The Links, Incorporated
Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service

THE CENTRAL AREA
Excellence ~ Elegance ~ Ethics

Central Area Best Practice Programs 2011-2013

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2013-2015

Excellence - Elegance - Ethics

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2011 - 2013

Program

Team

Dear Central Area Chapters,

During the past two years, I have had the privilege of meeting and interacting with many of you in person and by telephone. This incredible experience has been rewarding and fulfilling and I am humbled to have served as the Central Area Program Coordinator. My sincere thanks to you for your cooperation, support, commitment and most of all your spirit of sisterhood and service.

Please find in the pages that follow the "2011-2013 Best Practice Programs" for the Central Area. The scope of the programs presented represent the massive outreach chapters have exercised to implement programs that are transforming their respective communities. All of the programs included in this booklet received a cumulative score of 80 and above. The summaries submitted by these chapters have been classified as Best Practice Programs.

Special recognition and praise are extended to the members of the National Program Team for their ongoing support, counsel, guidance and leadership. It is through the collaboration with the National Program Team that the Area is able to ensure alignment, engagement, and integration of program services. Furthermore, because of the outstanding leadership of the National Program Director, Link Barbra Ruffin Boston and Co-Director, Link Delores Bolden Stamps, we were able to promote the use of the Service Deliver model incorporating effective program strategies. Through the orchestration of this model, chapters were encouraged to focus on programming from a systematic perspective.

Finally, I am indebted to the outstanding Central Area Program Team for the planning, coordinating and executing such amazingly outstanding workshops during the Area Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas. The strategies obtained during the various workshop sessions were instrumental in aiding chapters in transforming their community. I will also use this opportunity to congratulate the 2013-15 program coordinators who will serve the Central Area for the next two years. Both Link Monica Allen and Link Vicki Hill Brooks have worked on the team and are familiar with the requirements for coordinating and implementing effective programs. Their record of effective chapter operations is remarkable and will serve as a double dose of experience in helping chapters develop sustainable programs that are reflective of the communities we serve.

Thank you and I look forward to continuing my work in the Central Area as the Coordinator of the Literacy and Mathematics Initiative.
Sincerely yours,

Link Everlyn L. Williams
2011-2013 Program Coordinator

Link Alice Strong Simmons
Central Area Director

2011-2013 Central Area Program Team

Link Barbra Ruffin Boston, National Program Director

Link Delores Bolden Stamps, National Program Co-Director

Link Everlyn L. Williams, 2011 – 2013 Central Area Program Coordinator

Link Anne Lambert Johnson
Chair - The Arts

Link Karen Patricia Williams
Chair - Health & Human Services

Link Anne Williams
Chair - International Trends & Services

Link Monica Allen
Chair - National Trends & Services

Link Glenda Overstreet
Chair - Legislative Issues

Link Janice Garnett
Chair - Women Issues

Link Vicki Hill Brooks
Chair - Services To Youth

Link Helen Jones Kelley
Chair - Education Linkages

Link Shirley Marie McCarther
Chair - HBCU Community College Initiative

Not Pictured:

Link Carolyn Kornegay, Co-Chair, Health and Human Services

Link Kimbra Bell, Co-Chair, Health and Human Services

Link Ailene Booker, Co-Chair, National Trends

Link Teresa Bingman, Co-Chair, Legislative Issues

Reflections from 2011-13 Central Area Conference Program Workshops

During the 2013 Central Area Conference, a variety of workshops extended the dialog between chapters on methods to deliver and sustain transformational programs that impact the lives of women and children. The programs selected were laced with content that represent a wide range of strategies that were used to inspire participants to actions. These workshops addressed:

- The chronic health disparities that persist in the Black community
- Health-care issues including timely interventions and resources that affect and support women
- Childhood Obesity
- Education Across the Miles
- The implementation of "Classics Through the Ages"
- Anti-Bullying activities and strategies
- AARP initiatives
- Education Linkages
- The Impact of Freedom Schools in the Black communities

The Central Area program team continued working to align and promote the integration throughout the facets. The questions as outlined by the National Agenda served as a guide to the development and enactment of programs. The following three questions were the focus of the process:

- How can the Area Facet Chairs effectively provide the tools and refresher training to chapters on the Service Delivery Model that will assist the implementation and integration of best practice strategies for program development?
- How can chapter programs align with the strategic plan, program goals and concomitantly retain the focus of delivering and sustaining transformational programs?
- What qualities will be considered in defining and identifying the "Best Practices" across the five facets?"

