

Entertainment



BACKSTAGE AT THE GRAMMYS: Blige, Ludacris, Ike Turner, Ruby Dee and more meet the press.

*As great moments are experienced on stage at the Grammys before a worldwide audience, there's another whole show that goes on backstage for the media once the winners leave the stage.

DRAMA AT CLIVE DAVIS' PRE-GRAMMY BASH: Whitney in the bldg; Timberlake bails citing 'flu'.

*As expected, Whitney Houston put in an appearance at Clive Davis' annual pre-Grammy party Saturday in Beverly Hills, which included such luminaries as Quincy Jones, Diddy, Naomi Campbell, Janet Jackson, Jermaine Dupri, Nelly and Lionel Richie.

Read more



WHITAKER, HUDSON WIN BAFTA AWARDS: Even the Brits are giving Jennifer Hudson props for "Dreamgirls."

*Both Forest Whitaker and Jennifer Hudson respectively add another major trophy to their extensive collection this award season.

WHITNEY HOUSTON, JENNIFER HUDSON ALBUMS SHAPING UP: Clive's babies have producers lined up for long-awaited LPs. *News is beginning to trickle



ACCEPTANCE SPEECH RE-CORD: Grammy-winner managed to squeeze out 55 names.

*The wrap-it-up music was getting louder and louder, but Mary J. Blige was determined to thank every single one of the 55 people whose names she wrote in her Grammy acceptance speech for R&B album of the year.

PRINCE VS. FOO FIGHTERS: Rockers can't believe artist performed their song at the Super Bowl.

*Apparently, there's a beef going on between Prince and the Foo Fighters, a rock group founded in



1995 by former Nirvana drummer, Dave Grohl.

out regarding two highly-anticipated album projects under the stewardship of record mogul Clive Davis.

HUDSON JOINS ELITE COMPANY WITH VOGUE COVER: Oscar nominee to front magazine's annual Power Issue.

*When the new March issue of Vogue magazine hits newsstands later this month, Jennifer Hudson will become one of only three African-American actresses to have graced the cover since its launch in 1892. The other two Oprah Winfrey and Halle Berry.

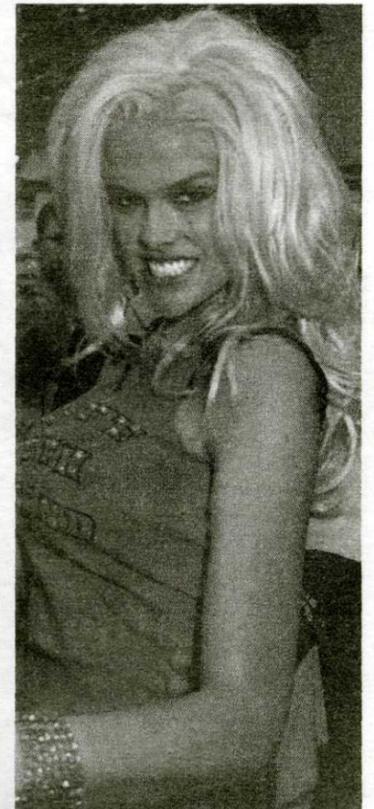
GERALD LEVERT'S LAST INTERVIEW: Soulful singer spoke with South African jour-



nalist Bonga Percy Vilakazi by: Bonga Percy Vilakazi

*I still remember the day like it was yesterday, when I received the sms, informing me about Gerald's untimely passing. That day, the music world almost came to a stand-still. It hadn't been that long since Luther Vandross died. Now, one more of our greatest soul artists, Gerald Levert, had left this earth. South Africans were still mourning Lebo Mathosa's death, our own talented diva...

BLIGE MAY HAVE SET AN



bloodthirsty cannibal, don't expect to get no satisfaction from Hannibal Rising, a prequel which doesn't make much sense, if you're at all familiar with the prior films from the grisly franchise.

ANNA NICOLE PHOTGRAPHED IN BED WITH BAHAMIAN OFFICIAL: Another bizarre twist in the mess following her death.

*From somewhere out of left field, a photograph popped up Monday showing a fully clothed Anna Nicole Smith cuddling in bed with Bahamian Immigration Minister Shane Gibson, who has been criticized for giving the late actress special treatment in approving her application for permanent residency.

