healthcare equality and access to quality healthcare for all. Your VOICE and your VOTE matter!



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The NAACP and the LGBT Community-- More Connected Than You Might Think

By Nick Harpster

I do not think that many people who are involved with the NAACP realize the long-standing history of support that the organization has given to the LGBT community. In doing some research for this article, I learned more than what I even expected. There have been many bold actions of support taken by leaders in the NAACP to ensure that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s words are carried out in action. When King spoke the often quoted, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere", he was not speaking only for a select group of people; he was speaking for all of humanity. These words have been used for years as a guidepost for NAACP leaders to make difficult decisions that have even caused dissent and backlash from its own members.

Perhaps one of the first instances of the partnership between the NCAAP and the LGBT community came about in 1963 with the help of Bayard Rustin. Bayard Rustin was born in 1912 and was committed to activism even in his teen years, as he reportedly staged an impromptu sit-in at a diner where they would serve his white teammates on the football team, but not him. Also in high school, he would come out as gay to his mother, stating that he would prefer to be in the company of young boys to girls, to which his mother casually replied, "I suppose that's what you need to do". After several years of continued undertakings of activism and working with several different organizations, he went to Alabama to work with Martin Luther King, Jr. during the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1956.

There were lots of ups and downs during the remainder of 1962 after the March on Washington. The success of the March led to the "Big Six" civil rights organizations gaining a meeting with President John F. Kennedy (Rustin was involved, but still kept in the background because of his history). Randolph and Rustin would make the cover of Life magazine on September 6th, 1962. Eight days after the Life cover, the Birmingham church bombing that killed four young girls occurred; President Kennedy was assassinated in November, which left President Lyndon Johnson to spearhead the effort to pass the Civil Rights Act, which was successful in 1964, the same year Martin Luther King won the Nobel Peace prize.

Even after Dr. King's assassination in 1968, and amid tensions among other Black activists, Rustin continued his philosophy of social justice. During the 1980s, Rustin talked about what he called the sublimation" of his sexuality since the 1950s, and then in 1987, he was the first to bring the plight of the AIDS epidemic to the NAACP, stating, "Twenty-five, 30 years ago, the barometer of human rights in the United States were black people. That is no longer true. The barometer for judging the character of people in regard to human rights is now those who consider themselves gay, homosexual, lesbian."

Bayard Rustin died on August 24, 1987, just four days shy of the 24th Anniversary of The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. In 2013, the golden anniversary of the March, Rustin was posthumously awarded the Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama (if you would like to learn more about Bayard Rustin, there is a documentary film about his life called, "Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin").

A second major event that continued the relationship between the NAACP and the LGBT community was the 30th Anniversary of The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. In 1993, NAACP Board Chair William Gibson made the decision to endorse that year's March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights. It was a difficult pronouncement for him to make, and there was immediate backlash in some parts of the country, as some conservative churches told their members to turn in their NAACP cards, high dollar donors threatened to retract their donations, and even rumors of the NAACP sending no one to the event to speak on their behalf. In the end, NAACP Executive Director Ben Chavez, who was aware of the reports and printed articles about "internal protests and external pressure", stated that "he, the board chair, and the NAACP national president — elected by the chapters — would all be on hand", adding, "We are with you,". These four words were also reiterated in his personal comments on stage at the march (link to a video of the event, including a short clip of Chairman Gibson https://youtu.be/3MbWNfX5NT8).

One of the issues at that time was the ban on gays in the military. Chairman Gibson did his homework on the issue and was ready to take a stand against the gay ban in the military. He based his decision on the historical perspective of blacks in the military, stating, "The alibis and excuses they're giving are the same ones they tried to use—to keep Black Americans out of the military. They said white soldiers would not be able to sleep in the same barracks, use the same latrines and would not take orders from Black superiors. No citizen should be excluded from any aspect of life because of race, religion, or sexual orientation."

This was an important coalition between the NAACP and the LGBT community as National NAACP leaders gave a unanimous endorsement of the March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights. Gibson acknowledged this by reiterating, “The NAACP supports efforts to end discrimination against gay men and lesbians in areas of American life where all citizens deserve equal protection and equal opportunity under the law. The NAACP endorses and will participate in this historic national march.”

Years later, in 2012, when the issue of marriage equality came about, NAACP leaders Julian Bond and Ben Jealous both spoke at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force’s National Conference on LGBT Equality, which serves as the largest assembly of pro-LGBT rights supporters in the country, in support of marriage equality. NAACP President Ben Jealous spoke before 3,000 LGBT rights activists and strongly reminded the crowd of their historical alliance. “The NAACP and the LGBT movement have fought together for social justice since Bayard Rustin planned the March on Washington in 1963. He was a black gay hero who wrote the textbook on mobilizing the masses for jobs and freedom” (link to Jealous’ full speech: https://youtu.be/Ym_tTsdfxXs).

