

# Powell: Immigration beneficial to United States

By Herb Boyd

Special to Sentinel-Voice

NEW YORK (NNPA) — Anytime a school is lucky enough to have such a prestigious alumnus as Colin Powell return to campus, it's a major event. Powell, whose military and governmental credentials are extraordinary by any standards, was at City College early this month to deliver the keynote address at a conference on immigration. Powell's remarks provided a summary of the "National Concern, Local Action: Immigration Integration in New York" presented by the Colin Powell Center for Policy Studies in conjunction with the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

During the panel discussions in Shepherd Hall, graphics appearing on a screen from a slide projector underscored the positive aspects of immigration: "Two of three immigrants are medical scientists, two out of five are dentists, one out of three is a doctor or surgeon and one out of three is a computer scientist."

These statistics were amplified by Chung-Wha Hong, executive director of the New York Immigration Coalition, during her panel presentation. She stressed that a policy promoting "equal access, resources, services and opportunities is necessary" if a new paradigm is to replace the old notion that immigra-



Sentinel-Voice photo by Herb Boyd/Amsterdam News

City College President Gregory Williams, left, and former Secretary of State Colin Powell chat it up at City College.

tion takes away jobs.

"Immigration is not part of the problem," Hong stated. "It's part of the solution." She added that while things are a long way from ideal for immigrants, they are improving with the recent signing of two executive orders in the city on the protection of confidentiality and language access.

Susan Fox, executive di-

rector of Shorefront YN-YWHA of Brighton-Manhattan Beach, was concerned about the language difficulties immigrants faced and the need for more volunteers as interpreters and translators, particularly at the lower grade levels in our schools. "Citizenship is not an end, but a step in the process," Fox noted, after explaining some of the barriers our new

arrivals successfully hurdle. And to help them along in this process, she said "we must think globally and act locally."

Educational advancement was a prime issue for Jose Calderon, senior vice president of the Hispanic Federation. He said we have a long way to go toward improving the status of immigrants. "Only 23 percent of them graduate on time and only 44 percent graduate after six years," he said. "And less than half of them graduate at all."

Moreover, he added, they are not aware of some very basic American history. Most of them, Calderon said, "do not know anything about the Civil Rights Movement."

At the keynote luncheon, after being warmly and generously introduced by Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation, Powell cited even more evidence of how beneficial immigrants have been in the development of America.

"They contribute more than they take away," he began, noting how much they pay into Social Security and taxes. "They play a vital role in the prosperity of this city."

Powell, always the great storyteller, regaled the audience with anecdotes from his own immigrant past and the ambitions of his Jamaican parents.

Ever the diplomat, he praised the Bush administration and its efforts to reform immigration and applauded the current plans of President Obama, whom he endorsed during the campaign.

"I'm confident that he [Obama] will not undercut the ideals of the American dream," he said.

The closest he came to talking about illegal immigrants was to insist that our security forces at the borders be strengthened and that something be done to better the circumstances of workers in Mexico. "We need to help create economic conditions

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## Edney

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Since that candid conversation, America has observed its first Black president as laborious and strong as he shoulders the weight of the crisis that was left behind by the Bush administration. Editorial pages of our papers are supporting him and rooting him on as Black people approach unemployment rates in the teens.

Although we anticipate reporting — step by step — how he maneuvers the political mine fields ahead, we refuse to let him shoulder this crisis alone. In fact, if the voices of Black newspapers — which were founded amidst crisis — are not now shouting louder than ever, then we will leave him as the first Black president to single-handedly carry the burden of repairing unequal justice.

In this regard, we are sure that President Obama recognizes the importance of our questions, the integrity of our journalistic pens and that his heart is to deal with us with fairness... We are sure.

As for that rogue article in the conservative *Washington Times*, well it's like "water under the bridge" as they say, although the paper's editors Chris Dolan and John Solomon failed to exercise the common decency or professional courtesy of returning my phone calls.

I had to know how this happened. Therefore, I called the reporter himself, Joe Curl, a seasoned White House correspondent, who I quite frankly enjoyed talking with.

He explained to me that he had been assigned to what he described as "political theatre — what happens in that room and try to capture all the things that went on there."

I explained to him that this so-called "political theatre", for me, is a new kind of reporting in which anything is fair game for a good quote — even the private conversation of his unsuspecting colleagues.