ITTY BITTY BITS: Whitney & Bobby B; Oprah fetes Mary J.; 'Monster's Ball' on iTunes; Rhonda Ross in real estate; Haysbert on playing Mandela.

*Whitney Houston and ex-husband Bobby Brown were spotted together Sunday night taking their daughter Bobbi Christina to Dan Tana, an Italian restaurant in Beverly Hills. Houston filed for divorce from Brown last October, and last week asked a judge to speed up the process.

ROBYN TROUP AND HER 'GRAMMY MOMENT': Texas teen spends 19th birthday singing with Justin Timberlake.

"I was so prepared for them to say somebody else. I had my game face on and everything," said Robyn Troup, the Houston native who got to perform with Justin Timberlake Sunday night as winner of a talent contest called, "My Grammy Moment."

KENNETH 'SUPREME' MCGRIFF ESCAPES DEATH: Irv Gotti's boy gets life without parole for double murder.

*Kenneth "Supreme" McGriff, the drug kingpin who was convicted of hiring hit men to kill two rivals in 2001, was sentenced Friday to life in federal prison without the possibility of parole.

EUR FILM REVIEW: Hannibal Rising by: Kam Williams

*If you ever wanted to know exactly what turned Hannibal Lecter from a dapper British doctor into a

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GRASSROOTS FOUNDATION 'SMOOTH AND SASSY STEPPIN' IN THE CITY BLACK, WHITE & GOLD MASQUERADE BALL Concert and Steppin' 8pm-12am Sunday February 25, 2007 Marmen Grand Ballroom 2230 S. Michigan Avenue Hosted by Ramonski Luv DJ MELLOW CHRIS Featuring Ms. Terisa Griffin 5PM VIP Reception Award Program 7pm VIP ALL ACCESS TICKET INCLUDES Open Bar, Food, and VIP seating

"The Strawberry Letter" with Vickii B Formerly with WTLC 106.7 FM "from the Indy to the Windy" Actress, Singer Brandy is being sued for \$50 million dollars.

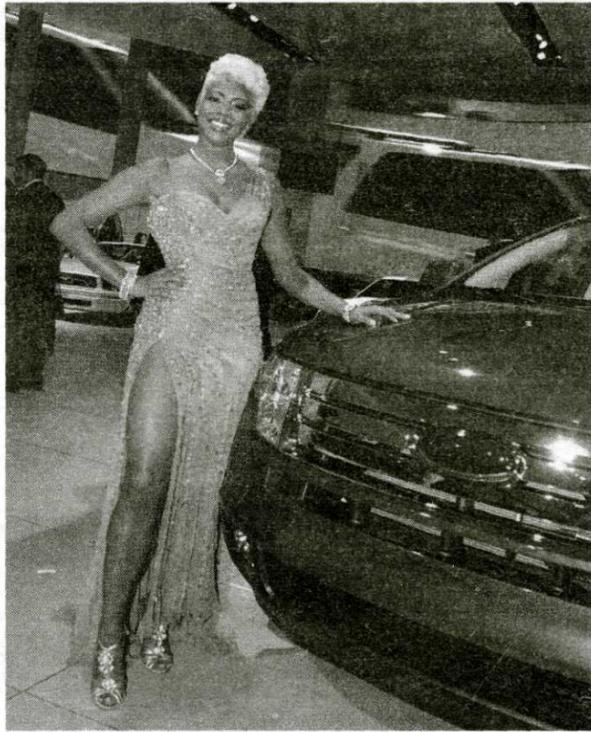
The wrongful death suit claims Brandy was driving recklessly when her land rover struck the back of a Honda driven by thirty eight year old, Awatef Aboudihaj. The suit was filed on behalf of Ahmed Aboudihaj and Labridi Zohara in Los Angeles Superior Court.

Sons of Lou Rawls and Marvin Gaye in court. Lou Rawls jr. and Marvin Gaye III are in court facing each other as legal adversaries. Lou Rawls jr. claimed he was attacked by "four large dogs" during a visit to Marvin Gaye III's Hollywood home in 2005. Rawls says he was "bit, clawed, physically and mentally injured".

