

# EDUCATION

## EDUCATION TODAY

### Tips on finding a good college

By Teresa Thorne  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

One of the most common mistakes students make as they begin their college search is to start with the external. A better place to start is with yourself, looking inward at who you are, what you know about yourself at this point in your life, and what your goals and values are at this particular point of your development.

The college search and selection process is a great

growth opportunity, and a great chance to clarify some things about who you are and who you want to be.

Are you the kind of person who loves the excitement and energy of a city environment, or do you prefer the natural beauty and outdoors that a more rural setting might provide? Do you want the diversity and range of options that a large school can provide, or do you value the potential for personalization and community that a smaller college

environment offers?

Do not allow cost to drive your search process in the beginning. Many of the very expensive private colleges are awarding literally millions of dollars in financial aid each year — in some cases, making them less expensive to attend than a state-supported institution.

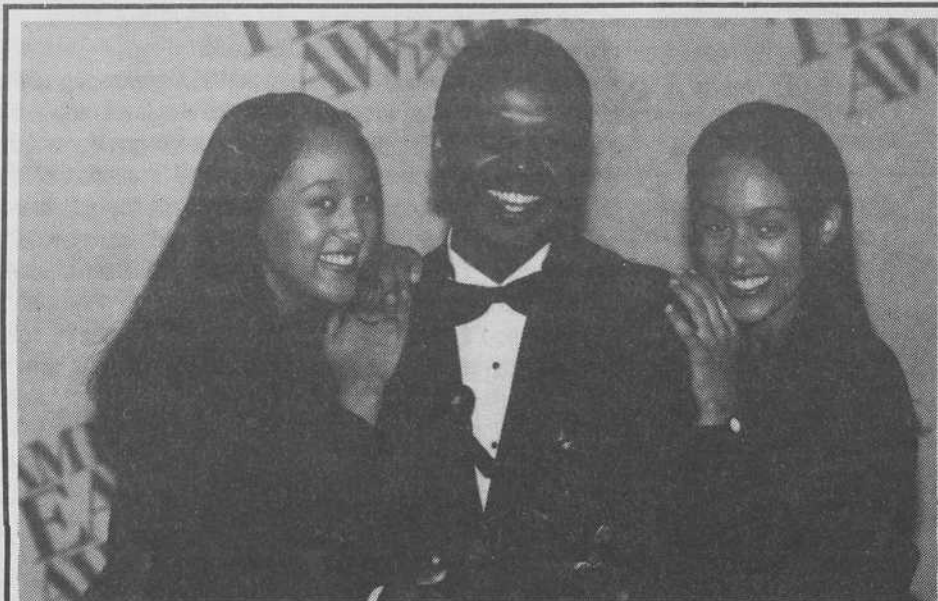
Write or call for information on your choices. Get on the mailing lists at a number of colleges in which you have some interest. See how they choose

to portray themselves to prospective students.

An important part of the college shopping process is visiting a number of campuses for a first-hand look at the college. If the campus offers an interview, have one. It's a chance to find out more about them and help them find out more about you. If they offer student-guided tours, take one. It can offer a helpful student's-eye view of the experience on that campus. Consider as well a return visit to sit in on classes, meet with faculty or coaches, eat the food in the dining hall, and perhaps stay overnight in a residence hall.

Aside from the broad-focus questions, there is a main question to be answered: "Are they good at what I want?" The Admissions Office is one place to start. Ask if they can provide statistical data about the recent placement records of your departments of interest. Can the graduates get into graduate school? Do they get jobs? What kind of assistance does the college provide with all this? Don't settle for verbal generalities or platitudes on this score-push for hard statistics.

While the college search and selection process can seem confusing, remember that it is a process. Take it one step at a time and happy hunting!



#### Award, Award

Foreign language teacher David Williams won the Outstanding Teacher Award recently during the McDonald's/Disney Company American Teacher Awards. A teacher at Dumbarton Middle School in Baltimore, Williams is joined by Tia and Tamara Mowry from the syndicated television sitcom, *Sister, Sister*.

Special to Sentinel-Voice



By Dr. Keith  
Orlando Hilton

### Ebonics: The hidden issue is about teacher certification

Let's put to rest the debate about Ebonics being a language, a dialect or slang. Empirical studies have been done to support the fact that it is indeed a functional language.

Bigger issues regarding Ebonics are; 1) teacher certification and 2) expanding the public education definition of bilingual education and/or ESL — English as a Second Language.

Approximately 90 percent of public school teachers are white (European American) and while many may grumble silently about faculty development and Ebonics, when it comes to employment and certification, many don't want to "talk the talk or walk the walk." You see, if teachers are expected to study Ebonics as a part of getting a job, who do you think will resist? The many whites and other non-black teachers who dominate the ranks.

So it is much easier to question Ebonics than discuss greater issues of human re-empowerment and resources for African children, parents and teachers.

Did you know that English is a borrowed language comprised of Arabic, Latin, French and African languages while Ebonics is as old as humankind?

We suspect that the issue of Ebonics will be discussed well into the 21st century. In fact, I have a 1986 article by Dr. Ernie X. Smith titled, "Ebonics and the Standard English Barrier" that I periodically cite. This is a 10-year-old article!

Also, during the Christmas/Kwanzaa holiday I went into my personal library and came across two related books that I have had for over 20 years, "Black English" by J.L. Dillard (1972) and "Black American English" by Paul Stoller (1975).

Yes, this issue has been around for sometime and it has ramifications beyond Oakland, California.

Now, about Jesse Jackson and Maya Angelou! In some ways their immediate responses to Ebonics were similar to those of some critics of the Million Man March.

Remember how some in the white media quickly found African critics of the march such as Angela Davis, Julianne Malveaux and Manning Marable? And in some cases it didn't take much looking. Yes, critics are important to discourse and often provide invaluable insight to a topic, however, I am hard pressed to think of too many instances when the white media collectively endorses African re-empowerment issues.

Sometimes, however, it is just better to say, "I don't know or let me consult with some others with more direct knowledge or just let me have some time to reflect on the issue."

Jackson didn't do that initially and as a result some wondered if he flip flopped for some other "shakedown" reason instead of looking at the issues beneath the surface.

According to Dr. A.S. Diamond of the British Supreme Court, in his 1962 book, "The History and Origin of Language," "It might seem likely that we should find the clearest evidences of the origin of speech near the areas where man arose. To the present author the evidence seems to indicate as the birthplace of man the areas around the great lakes of East Africa."

Smith in his paper also takes the position that "archeological evidence is irrefutable that the original man is the Asiatic black man. If then, the original man was the Asiatic black man, the original language of man was made of Asiatic black sounds."

Smith further notes that, "black sounds then, [Ebonics] always were and always will be. Hence, in the deep structure of black speakers, there is a cognitive process and deep phonology that is not the same as that of non-blacks."

Dr. Aisha Blackshire-Belay, a linguist and chair of African Studies at Indiana State University also noted that "Ebonics represents the oral tradition of African people. We speak American English but we also have another language, which is our own language — Ebonics. It is indeed our first language."

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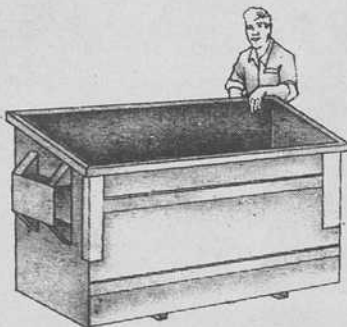
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