



The African American Council of Elders Annual Report

2012 - 2014

January 5, 2015

Our Vision... An inclusive organization, rooted in our African heritage and traditions, which offers its accumulated wisdom, guidance, experience and spiritual insight to provide leadership to develop, improve and enrich our community.

Our Mission... In order to bring awareness and address community issues and to strengthen the Wichita African American community:

- TCOE will provide guiding principles and advice to the African American community.
- TCOE will access resources, and implement programs and processes for the preservation and imparting of African culture, history, tradition and contributions of people of African descent/heritage.



The vision and mission of The Council of Elders was not only met locally but globally as well.

As is the custom of the Elders we wish to acknowledge the loss of several Elders who are now our Ancestors of which we call on to support, inspire and most important pray for us. Most have made their transitions from the mortal plane since 2011. By listing their names we want to show our gratitude for the courage and inspiration they were in the work and promises they fulfilled in our Village. Elder Dr. Jesse Williams, Elder Matt Greene, Elder Billy McCray, and Queen Mothers Bernice Hutchinson and Addie Mae Pearson. May God be pleased with All they accomplished, Ashe.

In just three short years several achievements have been met and new paths have been opened. Recognition was received from our community at annual events such as the NAACP, The Kansas African American Museum, the Nigerian Association, the City of Wichita, and the State Capital. In all we have attended, assisted and advised or counseled: The Kansas African American Commission, the Kansas Leadership Center's Health Alliance, The Kansas Poverty Conference and Conference, and we led City of Wichita Officials into Africa.

Partnerships and retreats created the clarity needed to move forward our community's concerns



The Kansas African American Affairs Commission

As part of our promise to Dr. Mildred Edwards, the Council of Elders became the District 4 steering committee to focus on strategies to change inequities in the State of Kansas. As a continuation of the Village Round Table initiative started in 2011, our first working Village Roundtable as the District 4 Steering Committee asked community leaders and members to envision a healthy, wholesome community, and to determine the priority areas that needed work and effort toward that vision. These were: Economic Development, Jobs, Family Strengthening, Education, and Health and Wellness; Created a yearlong series of Village Roundtables, which focused on each of the priority concerns of the community. In addition funding was later provided to create an online Village Roundtable.



Dr. Rhonda Lewis, Community Psychologist

Our periodic planning retreat held in January 2012 led by Dr. Rhonda Lewis, allowed the Council to focus on four concerns that would become our intentions, promises and later challenges in the community. Education, Health, Economic development and Family Strengthening became our areas of focus and work.

In 2013 our retreat was more directed at the culture of the Elders as an organizations and areas we would have to strengthen to garner our outcomes, improve our communications within and how to create a resource network for the community

In 2014 once again our focus was to create strategies to improve our outcomes, communication and sensitivity to one another. A new insight was to engage the political system and learn effective ways to influence policy.

Village Roundtables



In 2012 as part of an agreement the Kansas African American Commission, the Village Roundtables became a sounding board with strategic discussions involving leaders and activist. By 2013 The Council had answered the call and acquired new funding of \$9,250 to create a community website, OurvillageRoundtable.org, a community driven website that will be used to help keep our village connected, and to begin building a database of available community resources.



The Digital Elders project addressed another concern and care for our Village funded in 2013 by the Knight Foundation via the Wichita Community Foundation. Funding of \$17,945 allowed us to contract and hold a digital workshop with Dr. Shani McCoy Byard and her L.A. based Afro-Media Literacy Education program. Elders spent 2 days at the Urban League learning the newest in social Media and basic use of computers.



July 2013 Roundtable slated to look at economic development the village, instead gave way for a Roundtable to discuss Trayvon Martin's death and the violent police shootings in Wichita. Our Presiding Elder Frances Jackson called it a "healing roundtable".



The April 2013 Roundtable was dedicated to housing and wellness. Associate Elder Pamaline King-Burns led a discussion about *"Unnatural Causes: Is race making us sick...Housing and wellness"* with Elder Arbertha of CDC discussing the result of adequate housing for all, and Dr. Tim Clark discussing the natural path to wellness for the poor. Dr. Scott and 'Ayana' Jennifer Harrison. A Wellness coach from Baltimore Maryland, updating us on the research coming out of John Hopkins on health disparity and our legal rights to be well.



Above: Children and instructors at the Ubuntu School. An African Centered curriculum merging the common core with a spice of Africa knowledge through math, reading, language of Swahili, art, drumming and dance will

Although many strategies were put in place and counsel was provided from Elders to the Youth on how to organize, the earnest need for a village school was birthed at a Village Round Table.

In September 2014 the first semester of the Ubuntu Village School began and by December an average of 25 children had attended.

"My Village my Village Ubuntu Village"

"I Am because we are"

Operating as a free school, parent and adult learning will now be added so that the entire village can be part of the necessary "life long learning."

2014 Roundtables also created the platform for discussing the poverty in our state as well as Voter

Visit Ubuntu Village School located at Holy Savior Academy 4640 E. 15th Wichita, Kansas 67208
Face book:
Ubuntuvillageschool
ubuntuvillagewichita.wordpress.com

Economic Development Commission

The 2013 Roundtables created some discussions surrounding the needs of our local businesses. One roundtable after another continued to bring small businesses more visibility. The Council began to work in collaboration with the Community Voice to create a website that would keep the village informed concerning business opportunities and services in the village.

Later in 2013, as part of the WCF/Knight Foundation funding, the Council created "**Our Village Circle of Sharing Time Bank**". The idea is that I earn time credit by doing something for you. It doesn't matter what that "something" is. You turn around and earn a time credit doing something for someone else. Time banking builds on the magic of "pay it forward," one good turn leading to another and another and another.

TimeBanking joins unused resources in a community to needs that are not being met.

Today we have 40 members enrolled in our Circle and 68 hours have been exchanged.

The October 2014 Roundtable

launched our first **Community Sharefest**. A small grant and collaboration with CORE allowed for the creation and construction of two "Little Free Libraries" - one located on the grounds of the Elders' Living Room and another to be mounted at the Robin Rounds Memorial Garden at 11th and Volutsia in the Spring. Elders are encouraged to share books with the community. Attendees at the Sharefest included: Sunflower, Kansas African Commission, Janice Thacker and her display of history and art, Boys and Girls Club, Pearson Farms, and our own Elders Mama B's Bean Pies, Dea Sears, and Elder Carla Jackson-Patton. We also had a presentation by AARP



Time Banking Core Values

- EVERYONE is an ASSET
- Everyone's contribution matter
- Reciprocity means giving and receiving
- Our networks are our STRENGTH
- EVERYONE is worthy of DIGNITY AND RESPECT

Events in Attendance



Elders introducing Queen Mother Esther to Walmart official regarding import possibilities



Presiding Elder speaking with the Elders as we led our Wichita Officials into their first trip to Africa. 2011



Council meeting with Democratic Candidates Summer 2014



Elders participate in the Chef Rock Cook in with AARP 2014



Equity Day at the State Capitol 2013