Finally, the occasion and timing created the perfect opportunity to lend credence to the questions posed during the initial discussion and planning process. The Central Area Conference facet workshops can best be summarized in the brief overview listed below.

The Arts

The Arts, led by Link Anne Lambert Johnson, focused on ways to encourage chapters to implement the Signature Program, "Classics Through the Ages." The National Goal of the Arts is to: increase and expand art activities, elevate programs through arts integrations, and effectively create an arts renaissance within the organization. To this end, the participants became acquainted with strategies and activities that will guide chapters in the process of achieving the arts facet goals. During workshops, chapters recognized for "Best Practices" shared their experiences, expertise and successes. Link Alpha Blackburn, National Program Director for the Arts, provided strategies on ways to identify and use programs that promote "Classics Through The Ages."

Health And Human Services

Health and Human Services, the newest facet, led by Link Karen Patricia Williams, made its debut at the conference by designing sessions targeting the key areas that address the need to eliminate the health disparities in the community. Participants had access to resources that specifically addressed women and children issues. The workshop sessions and materials covered an array of topics on the importance of diet and exercise; childhood obesity, heart disease, diabetes, periodontal diseases, breast cancer awareness, etc. Other resources such as the Health Pavilion, Dental Van, riveting daily exercise classes (Zumba) and an early morning walk were incorporated into the program to demonstrate ways to maintain a healthy lifestyle. These sessions served as a training ground for chapter members, (with or without a health care background), to be able to deliver health information to the community.

The Mission of Health and Human Services is to promote and facilitate programs that support the maintenance of good health and the elimination of chronic health disparities in the Black community. Through education, health advocacy and the utilization of health resources, these disparities can be minimized.

International Trends And Services

The International Trends and Services facet, led by Link Anne Williams chose to highlight chapters that had made substantial progress integrating programs that brought awareness to the issues in Liberia. During the session, presenters who had recently traveled to Liberia shared their experiences of working with the A.M.E. University, Ann Sandell School and The School for the Blind. This excellent presentation elaborated on child protection and how Liberia has one of the highest infant mortality rates in Sub-Sahara Africa. Chapters were encouraged to address the needs of women and children in Liberia by providing financial contributions, books and Maama Kits. In addition to the donations and teacher training supports untaken by The Links who traveled to Liberia, the first Maternal Waiting Home was dedicated. Presenters also discussed the Haitians' need for assistance in building communities that will be able to ensure the survival of the family.
Participants were encouraged to establish programs to support the efforts of building communities and ensuring the survival of families, health services and supplies.

The mission of the International Trends and Services facet is to expand the global platform for programs designed and developed to service the educational, health and cultural needs of people of African descent throughout the world.

National Trends And Services

National Trends and Services led by Link Monica Allen took an approach to tackle some of the issues most commonly referred to as the societal ills facing the black community today, particularly among young people. National and invited panelists led the discussion designed to address the issues of teenage bullying. The Anti-Bullying workshop provided a forum for students to engage in a conversation about the impact of bullying on a young person's social, emotional, physical and psychological health. This workshop armed participants with tools, strategies and recommendations on ways to assist students in addressing the social media, cyber-bullying and other forms of bullying. Special insight was presented by representatives from chapters implementing the comprehensive community anti-bullying program of "Trash Talking: It's No Joke" program.

National Trends and Services also conducted a session sponsored by AARP on an innovative program that provides tools and resources to support African American women who are preparing for the aging process. The Central Area is proud to have two chapters implementing the AARP Links Academy. Chapters received information on ways they can become involved in this initiative.
The vision of National Trends and Services is to eliminate disparities by reducing barriers to services through advocacy, education, and service.

Services To Youth

The Services to Youth facet led by Link Vicki Hill Brooks showcased "Best Practice" chapters as participants were presented with information on strategies to construct an, award winning program using the Service Delivery Model. Concurrently, sessions presented by the Services to Youth's National Initiatives and Education Linkages, modeled strategies used to integrate a comprehensive approach of preparing students for a successful educational journey from pre-k through college.