Tom Joyner Morning Show Special in studio guest ... Eddie Levert ,



debuting his son's posthumously released CD, *In My Songs*, this morning on the Tom Joyner Morning Show. View archived webcast of TJMS in studio with Eddie Levert now Listen Live: TJMS talks with the President of "G Phi G" Gerald Levert's fan club, Kym Whitley, Keith Sweat and more on "G-Day." Enter Gerald Levert Tribute Contest : Tom Joyner is looking for Gerald Levert's biggest fans; tell Tom what Gerald Levert's life and music has meant to you and you could win exclusive Gerald Levert prizes including Special Edition Teddy Bears, video MP3 players filled with Gerald Levert performances and music and treasure chest of Gerald Levert's music.



Auto Show."

Kelis, star of Ford's latest marketing campaign for the Ford Edge, will make an appearance at the show to sign autographs, raffle off signed Apple iPod Nanos and giveaway www.fordurban.com T-shirts.

Kelis kicked off her new relationship with Ford on Dec. 18 in New York City at her husband's, rap icon Nas', black and white ball in New York City to celebrate the release of his new album, "Hip-Hop is Dead." Ford gave partygoers a glimpse of the new advertising campaign created by The Uniworld Group - Detroit.

On Dec. 20, the Ford Edge campaign featuring Kelis began with a complete print, television and radio promotions including a special radio spot featuring the song that Kelis created specifically for the campaign titled, "Push it to the Edge." The song flows with a strong hip-hop beat to the following lyrics:

So clean in my Edge
Steady headed to the spot
Speakers bump thump thump
All you hearin' on the block

I live life loud
Cause that's the only way to live it
I push it to the Edge
Never stop at the limit.

About the Ford Edge

The all-new Ford Edge hits the hottest segment in the industry, the growing crossover segment, and delivers on the package and features that customers want. The five-passenger 2007 Ford Edge has a bold design with a stylish, functional and clever interior.

It features a powerful, yet fuel-efficient powertrain, with a 265-horsepower 3.5-liter V-6 engine mated to a six-speed automatic transmission. For more details surrounding Ford's hottest products from the Chicago Auto Show visit: www.fordenespanol.com.

Chicago Ford Dealers bring Grammy nominated artist Kelis , music, and fun to Auto Show

Ford is enlisting Grammy-nominated hip-hop singer Kelis to turn up the heat at the Chicago Auto Show. She will be supporting various Ford auto show activities on Feb. 17th from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Ford display.

"We know that these artists will do a great job of generating buzz for Ford," said Marc Perry, multicultural marketing manger, Ford Division. "Kelis represents an excellent example of how Ford is finding new and innovative ways to connect with our customers at major events like the Chicago

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CIC Continues Major Impact on South and West Sides

In FY2006 CIC (Community Investment Corporation) facilitated the rehab of 244 buildings with 4,890 affordable housing units through CIC loans, the City's Troubled Buildings Initiative and Lawndale Restoration.

Of the 77 CIC loans for \$57 million with 2337 units, 92% were affordable to people with 50% of Area Median Income or less; 100% were affordable to people with 60% or less AMI.

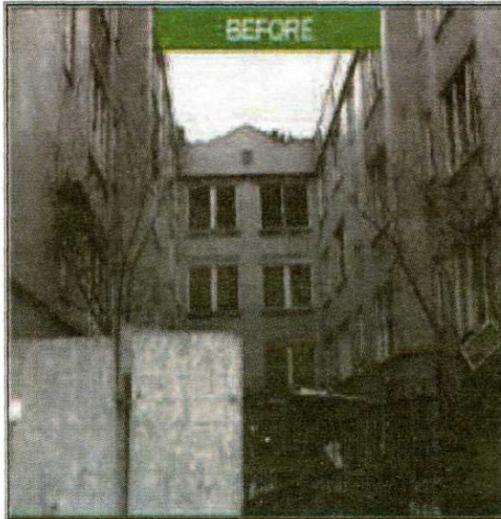
The program forced the repair to code of another 63 of the city's toughest buildings with 1,449 units. Since it began, the Troubled Buildings partnership of six City departments, Housing Court, and CIC, has processed 293 buildings totaling 5,567 units, of which more than half (170 buildings/2,957 units) are completed, under repair, or in receivership. CIC is the court-appointed receiver on 28 buildings with 586 units. 104 buildings with 1,104 units were transferred by one deed from

HUD, to the Chicago Department of Housing, to CIC for prompt closing to 23 rehabber/owners competitively selected by the City. In partnership with DOH and three subcontractors, CIC is the Program Administrator overseeing and aiding the success of rehab and property operation by the new owners.

