

# Voices



A newsletter published by The Maryland Multicultural Coalition,  
State Chapter of the National Association for Multicultural Education



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February 2009

## ***From the President***

by Deborah Misiag,  
MMC/NAME President

**H**appy New Year! This is the perfect time to reflect on the past year and to set goals for 2009. It is a time to renew your commitment to Multicultural Education and to Cultural Proficiency. It is a great time to recognize your own personal accomplishments in advocating for all students and supporting culturally responsive teaching. This year, make it the year that you commit to reading a book that focuses on a topic about best practices for creating and maintaining a culturally responsive classroom. Take time to talk to a colleague about their culture. Create an atmosphere that is inclusive of all parents and community members. Encourage a colleague to join you in this journey.

Some ways that you can obtain your goals:

- ☐ Join the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) by going to [www.nameorg.org](http://www.nameorg.org). Be sure to check off that you

see "President" on page 2

## **HISTORIC PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

**O**n January 20, 2009, Barack Obama was sworn in as the 44th President of the United States, the first African American elected to that position. On the night of his victory, President-Elect Obama noted, "It's been a long time coming, but tonight, because of what we did on this day, in this election, at this defining moment, change has come to America...If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible, who still

wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time, who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer."

While the event brought a sense of hope and unity to millions of Americans, and stirred a strong emotional uplift for those who have worked in the area of civil rights and lived their lives across generations in the shadows of racial discrimination in America, the election also saw a rise of racial rhetoric

see "President" on page 2

## ***Sitting down to take a stand: Remembering Rosa Parks***

**T**he Maryland Humanities Council hosted an event at the Lexington Market in Baltimore on the December 1 anniversary of Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus in 1955, which sparked the historic Montgomery Bus Boycott resulting in civil rights laws ending discrimination in public transportation. A presentation by

Rosa Parks (actor Gwendolyn Bailey Strand) highlighted the event, as did a "tour" of a 1955 bus, with a timeline of photographs documenting the bus boycott. Salina Marriott, former state legislator and current member of Mayor Dixon's staff, commented that many people paved the way for civil rights for African Americans.

see "Parks" on page 4

## **President...**

...continued from page 1

want to affiliate with the Maryland Chapter of NAME

- ❑ Check out our website at [www.mdmc.edublog.org](http://www.mdmc.edublog.org)
- ❑ Attend the state conference hosted by the Wicomico County Public School System. The conference will be held at the Wicomico Youth and Civic Center on Saturday, April 25, 2009, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- ❑ Visit your public library, favorite book store, or [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com) to select a book of interest to you in the area of cultural proficiency. Be looking on our blog-site for recommendations in February.

In closing, this is a special year as we celebrate the election of a new President. This is truly a time of change as a nation. Happy New Year! ❑

## **Election...**

...continued from page 1

and hate incidents across the nation. For educators working on diversity and multicultural issues, this historic event opens up opportunities to discuss race and build strong inter-group relations in our schools and communities.

Readers of VOICES are encouraged to submit ideas for



**President Barack Obama takes the oath of office as Michelle Obama looks on.**

# **Choices for a Rising Generation**

*Essay by the 44th President of the United States written while the 2008 Democratic Party Presidential Nominee. The essay was used with the Presidential Election Plan, as was an essay by Senator John McCain, Republican Nominee.*

**We** are in a defining moment in our history. We're fighting two wars. Our planet is in peril. Our economy is in turmoil. And the dream that so many generations fought for feels as if it's slowly slipping away.

Now, I know that the easiest thing in the world for young people to do is nothing at all. To turn off the TV, put down the newspaper, and walk away from the stories about Iraq or Darfur or the rising levels of joblessness and hopelessness in our own communities.

engaging students and community members across Maryland in reflecting on this historic election and presidency. Ideas can be sent to Tom Owen, VOICES editor and [towen01@comcast.net](mailto:towen01@comcast.net). Suggestions are also listed on the Teaching Tolerance website at [www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org).

