

# NAMAD.

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Carrie Ayers Haynes, Co-Chairperson, AOIP's Professional Education Committee



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1. The inordinate rate (44 percent), which in 1984 exceeded 47 percent among adult Black Americans, the educators concluded had absolutely nothing to do with our people's being Black or of African descent. They cited the fact that, if Black Americans of West Indian-type background were to be compared in isolation with White Americans, we would find that the educational attainment level of the former was slightly higher than that of the average White American.

"Thus," stated the noted educator, Carrie Ayers Haynes, "We can see that the inordinate and awesomely high rate of functional illiteracy among our population has absolutely nothing to do with being Black or of African descent."

"We must then conclude that the basis for this phenomenon has its roots in conditions imposed on and/or encountered by Black Americans right here in these United States of America."

2. The conditions the educators isolated were the unique kinds of economic and psychological exploitation imposed upon Black Americans in the past, and which continue today in this country's policies and practices in ways that make many among our race feel unworthy of improving their minds by learning to become literate.

To the second question, the following explanation was given:

1. Learning has two aspects. One is called the *cognitive* (tutorial) aspect. The other is called the *affective* (self perception or environmental) aspect. The latter, they pointed out, is of major concern because persons with a low sense of self-esteem and those who live in depressing or insecure environments tend to be poorly motivated to want to learn.

2. The predicament was so severe among Black Americans that, unless and until *all* Black Americans began working together to re-build our communities into secure and hope-filled entities, we would never be able to turn around the rising rate of illiteracy. The educators went on to state that these "affective" changes would necessitate a massive shift to all Blacks supporting our businesses run by our indigenous residents, supporting our Black or indigenous professionals, and supporting our Black or indigenously-run churches, organizations and institutions.

The facts in terms of the illiteracy-eradication need for an all-out effort in this community-building—or "affective"—regard were so overwhelming that not only is AOIP's 80-plus interorganizational literacy-enhancement approach known as one which is "affective-oriented"...but also the U.S. Department of Education has joined AOIP in a partnership way. In announcing that relationship almost two years ago, a press release of that major department stated:

"The Department will continue its cooperative efforts with AOIP as they begin their community-building approach toward literacy promotion."

Mrs. Carrie Ayers Haynes is a retired and renowned school administrator who now serves as a consultant to school administrators. She also serves as one of the national chairpersons of AOIP's Professional Education Committee. Among the many accomplishments of this brilliant and creative educator is the role she played at a school in the Watts section of Los Angeles that was second from the bottom among almost 600 schools in the L.A. unified school district when she took over as principal. By involving the total community in a grassroots ego-enhancement, or "affective-oriented, approach to education, every class was enabled to be on grade level within six and one-half years.

Even though many other educators have used this guaranteed-to-succeed motivational approach, the extent of Mrs. Haynes' not backing the traditional failure-producing system in our public schools is almost peerless in recent times. All of AOIP's newly-developed and incomparable materials are modelled around the focus of these educators.

In order to memorialize this major contribution of such outstanding educators in the past and present, Carrie Haynes was adopted symbolically as the "Mother" of AOIP's reading-motivational and "affective-oriented" process. Her unusual experiences are retold in her recently republished book entitled: *Good News On Grape Street* (Citation Press).

It was largely on this recognized need to make our communities the secure and hope-filled entities they must become if our people are to be motivated to want to prepare themselves to become literate that all of the 86 national leaders of organizations in AOIP have agreed to work together. Their aim is to be true to the overarching goals set by the founders of their freedom and justice-oriented organizations—*To reach out and to reach back so as to lift others as we climb.*

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