



## CONTACTS

Toni Beckham

TAAA Chief Information Officer

209.832.8020 / 408.499.3664 c | [PR@TAAA.net](mailto:PR@TAAA.net)

Paul Hall

TAAA Education Chair

559.707.7214 | [Phall.education@TAAA.net](mailto:Phall.education@TAAA.net)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 11, 2010

### **TRACY AFRICAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION GRANTS ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS TO 12 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES**

*Awardees to be Recognized at 16th Annual Juneteenth Festival  
June 5, 2010 | 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. To date TAAA has awarded more than \$62,000 in college scholarship grants. The scholarships are awarded to high school seniors who apply, meet specific academic requirements, and who plan to enter an accredited college or university on a full-time basis. TAAA announced today the names of 12 Tracy high school students, each of whom has been granted a \$500 academic scholarship. The 2010 Wayne Nelson Academic Scholarship recipients are:

#### **Merrill West High School:**

Elise Armour, Tanisha Auten, Paul Cooley Jr., Crystal Griffin, Tanilia Keel  
TeShayna Mitchell, Jenin Stephenson, Benjamin Young, Nkosi Zakers

#### **Tracy High School:**

Olivia Howard, Tiffany Lavender

#### **George and Evelyn Stein High School:**

Ipyana Jacobs

“Tracy African American Association is proud of the Tracy, CA high school students who are about to experience one of life’s most important and exciting milestones. TAAA Education Chairperson Paul Hall said, “As Education Chairperson, I believe our future lies in educating our future generations about their history and their culture, through oral and written traditions.”

-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, 2010 Tracy Juneteenth co-presenter Health Plan of San Joaquin will join TAAA to recognize them individually and collectively during TAAA's 16th annual Juneteenth Festival where there will be food, vendor wares, activities and entertainment for all ages!

**WHO:** Tracy African American Association and Health Plan of San Joaquin *present*  
**WHAT:** 16th Annual Tracy Juneteenth Festival  
**WHEN:** Saturday, June 5, 2010 | 10:00 am to 7:00 pm  
**WHERE:** Lincoln Park (Eaton Avenue and Holly Street), Tracy, CA  
**COST:** **FREE** Admittance  
**WHY:** Juneteenth commemorates the notification of slavery's end. On June 19, 1865 slaves in Galveston, Texas learned 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.

TAAA is grateful to its corporate sponsors: Health Plan of San Joaquin, City of Tracy, GWF Energy, LLC, San Joaquin Delta College, Wal-mart, and Wells Fargo Bank as well as other Juneteenth festival contributors, which include, Imara Mortgage & Realty, Spinal Care of Stockton, The Clorox Company, and *Tracy Press*.

### **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 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.<sup>1</sup>

### **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](http://www.TAAA.net)

<sup>1</sup> Source: *Juneteenth.com*