— Linda Shevitz, MSDE  
Educational Equity Specialist

**by Senator Barack Obama**

To go about their busy lives, wishing these problems away, expecting someone else to solve them. To remain detached and indifferent.

But I hope they don't do what is easy — because sometimes, there are moments when what's truly risky is not to act. What's truly risky is to accept things as they are instead of working for what could be.

Taking action can mean getting involved politically. We've seen huge numbers of young people taking part in our campaign. They're knocking on doors and making phone calls and helping fight to bring about real change in this country.

But action can also happen outside the political arena. I was born the year that John F. Kennedy called a generation of Americans to ask their country what they could do. And I came of age at a time when they did it. They were the Peace Corps volunteers who won a generation of goodwill toward America. They were the

See "choices" on page 7

## ***Voices***

The newsletter of the  
**MARYLAND  
MULTICULTURAL COALITION**

Deborah Misiag  
President

Tom Owen  
Editor

For questions or suggestions,  
or to submit articles,  
call 410-272-1085, or email  
[towen01@comcast.net](mailto:towen01@comcast.net)

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# The 2008 Conference in New Orleans

*By Debbie Misiag*

**T**he 2008 NAME Conference was held in New Orleans. It was wonderful to see the city welcome people from around the world. The theme of this year's conference was *Beyond Celebrating Diversity: ReActivating the Equity and Social Justice Roots of Multicultural Education*. The Big Easy conference was a time to network with others doing the valuable work of their school system, university or community organizations. Several authors attended the conference and conducted conversation with the author sessions. Authors included; Kent Koppleman, James Loewn, Jean Moule, Sandy Grande, Xae Alicia Reyes and Lewis Diuguid. The participants



**MMC attendees at the New Orleans NAME conference included (l to r) Dr. Rita Robinson, Prince George's Co. (ret.); Debbie Misiag, MMC President; Peg Kulow, Carroll County; Bonnie Brownell, Howard County (ret.); with Joyce Harris, Executive Director of NAME and former MMC President.**



**Frostburg University students with their advisors at the NAME Conference, New Orleans, 2008.**



**New Orleans landmark: St. Louis Cathedral.**

were entertained by local students throughout the week including the Alpha Phi Alpha Young Gentlemen from the Sophie B. Wright Charter School and the Xavier University Preparatory School all African American female school founded in 1915 as well as other groups.

Marylanders not only attended the conference, but they presented concurrent sessions, reviewed proposals for selection of sessions, staffed the Maryland Multicultural Coalition table, moderated the film festival sessions over a

period of three days and helped support the national organization with clerical and technical support.

Maryland presenters included, Peg Kulow and Pat Levrony from Carroll County Public Schools, LaShaun Williams, Gallaudet University and Mark Brimhall-Vargus from the University of Maryland, Davenia Lea from Columbia Union College and Judith Guerrero of Towson University, Deanna Stock from Chesapeake College and Andree Fee, and Debbie Misiag from Howard County

*See "Interludes" on page 7*



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## Lesson plan for elections

**F**ollowing is a lesson plan which, while originally designed for last November's election, can be used for other elections, both presidential and other offices.

This morning students will walk into your classroom with differing reactions to the presidential election. Some will be jubilant; some will be angry; some will be disappointed; some will be apathetic. The goal of this lesson is to help the students find common ground. We also hope that by starting the day as an advisory group, we can deal with any volatile or emotional reactions of any of our students and deal with insensitive comments at the start of the day.