Education Linkages, a Services to Youth supporting program, chaired by Link Helen Jones Kelley worked with the Freedom School staff to interact with the audience during Haramba, and story time. The participants left the session armed with materials and tips to involve young people on ways to select appropriate reading materials and how organizations such as The Links, can be instrumental in developing a community of readers. One of several National Initiatives of Services to Youth is the National HBCU Initiative. Link Shirley Marie McCarther chaired this initiative. During the session with the National Director, participants had an opportunity to learn more about the purpose and how chapter members can connect with an HBCU in their geographic area.

Services To Youth is an integrated approach to preparing youth for the 21st century workforce.
In conclusion, the information contained in this summary is designed to provide an overview of the program sessions at the 2013 Central Area Conference. We hope this has been helpful and will give you a better insight on the workings of each facet.

Winning Programs

Program Facet: The Arts

Chapter: Jackson (TN) – First Place

Program Title: The Arts

Chapter: Lake Shore (IL) – Second Place

Program Title: Arts Signature Program: Classical Ballet Forum

Chapter: Renaissance (MI) – Third Place

Program Title: Sphinx-Links Program

Program Facet: Health and Human Services

Chapter: Renaissance (MI) – First Place

Program Title: The Working On Women (WOW) Initiative for Health

Chapter: Nashville (TN) – Second Place

Program Title: The Links Health Walk: A Journey to Good Health

Chapter: Queen City (OH) – Third Place

Program Title: A Healthier You Program with Church Outreach and Link Sister In Reach

Program Facet: International Trends and Services

Chapter: Windy City (IL) – First Place

Title: Friends Across Borders

Chapter: Twin Rivers (OH) – Second Place

Program Title: Feed A Mind-Help A Nation

Chapter: Greater Wayne County – Third Place

Program Title: All Terrain-Rescue Motor Vehicle Ambulance Program-Safe Motherhood Program in Rural Hawassa, Ethiopia

Program Facet: National Trends and Services

Chapter: Shelby County (TN) – First Place

Program Title: Empowering, Enlightening and Elevating the Diaspora Through The Creation of The Institute For Women's Empowerment

Chapter: Omaha (NE) – Second Place

Program Title: Trash-Talking: It's No Joke

Chapter: The Greater Kansas City - Third Place

Program Title: HOPE – Helping Others Parent Effectively

Program Facet: Services to Youth

Chapter: Shelby County (TN) – First Place

Program Title: The Leadership Academy Shelby County Connecting the Dots, Bridging The Gap From

High School to Success

Chapter: Jackson County (MO) – Second Place

Program Title: National Cares Mentoring/Pen or Pencil Progam

Chapter: Nashville (TN) – Third Place

Program Title: Meharry Health Professions

UMBRELLA PROGRAMMING

Chapter: Central (IL) – First Place

Program Title: "A Better Mind, A Better Life"

Chapter: River City (TN) – Second Place

Program Title: License To Live: Closing The Gap, Education and Beyond

Chapter: Louisville (KY) – Third Place

Program Title: The Louisville Links Academy Young Achievers Programs

COLLABORATION AWARD

Chapter: Oakland County (MI)

Program Title: Fiscal and Physical Health

AARP AWARDS – Special Recognition

Chapters: Lakeshore (IL) and The Louisville (KY) Chapters received the AARP special recognition awards.

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2011 - 2013

Best Practice Programs

The Arts

Chapter Name:	**South Suburban Chicago (IL)**
Location:	**Illinois**
Facet:	**The Arts**
Title of Program:	**Signature Program - Classics Through the Ages**
	Arts Enrichment at the Jones Community Center

Number of Members in Chapter:	53
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	20
Number of People Served:	131

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
We collaborated with the Union Street Gallery, local organizations and individuals who provided human and fiscal resources. The Jones Community Center provided the students, the facility and the staff support. Partnerships with the Delta Sigma Chapter of the Boule' and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority have provided additional financial resources.

Program Budget: Projected Cost - $8,020: Actual Cost - $8,020

Program Summary / Impact Statement:
The South Suburban Chicago Links Chapter is committed to supporting students and their families in the Chicago Heights, IL area through its partnership with the Jones Memorial Community Center. Results of the surveys administered at the end of the previous program year indicated that students gained additional knowledge and an expressed appreciation for the programs sponsored by the Links.