Geographically, 90% of CIC loans were made in 21 community areas of the city of Chicago in 2006. North Lawndale was the neighborhood with the most loans (9) for nearly \$19 million. North Side neighborhoods accounted for 10% of loans, the South Side 39%, and the West Side 40%. Ten percent were in the suburbs of Aurora, Chicago Heights, Dolton, Franklin Park, Hazel Crest, Homewood and Maywood.

Of the 293 Troubled Buildings taken on by CIC and City departments, 97% are on the South and West Sides.

About half (51%) of our borrowers



were minorities, and 52% of rehab contractors were minorities (50% of general contractors)

CIC Flex loans can go beyond conventional underwriting standards using debt coverage, rather than loan

to value, and allowing quick acquisitions. In 2006, total Flex loans surpassed the \$100 million mark, and the program still has not sustained a single loss to date.

Funding Doubles For LIHTF Rent Subsidies

The Chicago Low-Income Housing Trust Fund (LIHTF) is accepting applications from landlords interested in receiving subsidies to provide housing for households in Chicago earning less than \$22,000 a year, some of whom may have experienced homelessness. Not a new program, the LIHTF has been in existence for over 15 years and is very popular with landlords, leading to its funding being doubled as of 2006. Why do landlords like it?

Guaranteed rent subsidy payments covering the majority of the rent. Subsidy payments made quarterly in advance. Increased stability of tenants because their rent is affordable and assistance with locating qualified tenants.

"As a past landlord participant in the CLIHTEF subsidy program I can provide a strong recommendation," said CIC Director of Capacity Building Larry McCarthy. "The program provides a building-based rent subsidy. You pick the qualifying applicant, screen them as you would any other applicant and enter into a lease with them. The Trust Fund provides a monthly rent subsidy which you

voucher for on a quarterly basis and is paid upfront. The only other paperwork is a simple annual recertification of your tenant."

Landlords accepted into the program receive a one-year, renewable grant and are paid on a quarterly basis in advance. The subsidy allows the landlord to charge a rent that is affordable for very low-income individuals and families while still receiving a market rent for the unit. Renewals are based on successful performance and funding availability. No more than a third of the units in a building can be subsidized by the Trust Fund. The Rental Subsidy is granted to Landlords for a specific unit and the landlord must show that the unit is occupied by qualified low-income tenants. The Trust Fund is required to use at least 50 percent of its resources for households earning less than 15 percent area median income (\$11,310 for a family of four) and the balance of its resources for households earning 16 to 30 percent area median income (\$22,600 for a family of four). Households that exceed the income limits are not eligible for the Rental Subsidy Program. Landlords interested in participating in this innovative program should contact Nora Saldivar of the Chicago Department of Housing at nsaldivar@cityofchicago.org or 312-742-1551, or call Steven Boone at 312-742-0288. You may link to an application through the CIC website at <http://www.cicchicago.com/htdocs/training/pmmanual.html>.

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\$1 mil commitment from the University of Chicago

With the help of a \$1 million commitment from the University of Chicago, CIC opens 2006 with a new program of 90% of total cost financing for loans creating or preserving affordable housing in the South Side neighborhoods of Woodlawn, Washington Park, South Shore, North Kenwood-Oakland, Douglas, and Grand Boulevard. CIC projects that the program could leverage the rehab of about 180 apartment units in 10-12 buildings with a total project cost of \$10 million (\$1 million in cash equity; \$1 million in University loans; and \$8 million in CIC loans).

"When the U of C contacted CIC and asked what one thing would most help stimulate increased rehab of affordable housing, I repeated what I had just heard from our loan officers: that lower cash equity requirements would help capable owners move more quickly to do added deals," said CIC President John Pritscher. "This would also tie in with addressing the large number of Troubled Buildings in the areas surrounding the University."