1. Open the class by asking students to think about how they feel and to let students know that whatever the result, it is time for all of us to move forward together in a less divisive manner.
2. Ask the students to take out a sheet of paper and rip it in three. On one sheet they

*see "Lesson Plan" on page 7*

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## **Parks...**

*...continued from page 1*

She noted that "Crisps Attacks fell in the Boston Massacre prior to the American Revolution, so that Richard Allen could stand in opposition to racism in the Methodist Church and found the AM Church in 1794, so that Rosa Parks could sit in 1955, so that Martin Luther King, Jr., could march in the 1950's and 1960's, so that Barack Obama could run in 2008...and Barack

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## Nominations sought for The Jack Epstein Award for contributions to Multicultural Education

**T**he Maryland Multicultural Coalition/State Chapter of NAME presents the Jack Epstein Award for contributions to multicultural education each spring at its annual statewide conference. The award recognizes exemplary commitment to Education that is Multicultural in Maryland. Nominees may be educators or others who are dedicated to creating educational environments in which all people are valued equally and where all are inspired to work together in schools and communities. Outstanding examples of multicultural activities, programs or multiculturalism in an educational setting may also be nominated for recognition.

### **AWARD CRITERIA**

Nominees may include (but need no be limited to) teachers, support personnel, volunteers, counselors, administra-

tors, specialists, coordinators, directors, and community activists. Nominees may work in public or private organizations and must live or work in Maryland. Members of the MMC/NAME Executive Board may not be nominated.

Only one nominator is required for each nomination. Anyone may make a nomination, whether the nominator is a NAME member or not. All nomination forms must bear the signature of the person making the nomination along with his/her home address and day and evening phone numbers. (E-mail addresses will also be requested.)

Completed nomination forms and supporting documents are to be mailed or delivered to the Chair of the MMC/NAME Awards Committee. Nominations must be postmarked or delivered no later than March 15th of the year in which the award is to be given.

The final decision on awards to be presented will be made by the MMC/NAME Executive Board. The Executive Board may appoint a sub-committee to review nominations and make recommendations to the Board for a final decision.

The award will be in the form of a certificate from MMC/NAME, recognition at the MMC/NAME Annual Conference and in the pages of the MMC/NAME newsletter, VOICES. □

Obama ran so that our kids could fly."

The commemoration on December 1 featured the Baltimore's public buses reserving the front seat on every bus in honor of Rosa Parks. The Maryland Humanities Council is also sponsoring several events from January — February 2009 to honor Rosa Parks. More information about these events can be found at [www.mdhc.org](http://www.mdhc.org).

— Linda Shevitz, MSDE  
Educational Equity Specialist

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Nomination of \_\_\_\_\_

**Maryland Multicultural Coalition/State Chapter of NAME**  
**2009 JACK EPSTEIN AWARD**  
**FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION**

**NOMINATION FORM**

*This application and all support materials will become the property of Maryland Multicultural Coalition. **To be considered, this application must be postmarked or delivered by March 15th of the year in which the award is presented.***

Please type or print clearly.

**1. NAME OF NOMINEE/NOMINATED PROJECT:**

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Business address: \_\_\_\_\_  
street apt. #

\_\_\_\_\_ city state zip

**3. Home address (if individual):**

\_\_\_\_\_ street apt. #

\_\_\_\_\_ City state zip

4. Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE INCLUDE WITH THIS NOMINATION:**

- A letter of support explaining how the nominee meets the criteria (see attachment) for the award. (Additional letters of support may be included.)
- A brief biographical sketch of the individual or overview of the program.

Materials from projects, newspaper clippings and other support material may be submitted. Support material should relate to the reasons the nominee is being nominated. Final decision on awards to be presented will be made by the MMC/NAME Executive Board. The Executive Board may solicit additional information if it is deemed necessary. The nomination form and support materials will become the property of MMC/NAME.

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Nomination of \_\_\_\_\_

Please type or print clearly:

**1. NOMINATED BY:**

\_\_\_\_\_

name

2. Business address: \_\_\_\_\_

street apt. #

\_\_\_\_\_

city

\_\_\_\_\_

state

\_\_\_\_\_

zip

**3. Home address (if individual):**

\_\_\_\_\_

street

\_\_\_\_\_

apt. #

\_\_\_\_\_

city

\_\_\_\_\_

state

\_\_\_\_\_

zip

4. Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL TO: Debbie Misiag**  
**Administrative Office of the Dept. of Special Education**  
**Old Cedar Lane School**  
**5451 Beaverkill Rd.**  
**Columbia, MD 21044**  
[deborah\\_misiag@hcpss.org](mailto:deborah_misiag@hcpss.org)

**OR FAX TO: 410-313-7049**

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## ***Choices...***

...continued from page 2

teenagers and college students who knew it was probably safer to stay at home, but still decided to take the Freedom Rides down South. And because they did, they changed the world. And they inspired me, just out of college, to move to Chicago to help lift up neighborhoods that were devastated when the local steel plants closed.

