



Sentinel-Voice photo by John Broussard

Two girls chomp down on ice cream and get their calcium at the recent Unity Day Festival.

Calcium: Get your grow on

Special to Sentinel-Voice

A new study will examine if there are benefits to giving children more calcium during their pre-school years.

Researchers at the USDA/ARS Children's Nutrition Research Center are beginning a two-year study involving 16 children between ages 3 and 5 years.

"The ultimate objective is to find out if increasing the amount of calcium young children receive in their diets will decrease their risk of incurring osteoporosis later in life," said Dr. Steven Abrams, an associate professor of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. "Since calcium and iron compete for absorption into the body, the primary concern is whether increasing a child's calcium intake will affect their bodies ability to absorb iron."

Researchers hope to learn whether it is appropriate to provide the child with increased

calcium at the same time as iron, or whether it should be provided separately so the child is receiving enough of both.

"Iron is very important for a pre-school child's development," said Abrams. "We want to make sure giving them more calcium does not affect their iron intake."

Most studies involving calcium absorption are conducted on older children, at or near puberty. Abrams says the 3-to-5 year-old age group is one that is rarely studied. The nutritional needs of these children are not well understood.

"We want to provide information to families about how much calcium is needed early in life, and the right way to provide it," Abrams said. "Getting children to drink more milk, eat more dairy products and vegetables may build stronger bones that will be more resistant to debilitating bone fractures from osteoporosis when they get older."

Fulani

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votes to win ballot lines in over 30 states. I am active in the Reform Party, along with an expanding network of black activists around the country who are finding that the independent option adds a new dimension to black empowerment dynamics at the local level. Here are some recent examples. When three African-Americans in Union County, Arkansas wanted to serve on the County Board of Directors, they ran on the Reform Party line and won. And in 1994 in Alabama, Nate Roberson became the nation's first elected official of the Patriot Party, the independent party that is now a part of the Reform Party coalition, with his successful run for County Commissioner in Green County.

The Fair Elections Bill, like many other

structural democratic reforms such as term limits, equal access to delegates and campaign reform, are very important for the black community. At a time when the Democratic Party is increasingly unresponsive to our agenda, the independent route opens up new political avenues for us. And a time when independent political parties are growing throughout the country, non-major party candidates can impact on, and even win, elections.

We need a level playing field in the electoral area to allow independents to impact. Write your Congressman. Tell her or him to cosponsor and work for the passage of the Fair Elections Bill.

Dr. Lenora B. Fulani is currently a leading activist in the Reform Party and chairs the Committee for a Unified Independent Party.

Lil' Kim

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has already set her hopeless course.

To hear her music is to know her present state of mind. I believe this is a talented young woman, a soulful young artist who has so much to offer the world — if she can only live long enough to change to a more positive course.

I want to remind her that she comes from the same genetic pool that has blessed our world with an unending array of stellar artists ranging from Marion Anderson to Whitney Houston; from Mahalia Jackson to Dionne Warwick; to Ella Fitzgerald and Aretha Franklin; to the "Divine" Sarah Vaughn; and the incomparable Lena Horne to Leontyne Price, Diana Ross and Patti Labelle; from the glorious Jessye Norman to Melba Moore and Anita Baker;

from Dinah Washington to the glittering stars that stretch virtually from the dawn of time into infinity; and Lil' Kim, a rightful heirress, is irrevocably attached to the line of great talents.

I want to see, if after we have talked, if there is something my organization can do right now for her. I want us to put our collective arms around this terribly wounded young soul, to administer to her hurts and her tattered self-respect.

I want to see if we can encourage her to develop her talent in a positive way, as we nurture her, with tender love and understanding, to be all that she has the talent and the

potential to be — if she has the will.

I want to meet Lil' Kim! Yes, I want to sit with her, and soon. As I send out this invitation, I am also enlisting the help of Jamie Brown, the publisher of *Sister to Sister* magazine who has tremendous respect in all segments of the music industry, to arrange this meeting.

We must reach out to our lil' sisters like Lil' Kim and save them from the greedy entertainment industry exploiters and allow them to grow, to mature into the wonderfully grand Kims of tomorrow! Then our hearts will be truly warmed and our souls at rest!

Pal

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In addition, department director Sharon Segerblom encouraged staff to expose the students to other non-profit, municipal agencies and businesses related, and unrelated to the department's mission.

Segerblom emphasized the importance of exposing youth to as wide a variety of experiences, careers and activities as possible.

Other activities included an extensive tour of McCarran International Airport, meeting with District Court Judges Michael Douglas and Don Chairez and attending open court sessions. The students also attended City Council and County Commission meetings and spent an evening backstage with performer Gladys Knight.

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