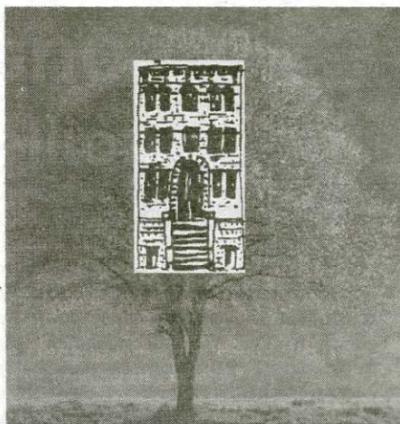
The U of C funds will make possible a CIC second mortgage processed with the first mortgage in one seamless CIC borrower application. There would be no delay or added cost to the borrower. The borrower would provide 10% cash and pay the prevailing CIC slightly-below market adjustable interest rate with 25- or 30-year amortization on the combined 90% of cost loan amount. The rate on the second mortgage would be the same as the CIC first mortgage rate.

In order to fulfill the intention of both CIC and the University of Chicago to create affordable housing, the borrower would be required to rehab the building according to CIC standards; must have all after rehab rents below 55% Area Median Income; and encouraged (but not required) to take advantage of the Cook County Assessor's Class 9 program for the rehab.

For information contact a CIC loan officer at (312) 258-0070.

Living with Trees in Chicago: One example Tenants from across the city to convene the Community Congress

How would you like to live with trees? The Metropolitan Tenants Organization (MTO) hotline received a call from a woman in the hospital. After hearing her story, the call was immediately referred to the Healthy Homes Coordinator. Why? The woman's problem was that "trees" are growing in her walls. The proper diagnosis - mold. Years of moisture and disrepair leading up to dangerous levels of mold. Enough to send the hotline caller to the hospital with a severe attack of asthma. For five years she had been asking her landlord to address the issues in her unit contributing to the mold. For five years the landlord ignored her requests. Now they are in court. But the damage done to the woman's health cannot be remedied in court. That is lost. And it was all so preventable.



Tenants coming together to support tenants. How will this happen? At the Community Congress of Tenants. This will be a forum through which tenants from across the city can come together and raise a collective voice. Together, tenants will claim their rights to safe, clean and

affordable rental housing. Together tenants from across the city of Chicago will rally around issues critical to the future such as: condo conversions run amok, the proliferation of slumlords and rents that are skyrocketing. Together, we will develop a plan of action and move forward from the Congress to address these issues.

The power of tenant unity is exactly what the Community Congress will address on February 17th. MTO organizers experience the power of people coming together around a common cause everyday. As tenants from across the city of Chicago convene the Community

Congress, we'll experience that power anew. The Community Congress will be held at United Church of Hyde Park, 1448 E. 53rd Street in Hyde Park on February 17th from 1:00pm to 3:00pm. Come and find out what issues will be on the forefront of the tenants' rights movement for the next year. For information regarding these events contact: Shirley Johnson at (773) 292-4980 ext. 224.

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Business Brief

Gov. signs full min. wage law

Amendments to House Bill 3752 will help over 400,000 temporary workers across Illinois

Governor Rod R. Blagojevich signed legislation to help make sure day and temporary workers across Illinois are paid the full minimum wage.

House Bill 3752 amends the Minimum Wage Law to exempt day and temporary laborers from this proba-

tionary wage provision, ensuring hundreds of thousands of day and temporary laborers across the state receive the full minimum wage increase.

"We raised the minimum wage to help thousands of hard working families keep up with the rising cost of living. But thousands of day laborers and temporary workers might have been unfairly left out because of a provision in the law.

Although day and temporary laborers are entitled to the minimum wage, high turnover in the day and temporary labor industry makes temporary workers more prone to abuse by employers who might try to pay workers less than the required minimum wage, by either by moving workers on their 89th day of employment to

another job or replacing temporary workers every 90 days.

HB 3752, sponsored by State Representative Susana Mendoza (D-Chicago) and State Senator William Delgado (D-Chicago), corrects this ambiguity in the law and takes effect when the minimum wage increase becomes effective on July 1, 2007.