So at this historic moment, we must ask our rising generation to serve their country as Americans always have — by working on a political campaign or joining the military, by doing community service or relief work abroad. Because that's how real change has always come — from ordinary people coming together to do extraordinary things; from all those, young and old, black, white, and brown, who were willing to do what was risky and what was hard and put their shoulders to the wheel of history, and turn it towards opportunity and equality and justice for all. ☐

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## ***Conference...***

...continued from page 7

Public School System.

Attending the sessions, keynote speakers, luncheons, school trips and cultural venues are only part of the experience one has while at the conference. There is usually a bit of time to take in the culture of the location as well and New Orleans has its share of great places to visit and to eat. Whether it was a shrimp po'boy at Bubba Gumps or the powder sugared coated beignets from Café du Monde, the city

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## ***Lesson plan...***

...continued from page 4

should list the things about their preferred political party and candidate. They may list feelings, adjectives, policy positions, etc. Have them share (without sharing the candidate/party's name) and list them on the board.

3. As a whole class, discuss the following:

- ☐ Which words on the board would you add to your list? Why?
- ☐ What qualities were all of us searching for in our president?
- ☐ What does this collection of words tell us about our needs as a nation — emotional, economic, security-related, etc.
- ☐ What common ground do we all have?

4. On another sheet, have them list the things about the presidential candidate/party they do not prefer. They may list feelings, adjectives, policy positions, etc. Have them share (without sharing the name) as a whole-class discussion. You may be surprised by the statements made by some of the students. This is your opportunity to dispel any rumors or myths regarding candidates. And be sure to address the underlying issue or prejudice associated with those myths:

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of New Orleans did not disappoint.

The next conference will be held in the Mile High city of Denver, October 28–November 1, 2009. We hope that you will join us there. ☐

- ☐ For example, you may hear that Senator Obama is a Muslim. In reacting to that, explain that he is not a Muslim, but a Christian, but more importantly, emphasize that there is nothing wrong with being a Muslim. A person's faith is her/his personal choice and no faith or lack of faith precludes anyone from being eligible to be president.

- ☐ You may also hear that Governor Palin is stupid, or women shouldn't be allowed to be vice presidential candidates. Again, address the insensitivity and sexism inherent in these comments. It may present an opportunity to share with students some understanding of the women's suffrage movement and the sacrifices women made to get the right to vote only 80 years ago.

5. In any case, this was an historic election and a move forward for this nation in many ways. One thing both candidates agree on is the need for young people to get more involved in their country and in the service to others. Attached are two essays, one from each major-party candidate. Have the students read them and discuss their reactions to the essays. On the third sheet of paper, have the students list the ways they hope to/will/do make contributions to their community. Have them share their goals and ideas.

— Pat Levroney



## **Maryland Multicultural Coalition**

### **Chapter of the National Association for Multicultural Education**



January 15, 2009

Dear Colleagues:

The National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) Spring Conference, will be hosted by the Wicomico County Public School System. The conference will be held at the Wicomico Youth and Civic Center on Saturday, April 25, 2009, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The theme of the conference is "*Success ~ Every Student Everyday*": *Eliminating the Achievement Gap*. Participants will be able to choose breakout sessions from strands including: Strategies for Eliminating the Achievement Gaps/No Child Left Behind, Diversity/Relationships and Cross-Culture Competencies, Positive School Climate, Parent/Community Involvement, Education that is Multicultural, and Developmental Assets.