The Jones Center's evaluation highlighted the positive impact of the program on students' academic indicators in comparison to those who are not enrolled at the Jones Center.

The Art program provides positive and lifelong opportunities through awareness, knowledge and participation in the visual, musical and performing arts for those who have been marginalized and underserved at a critical time in their young lives.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- The exposure of at-risk children to a wide range of visual, performing and speech arts activities and opportunities at a critical time in their development.
- The engagement of parents and community, in partnership, to support the education and aspirations of participating students.
- The collaboration of the Links with other community and service organizations to successfully fill a void in the educational and enrichment opportunities available to selected at-risk children residing in the Chicago Heights, IL community.

The Arts

Chapter Name:	**Renaissance (MI)**
Location:	**Michigan**
Facet:	**The Arts**
Title of Programs:	**Signature Program - Classics Through the Ages**
	Sphinx Links Program

Number of Members in Chapter:
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 34
Number of People Served: 650

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
The Sphinx Organization. Sphinx initiated and runs these programs and serves as mentors and support for the Renaissance chapter artists and audience members.

Program Budget: Projected Cost - $15,000: Actual Cost - $10,400

Program Summary / Impact Statement:
The Renaissance Chapter of the Links, Inc. and the Sphinx Organization have partnered to address and increases the participation of Blacks and Latinos in classical music by administering youth development initiatives in underserved communities through music education and by promoting the creation, performance and preservation of works by African Americans and Latinos. The Renaissance Chapter of the Links has committed to assist Sphinx in fulfill its goal of doubling the diversity of classical musicians and their audiences over the next 5 years.

Only 4% of African-American and Latinos have careers in U.S. orchestras. The limited supportive role models, the decimation of music program budgets, the lack of opportunities for minority students to experience classical music and the elitist stereotype of classical musicians all contribute to this staggeringly low figure.

Through the partnership, the Renaissance Links sponsored the Classical Connections program at local Detroit-area charter school, Chandler Academy, which trained teachers to teach middle school students about classical composers of color and taught students the identity, purpose and use of all the string instruments used in performing classical music.

The Renaissance Chapter also served as Sphinx Audience Ambassadors, selling 500 tickets to the Sphinx Finals to increase the audience at the Sphinx Finals, most of whom had never attended a classical concert.

The Renaissance Chapter also solicited and received a $5,000 grant from the William Pickard Foundation, which allowed the chapter to imitate its first Sphinx-Links Fellow. The Sphinx-Links Fellos is the highest ranking African-American female competitor of the Sphinx Competition. In addition to other rewards and opportunities, the fellow, Ade Williams, was chosen to perform at Carnegie Hall in New York in October 2012, along with the finalists in other age groups.

Most recently, the Renaissance Chapter identified and contracted with 13-year vocalist Jasmin Granger and 15-year old violinist Hadiya Knight, to participate in the Links, Inc.'s signature program, Classics Through the Ages (CTA). Through the CTA program, Sphinx and the Renaissance Links will partner to increase the two artists'

knowledge, appreciation, and participation in the classics through arts education, interactive demonstrations, and peer mentoring, until they graduate from high school.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- Outreach to two potential underprivileged artists through the Classics Through the Ages Program, until they graduate from high school.
- Expanding the Sphinx audience by 450 African-Americans located in the Detroit area, which is unprecedented.
- Initiating for the first time in a local charter school the Classical Connections program, by training teachers to teach middle school students about classical composers of color and the identify, use and purpose of all the string instruments used in playing classical music.

The Arts

Chapter Name: Fort Wayne (IN)
Location: Indiana
Facet: The Arts
Title of Program: **Links Support Unity**

Number of Members in Chapter:	13
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	276
Number of People Served:	650

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
The Euell A. Wilson Community Center staff helped promote UNITY concert by distributing promotional information to their students and encouraging students to attend performance.

Program Budget: Projected Cost - $620: Actual Cost - $620

Program Summary / Impact Statement:
Provide a summary of the chapter program that can be used for publication.
Include information on how the program made an impact on your community.