"Day and temporary laborers are sent to work in various industries, including factory, landscaping, food processing, construction, warehouse or office work and are often switched to different worksites well before 90 days of employment are completed. HB 3752 makes sure that these workers won't fall through the cracks and that they receive a fair minimum wage," said Rep. Mendoza.

"We worked hard to make sure the most vulnerable of workers in our state are not left behind as the minimum wage increases over the next four years. I thank Governor Blagojevich for tirelessly working to better the lives of all working families in Illinois," said Sen. Delgado.

"Without this change, employers would be encouraged to replace full-time workers with a rotation of temporary workers and day laborers," said Erica Hade, Field Director of the Illinois AFL-CIO.

"Unscrupulous employers can use the probationary wage as a scheme to create an entire class of permanent 'probationary workers.' Passage of this amendment is so crucial in the daily lives of day of thousands of day and temporary workers across Illinois" said Ari Glazer, Director of the San Lucas Workers Center in Chicago.

"Day and temporary workers perform some of the hardest and most dangerous jobs in Illinois. We applaud Governor Blagojevich, Sen. Delgado and Rep. Mendoza for making this correction to the Minimum Wage Law.

The Black Talk About Economics & Community News



By Lawrence Hayes

The Big Jag Rip-off

Jaguar credit rip-off of consumers is under investigation - more details on the probe to be announced and possible government and civil charges to be filed. Geoff P Polites, of CEO of Jaguar, to be investigated for possible consumer fraud.



Judges - Good or Bad?

Judges whose side are you on anyway? This is an investigative report on Federal Judges such as Moran and Noral who sides with major corporations, who give to their political campaign Donations, Perks, Cronies, and aid to corruption.

In depth conversation with the judge's review board on policies and conduct of judges who fail to do their responsibility in the ruling of multimillion dollar cases. Will keep you informed on the follow-up of this investigation.

The heroes in the hood that keeps it real. Here are two of those that have made a difference: Attorney Sabrina Wilkins and Attorney Arlene Y. Coleman along with Attorney Bow Harvey have single handedly took on for the last four years the mega giant Clear Channel fighting for the Expo.

Special Report coming in March 07.

The Midwest Bank turn around or, the hat run them down? In a follow up on a meeting with Midwest executives, Thomas E. Jalette, Senior Vice President, and Dennis M. Motyka, Executive Vice President in a two hour meeting resulted seemingly positive and we'll see if the two community groups Heartland and Btasks finally get their compensation.

The Fight of Our Life To Save The Black Expo

Clear Channel is stealing the Black Community blind, and you are letting them. Chicago black community-- it will be said that there was once a Black expo that was owned and operated by black folks. Not the expo for today's black woman which is not black and never has been.

The crook report coming in we will feature who is a crook that you would not believe based on the Chicago Crime Commission Reports leaders know it and will not tell you. Where Are The Heroes??

Lawrence Hayes Don't for get to E-MAIL e-mail lawrencehayesexpo@yahoo.com for commits or information

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Advertisement for Mike's Furniture, featuring refrigerators, stoves, washers, and dryers. Includes prices for Queen Size Sets and various furniture items like sofas and tables.

Advertisement for Community Insurance Center, Inc., providing auto, home, life, and health insurance. Includes a free calculator and contact information for sales.

(Continued from page 1)

Urban League Business

with major partners: BP, Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and the Illinois Finance Authority, The Chicago Urban League's 2007 Annual Business Luncheon, President and CEO Cheryle Jackson unveiled her economic empowerment vision for the agency, which will now focus on Chicago's African-American workforce and business community through four growth engines collectively called projectNEXT: entrepreneurship, workforce diversity, commercial real estate development, education and advocacy.

Jackson made history in October 2006, becoming the first woman to lead the civil rights organization in its 90-year history. "The Chicago Urban League is getting out of the social service business and will focus exclusively on economic development," said Jackson. "There should be at least one organization dedicated to creating the kind of wealth where no social services of any kind are needed."

After conducting an intensive analysis of the agency's current programs and services along with a scan of local and national economic and workforce trends and resources, the League developed projectNEXT, the agency's new economic development platform. projectNEXT entails the League building new programs and business, academic and community partnerships to drive:

- 1. **Entrepreneurship:** Strengthen, grow and expand the number of African-American owned businesses
- 2. **Workforce Diversity:** Raise employment and income levels in the skilled, retail management and executive management workforce
- 3. **Commercial Real Estate Development:** Promote real estate development, increase the supply of goods and services in African-American communities, and help to ensure that African Americans are not just consumers but owners of the redevelopment of their communities.

