

# Education

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HILTON

## ARE THERE REALLY AFRICAN AMERICANS IN OGDEN, UTAH?



KEITH O. HILTON

WE ARE EVERYWHERE. Not only are African Americans in Utah, but they are doing serious research with regards to Afrocentrism.

Afrocentricity as a concept was developed by Dr. Molefi Kete Asanti, Professor of African American Studies at Temple University, PA.

Two prime examples are Drs. Forrest C. Crawford and Daily E. Oliver of Weber State University in Ogden, Utah.

I had the pleasure of attending a timely session that they presented at a conference of the National Association of Black Cultural Centers titled "The Role of Afrocentrism in Multi-Cultural Centers: Perspectives from the Intermountain West."

The region called the Intermountain West covers Utah, Wyoming, Idaho and Montana.

As you know, from time to

time, HILTON: HIGHER EDUCATION presents profiles, articles and opinions of other scholars practitioners and readers.

We are confident that you will find their observations and comments valuable. Educators of African descent continue to forge inroads nationally and internationally.

The workshop that they presented had as its purpose to "discuss the challenge of Multi-cultural Centers in a region dominated by Anglo Americans (Intermountain West.)"

In addition, the presenters discussed "Afrocentricity" as a means of "preserving the strength, self-discipline and intellectual growth of centers charged with enhancing the relevance of the African American student's college experience."

As a former dean of a multi-cultural student affairs office at a

major university on the East Coast, and now as the Dean of a center primarily for students of African descent - on the West Coast, I understand firsthand the discussions with in African Cultural Centers regarding "our future."

Forrest Crawford and Daily Oliver should be commended for their efforts in explaining and strengthening the issues of Afrocentricity (Africentricity) and Multi-Culturalism in higher education. This is particularly relevant when one realizes that during the fall of 1990, in Utah Higher Education System, only 575 African Americans were reported as enrolled.

"Whether its curriculum infusion in public schools, studies in Africa or slavery and the Black American Experience," they noted, "Afrocentrism is a widely recognized movement that combines scholarship and the sense to reconstruct a definitive world view that places them at the center of historical development; in fact becoming the subject, not the object."

They concluded by identifying the following as crucial delivery systems for Afrocentrism in Utah:

1) Departments of Black Studies, 2) African and African

American History Classes, 3) African/African American faculty Member (s) Applied Pedagogical Methods, 4) Multi-Cultural

Centers and 5) Community Based Leadership.

HILTON: HIGHER EDUCATION is designed to dialogue

with college and world readers. Education is ongoing and certainly not limited to classroom study. Let's talk. (714) 899-050.

## ALL EXISTING SCHOOLS TO BENEFIT UNDER \$600 MILLION BOND ISSUE

Clark County schools officials are living up to their pledge that existing schools would not be overlooked in the district's \$600 million bond issue: Even though construction of new schools is the focus, every building is being touched to some degree as part of the intensive program.

By the time the bond program is complete, the district will have spent approximately \$84.5 million—or almost 15 percent of total bond money—to improve existing schools, said Dale Scheideman, director of facility planning. More than \$50 million has been spent so far on existing buildings, with another \$35.4 million to be spent over the next three years.

That is in addition to a \$4 million outright allocation to existing schools for instructional equipment purchases.

Officials had promised voters when they approved the bond issue in 1988 that some of the

money would go to existing schools.

"We are keeping our promise," Scheideman said. "We are meeting the need of rapid growth in our district by providing more schools, but we haven't forgotten our older buildings. We hope citizens will be pleased with the improvements at our existing schools."

Scheideman said officials are selecting the projects based on need, impartial to provide amenities comparable to those at newer schools.

Bond money earmarked for existing schools is being spent in three areas: additional and major renovations, rehabilitation and modernization, and program needs.

Program needs refers to renovation and modernization designed to accommodate curriculum or graduation requirements, such as technology and science labs.

Plans for existing buildings during the course of the bond issue call for \$33.6 million to be spent for additions and major renovations, \$33.7 million for rehabilitation and modernization, and \$18.2 million for program needs.

Among the most common school projects are modernization of classrooms and office-workroom areas, addition of science and computer labs to accommodate changes in graduation requirements, pavement and landscaping work, classroom additions, installation of shade structures on playgrounds, and upgrading of clock, intercom, alarm and telephone systems.

Other, less widespread projects run the gamut from replacing heating and air conditioning equipment to modernizing restrooms and replacing stage curtains.

## Some of our former stars still shine brightly!

Tony Gladney, UNLV's coordinator of multicultural student affairs, has three goals. He is working hard to recruit minority students to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He is developing programs to help them make the most of their education. And he is promoting an increased awareness of UNLV's cultural diversity campuswide. Gladney, a former professional football player and UNLV alumnus, believes strongly in the power of education. "A college education is very important, but I know it's not always easy," he says. "We are here to help minority students with the transition to college life." You can talk to Tony Gladney at 597-4165.

# UNLV

University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
a "rising star" of American higher education...

—U.S. News and World Report

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