



CONTACTS

Margie Eaton Forehand
TAAA Education Chair

(510) 504-3843 | spiritofthedrum@comcast.net

Toni Beckham

TAAA Chief Information Officer
(209) 832-8020 | PR@TAAA.net

PRESS RELEASE

May 18, 2009

TRACY AFRICAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION GRANTS ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS TO 10 TRACY STUDENTS

*Awardees to be Recognized at 15th Annual Juneteenth Festival
June 6, 2009 | Lincoln Park, Tracy, CA*

TRACY, CA – Tracy African American Association, LLC. (TAAA) places special emphasis on youth mentorship and education, and gears nearly all of its events and activities toward fundraising to benefit its Wayne Nelson Academic Scholarship Program. Annually, the organization provides scholarships – named for late TAAA member and education advocate Wayne Nelson – to enrich educational opportunities for college-bound African American students who are graduating from Tracy, CA high schools. The scholarships are awarded to high school seniors who apply, meet specific academic requirements, and who are entering an accredited college or university on a full-time basis. TAAA announced today the names of 10 Tracy high school students to each of whom it has granted \$650 academic scholarships. The 2009 Wayne Nelson Academic Scholarship recipients are:

Millennium High School:

Antoinette Morris

Tracy High School:

Austin Jones, Tajonay Odom, Christopher Paschal, Nkem Ujuagu

West High School:

Jolicia Kendrix, Ariel Mason, Brittany Perry, Anthony Richardson, Semhar Tesfalem

“In today’s economy, it is harder than ever for students to compete for funds that enable access to higher learning,” said TAAA Education Chairperson Margie Eaton Forehand. “I am a strong believer that an education is the drumbeat of promise and that drum does not always beat for African American students when it comes to the financial ability to attend a four-year college.”

-more-

SCHOLAR RECOGNITION AT TRACY JUNETEENTH FESTIVAL:

Though each student will receive his or her award letter and scholarship certificate during their respective school awards programs, TAAA will recognize them individually and collectively during its 15th annual celebration of Juneteenth, which observes that on June 19, 1865 slaves in Galveston, Texas learned that the Civil War had ended and they were now free. Upon hearing the news, the slaves celebrated in jubilation with song, dance and food. Since that time, slave descendents throughout the United States have carried on the celebratory tradition. Tracy African American Association will once again observe and celebrate the end of slavery by hosting its Juneteenth Festival Saturday, June 6th from 10:00 am until 7:00 p.m. at Tracy's Lincoln Park located at Eaton Avenue and Holly Street.

TAAA is grateful to its corporate sponsors San Joaquin Delta College, McDonald's, Jackson Rancheria, and Wal-mart, as well as other Juneteenth festival contributors, which include Health Plan of San Joaquin, Imara Mortgage & Realty, Tracy Disposal Services and Wells Fargo.

ABOUT JUNETEENTH:

Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States. Dating back to 1865, it was on June 19th that the Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free. (Note: This was two and a half years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which had become official January 1, 1863). The Emancipation Proclamation had little impact on the Texans due to the minimal number of Union troops to enforce the new Executive order. However, with the surrender of General Lee in April of 1865, and the arrival of General Granger's regiment, the forces were finally strong enough to influence and overcome the resistance.¹

ABOUT TRACY AFRICAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION, LLC:

The Tracy African American Association (TAAA) is a non-profit organization established in 1994 by a group of concerned professionals seeking to form ties among African Americans and other members of the Tracy Community. Its mission is to unite people of all ages and backgrounds through sponsorships and contributions to educational, cultural and social programs that foster awareness, diversity, and a cooperative environment that unite the Tracy Community.

Membership is open to individuals who share and embrace the TAAA mission.

www.TAAA.net

¹ *Source: Juneteenth.com*