•4. **Education and Advocacy:** Advocate to broaden the base of educated, skilled and engaged African-American youth and serve as the voice and thought leader for economic development issues in the African-American community

Six New Ground-Breaking Alliances

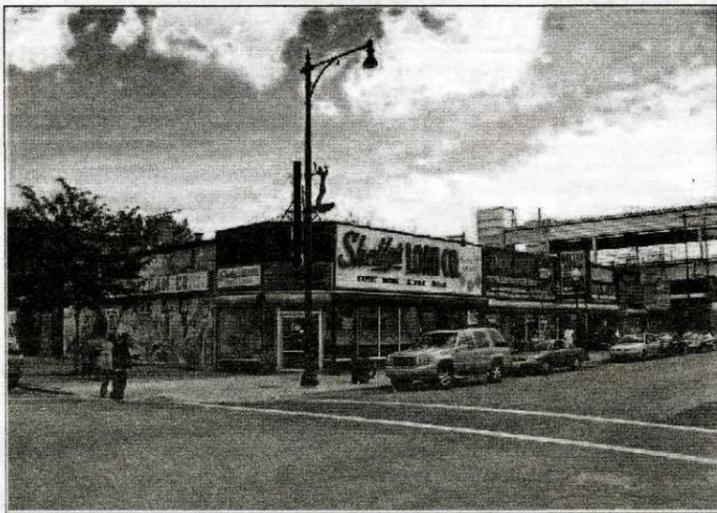
Consistent with its new focus and partnership model, the League has established key alliances with BP the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and the Illinois Finance Authority (IFA).

The League is also leading two major initiatives to advance workforce diversity. The first is an Organized Labor Task Force to increase minority access to trade unions. The second is a partnership with the Chicago Manufacturing Renaissance Council, a federation of business, labor, government, education and community-based organizations working to promote a highly skilled manufacturing workforce. In the coming year, the League will also partner with Ariel Mutual Funds on an in-depth study pertaining to diversity in the professional services arena.

BP Foundation Inc. and BP America Inc. have committed more than \$6.2 million over three years to programs that work across all four areas of the strategic vision. The project all so calls to create a series of pilot economic development programs focused on diversity in employment, suppliers, business market relationships, education and research.

With investment from BP Foundation, the League will launch an Entrepreneurship Center with the Kellogg School of Management at Northwest-

See the "BEFORE" and "AFTER"



Third ward candidate Mell Monroe's Model for Success in the 3rd Ward - 2007-2015". above is a sample vision in Bronzeville at the commercial intersection of Prairie and 47th Street. Using this intersection, Monroe articulate how a commercial and residential transformation would provide better lighting, more openness, and an overall "walking friendly" neighborhood where people of all ages can shop in their own neighborhood. As the Alderman, Monroe says he would bring: 1000 new jobs in the ward; 12 new businesses; and, a 20% safer community for all ethnic groups.

"The Chicago Urban League is getting out of the social service business and will focus exclusively on economic development,"

ern University. As the academic partner for the Entrepreneurship Center, Kellogg will help staff the Center with graduate students and faculty. One of the key priorities at the Entrepreneurship Center will be developing strategies for minority-owned businesses to pursue and secure venture capital.

Steven Rogers, The Gund Family Distinguished Professor of Entrepreneurship and the Director of the Larry and Carol Levy Entrepreneur Institute said. "It is imperative that we all do everything possible to assist in the development of African-American

entrepreneurs because they do good for others when they do well for themselves. And people with jobs are self-sufficient. And self-sufficient people create healthier communities."

Through projectNEXT, both BP Foundation and the Illinois Finance Authority (IFA) are earmarking approximately \$1 million each to invest in a venture capital fund.

Jackson remarked, "We're very proud of these partnerships. They are unique, wide-ranging and forward-looking, and serve as a model that could be emulated nationally. and are inviting others to invest in projectNEXT and help create the kind of wealth that can lift up and transform whole neighborhoods and entire communities.

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