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Executive Director Rea Carey echoed these sentiments when discussing the event. “We are proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with the NAACP working together on the many issues that affect all of our lives. Whether it be fair access to education and jobs, an end to voter suppression and racial profiling, the right to love and be who we are free of discrimination — these issues affect all of us, our families and our country. Today the NAACP did what it does so well — inspires and affirms our common humanity.”

Today, many similar issues exist, and the NAACP is still standing in solidarity with the LGBT community. In 2017, similar to the gay ban in the military in 1993, the NAACP also stood steadfast against President Trump’s ban on transgender people in the military, stating, “The mission of the NAACP has always been to ensure the political, social and economic equality of all people – and President Trump’s directive to the military is in complete opposition to that mission. We pledge today to stand with our transgender brothers and sisters as we continue to fight any efforts to codify discrimination into law.”

Most recently, in 2019, the NAACP endorsed the LGBTQ Equality Act, which is a federal non-discrimination act that would modify the Civil Rights Act, which the NAACP was instrumental in passing, to add "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to the list of protected classes. They also supported expanding hate crime legislation to include "sexual orientation" and "gender identity, stating, "We believe the same protections that we have worked for so hard over the 110 years of the NAACP should be extended to all Americans, particularly members of the LGBTQ community".

In 2019, at the 110th NAACP National Convention in Detroit, LGBT issues were discussed in two different town halls entitled, "The State of LGBT People of Color in America" (https://www.c-span.org/video/?448057-1/naacp-lgbtq-town-hall), & "Gender Justice Matters Fireside Chat". The NAACP was also celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the LGBTQ Task Force. The discussion in one panel involved violence in the LGBTQ community, especially those of color. Panelists were adamant that the NAACP needs to do more to make people aware of these types of violence, with one panelist, Lawrence Washington, stating that "leadership on all sides is failing LGBTQ people of color" and that, "there is such a very small response ...as it relates to a trans person's death, as opposed to when there is a Trayvon Martin, Nipsey Hussle and Eric Gardner" .

Another panelist, Tiffany Dena Loftin, spoke to the fact that Non-LGBTQ members of the Black community, including Black LQBTQ organizations and people on social media, need to be more aware of LGBTQ issues. She gave a strong statement of inclusion, exclaiming, "You're narrowing yourself to a very small percentage of Blackness and that's not what Black power, Black solidarity, Black Lives Matter means; none of those things mean that. It means all of the Blackness."

In the second panel, one focus was on HIV/AIDS, where Curtis Lipscomb, executive director of LGBT Detroit asserted that, "HIV infection among gay Black males is out of control", as half of gay black men are infected with HIV, and that the promotion of condoms must be increased, as now, condom use is just a "consideration". He also commented that LGBTQ members shouldn't cling to communities of faith, asking, "Why do you worship a place that vilifies you?". He said the NAACP and its members must work to reduce the ostracization and stigma directed at members of the Black LGBTQ community and reach out to them as much as they would anyone else.

During the Convention, the NAACP also passed three pro-LGBTQ resolutions: The NAACP voted unanimously to pass resolutions in "support of the transgender community and to aid in ending murders and violence against transgender women; preventing and detecting HIV infection earlier; and for the inclusion of LGBTQ Diversity and Sensitivity Training for NAACP chapters across the country". David Johns, executive director of the National Black Justice Coalition, talked about the intersectionality of NAACP members, and that there are many other categories that Black people fit into besides being Black, and that those categories cannot be ignored.

Johns specified, “At a time when our community is under attack by occupants of the highest office in the country as well as the lowest depths of hatred and bigotry, it is noteworthy that the NAACP is taking meaningful steps toward intersectional social justice. Johns also told the group, “Anyone who purports to care about the well-being of black people must care about all of us all of the time. Too many people think that the gains made by the white lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community are eroding civil protections for black people and these people miss the fact that as long as there have been black people there have been black LGBTQ and same-gender-loving people.”

In conclusion, I whole-heartedly believe in the words spoken by David Johns, and that the NAACP needs to make a shift to more intersectionality in its actions and goals in the community. It’s very apparent that the National NAACP organization supports the LGBTQ community, and we need to do our best to follow their lead in our, and all local chapters. While it may seem like we have a lot of work to do, and that this is at times a daunting task, let us remember the words spoken by Curtis Lipscomb, executive director of LGBT Detroit, “Black people are optimistic people. They are progressive people. They always look forward. So, I think it’s important to take note of the successes we have because we should always celebrate our successes.” Let us feed off our successes in order to move on to other areas that need our attention. Success is not easy, but it is possible and necessary.

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The NAACP Objectives

The following statement of objectives is found on the first page of the NAACP Constitution – the principal objectives of the Association shall be:

- To ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all citizens
- To achieve equality of rights and eliminate race prejudice among the citizens of the United States
- To remove all barriers of racial discrimination through democratic processes
- To seek enactment and enforcement of federal, state, and local laws securing civil rights
- To inform the public of the adverse effects of racial discrimination and to seek its elimination
- To educate persons as to their constitutional rights and to take all lawful action to secure the exercise thereof, and to take any other lawful action in furtherance of these objectives, consistent with the NAACP's Articles of Incorporation and this Constitution.