This year the conference will provide information to assist schools as they implement their Bridge to Excellence Master Plans. One of the requirements for these plans is the inclusion of the components of the state's Education That is Multicultural Regulation.

Besides being an excellent professional development opportunity, the conference enables school systems to showcase their exceptional programs, staff, and accomplishments. I ask your assistance in encouraging our staff to attend the conference and even facilitate a session workshop. Our conference planning committee hopes that supervisors and other leaders from WCPS will be involved in the conference which focuses on improving achievement for all students.

Enclosed please find registration forms which you can pass on to your staff members. Also included is the proposal documentation which must be completed if you would like to present.

Thank you in advance for your support of the 2009 MMC/NAME Spring Conference.

Sincerely,

Dr. Judylynn Mitchell

Dr. Judylynn Mitchell  
MMC/NAME 2009 Conference Chair  
Wicomico County Public School System

Enclosure

**NAME is committed to an anti-discrimination policy in all of its programs and services. NAME is consciously and proactively inclusive of all areas of diversity including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, socioeconomic status, marital status, language, disability or immigration status.**



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Maryland Multicultural Coalition/NAME  
Annual Statewide Conference  
April 25, 2009

## Individual Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Occupation/Title \_\_\_\_\_

School System/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

☐

**Includes Continental Breakfast and Lunch**

Check here if you would like a vegetarian lunch

Please check one:

\_\_\_\_\_ MMC/NAME member - \$35.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-member - \$45.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Groups of 10 or more - \$35.00 per person (Please submit a form for EACH person registering.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Undergraduate student - \$25.00

\_\_\_\_\_ High School student - \$10.00

\_\_\_\_\_ New NAME membership and conference - \$115.00

Include check payable to: **Maryland Multicultural Coalition/NAME**

Mail registration form and check to: **Dr. Judylynn Mitchell, MMC/NAME Conference**  
**WCBOE – Department of Instruction**  
**101 Long Avenue, P.O. Box 1538**  
**Salisbury, MD 21802-1538**

**You must pre-register. Seats are limited. Fees are non-refundable.**  
**Checks and forms must be received by March 20, 2009.**

**Unless you hear otherwise, you are registered for the conference.**

For additional information or to request an accommodation because of disability, please call Judylynn Mitchell at 410-677-4401 or e-mail at [jmitchel@wcboe.org](mailto:jmitchel@wcboe.org).



## Maryland Multicultural Coalition (MMC)

MARYLAND STATE CHAPTER, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

c/o Debbie Misiag, President  
6201 Twenty Year Chase  
Columbia MD 21045

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## Katrina's Children

**By Debbie Misiag**

**T**he 2008 NAME Conference was a conference filled with many memorable moments. But the one that will resonate with me for quite a while is the one in which I was the moderator for one of the film festival presentations. I had spent time attending sessions, key note addresses and staffing our own MMC booth selling t-shirts. But late on Friday afternoon 80 other participants and I witnessed a very special video on the children of Katrina. This 80-minute video was filmed on location after hurricane Katrina. The video features nineteen children from different neighborhoods in New Orleans. The story is told

entirely from the perspective of these children ranging in age from six or seven years old to teenage years. The video includes sequences of artwork that at times are animated in the video depicting the sadness surrounding losing everything they had known. This video is a celebration of the resilience and spirit of these children of Katrina. The presentation was followed by a question and answer period with the director of the movie and two of the most incredible young ladies you will find anywhere. One thing that the director told the audience is that the teachers of New Orleans are still without many essential

and basic school items. We will be showing this video in different locations in the year ahead for the admission price of a teacher supply item. You can also view this video during the spring conference in Wicomico. Plan on bringing a pack of markers, white board, pencils, crayons, paper or other item if you wish to view this exceptional movie. You will also be able to provide a cash donation that will be used to purchase items or gift cards for the teachers to purchase items that they need. If you would like to learn more about this video, please visit [www.katrinaskildren.com](http://www.katrinaskildren.com).