"We were all kind of mashed together in a group of people moving out," he recalled. "So, it may not have seemed like we were talking directly to each other, but I was talking with April, and I don't know if I said anything directly to you or not."

Well, let the record show that he didn't say anything directly to me after the press conference. He simply blended in with the crowd.

But, the Black Press will never blend in with the crowd. We didn't when we for decades raised our voices for the election of Black politicians across this country. And in the recent words of Rev. Joseph Lowery, we will continue to "speak truth to power no matter what color power is."

From city halls to state houses to the White House, we will do so with unbridled vigor and honesty without exception. But, we will also do so — through our questions — with fairness and equity. We insist on nothing less than the same.

Hazel Trice Edney is editor-in-chief of the NNPA News Service and Blackpressusa.com.

## Your Horoscope Says...Feb. 19-25

### ARIES

Don't expect to win every battle, especially with your lover. This week winning is losing. Backing down is winning. Shyness produces a bold result. It's easy to collect that long-standing debt.

Soul Affirmation: I keep money on my mind this week.

Lucky Numbers: 18, 25, 39

### TAURUS

Possibilities of hearing good news about home are greatly expanded. Savor the news rather than thinking about other annoyances. Travel is on the horizon. Plan the trip this week.

Soul Affirmation: Jewelry reflects the beauty of my feelings about myself.

Lucky Numbers: 26, 44, 52

### GEMINI

Feather the nest. Stock up on stuff for the long haul. Cement relationships. A friend needs your support. Enjoy giving it. You will receive good news about a pal.

Soul Affirmation: Cheerfully handling what comes at me is the test of who I am.

Lucky Numbers: 13, 22, 31

### CANCER

Your mate has a sweet surprise. Open up to receive it. Choose your words carefully around a sensitive pal. Listen for good news about a loan or financial matter.

Soul Affirmation: I let others toot my horn this week.

Lucky Numbers: 27, 28, 41

### LEO

Enjoy the great insights you have in the area of career objectives. Take

a look at what's out there! An unanticipated financial matter may arise, find the good in it.

Soul Affirmation: A cheerful soul should be wrapped in a cheerful package.

Lucky Numbers: 15, 23, 35

### VIRGO

Be cautious and conservative with money. You are extremely witty this week. Allow others to enjoy your good humor. Your leadership skills are very high, and others will follow.

Soul Affirmation: Luck is my best friend this week.

Lucky Numbers: 14, 20, 44

### LIBRA

This is a good time for you to seek agreement on a plan that involves a relative. Take the time to remind your lover how much you care. Get a little sentimental if you have to. Don't be too critical of that softer side of your personality.

Soul Affirmation: Self confidence is the key to my success this week.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 9, 19

### SCORPIO

Push. Now is a good time to push. Your energy is higher than ever. Someone might get offended, but you can't please everyone. Hire a pro for something that you planned to do yourself, especially if an expertise is involved.

Soul Affirmation: Success is mine because I feel successful.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 7, 12

### SAGITTARIUS

Review your "to do" list again. You may need to slow down to discover something that you didn't realize while you were in the flow of events. Your

lover is going to be a little difficult to understand. Back off if an argument arises. You're probably the one who is too busy. Forgiving yourself is often harder than getting someone else to forgive you.

Soul Affirmation: Two hats fit well on my big head.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 20, 32

### CAPRICORN

Make a special effort to spend all week with your lover, husband or wife. Your sense of the importance of relationships is keen and this is a good time to strengthen your passionate partnership. Take your lover to a party. Devote attention.

Soul Affirmation: Change is my middle name.

Lucky Numbers: 12, 51, 52

### AQUARIUS

The flock will come to you for direction. Give it gracefully. Know that your insights will help a lot if you deliver them in the right way. If you are a mother, guidance will be the best gift you can give others this week.

Soul Affirmation: Knowing I can do it is the biggest preparation for getting it done.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 11, 22

### PISCES

Most people don't know how often dreams and reality blend into that practical consciousness of yours. Knowledge comes from a dream you've had lately. This week is a good week to get started making that dream a reality.

Soul Affirmation: My spirit gives me limitless possibilities.

Lucky Numbers: 9, 17, 52