Links Support Unity is The Arts Facet program of the Fort Wayne (IN) Chapter. The chapter is actively involved as a collaborating partner with Unity Performing Arts Foundation (UNITY). UNITY is a multi-faceted performing arts organization that empowers and develops young people in the areas of artistry, character, and leadership. UNITY promotes soulful art forms through training, education, and entertainment in the areas of choral music, dance, drama, creative writing, instrumental music, and oratory. Most of the participants are under age eighteen.

The Fort Wayne Link Chapter has made a unique impact as the only African American service organization that has continuously offered supportive services to UNITY. Fort Wayne Links assisted the Voices of Unity Youth Choir as they prepared to compete in July 2012 at the World Choir Games hosted in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Fort Wayne Links consider it an honor to continue support by providing service to UNITY through fundraising, collaborating and assisting with UNITY programs, and offering leadership expertise which has helped hundreds of youth and their families.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- Choosing to support UPAF's efforts to compete in the World Choir Games, Cincinnati, Ohio, was a rewarding decision because the choir participated and won two gold medals for the United States! The choir achieved 2nd place world champions in Contemporary Gospel category.
- Link participation has highly contributed to the expanded community interest in the outstanding accomplishments of the Voices of Unity Youth Choir.

The Arts

Chapter Name: Dayton (OH)
Location: Ohio
Facet: The Arts
Title of Program: **Links to Literacy- The Art of Connecting**

Number of Members in Chapter:	30
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	1100
Number of People Served:	1100

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
WRCXTV40- Ross Communication is assisted with documentation of all events.
Scholastic Literacy Partners provides all books at ½ price if books are distributed to students for their personal library.
Barnes & Noble provided books at 20% discount.
Victoria Theatre Association discounted student cost, and provided workshops
K12 Art Gallery provided assistance with the recycling art project
University of Dayton- students provided assistance with special needs classrooms on the recycling art project
Dayton Public Schools assisted with transportation.
Dayton Opera Guild (Marionettes)provided the stage actors to provide a workshop for students at the school.

Program Budget: Projected Cost - $5000: Actual Cost - $4200

Program Summary / Impact Statement:
Art and music have almost disappeared from many school districts. In the Dayton Public Schools opportunities for students to participate in arts instruction and field trips that extended learning beyond the classroom are diminishing. This is due to shifting priorities and budget cuts which is impacting the students. The students must have the opportunities to learn about and experience the arts in many forms. The art is an essential part of achieving success in school, work and life. With the demands made on schools to focus on the core subjects, schools are teaching what is tested. In today's classroom, the arts aid in assisting the visual learner to learn in a different modality. The student's letters and art work share the impact of our work. For many, this is the only opportunity to travel downtown, and sit in an auditorium to view alive production. The Dayton Chapter of The Links, Incorporated understands the need to provide multiple opportunities to meet the diverse learners in the classroom to impact learning

Most outstanding qualities of this program (up to three):

- Opportunities to engage in high quality performing arts productions
- Offset expenses for students

Chapter Name: Lake Shore (IL)
Location: Chicago, Illinois
Facet: The Arts
Title: **Arts Signature – Program: Classical Ballet Focus**

Number of Members in Chapter:	53
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	30
Number of People Served:	200

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
We partnered with Calhoun Elementary School and the Better Boys Foundation(BBF) to identify young participants for the Theatrical Arts Program. We contracted with eta Creative Arts Foundation and Deeply Rooted Dance Company to design the program according to our specifications and we hired their instructors to conduct the classes.

Program Budget: Projected Cost - $12,000: Actual Cost - $11,395

Program Summary / Impact Statement:
Lake Shore Chapter of the Links Arts Facet Committee developed a Theatrical Arts Program (TAP) as a creative outlet for children ages 6 to 14 who reside on the West Side of Chicago. This is an area which has been devastated by loss of business, industry and population and therefore, children are at risk to the negative influences of poverty and crime. The TAP goals are to promote creativity, boost self-confidence, improve self-expression, and develop appreciation for the performing arts and to release talent and leadership potential. The program also fills the void of performance arts programs in Chicago public elementary schools. More than 200 children have participated in the program. We contracted with eta Creative Arts Foundation and the Deeply Rooted Dance Company to design programs and provide instructors.

In the fall of 2010, we introduced classical ballet classes and sponsored a ballet student instructor Ms. Chawnta Van, to design and conduct the classes. The children learned the classical ballet positions and their French pronunciations. This was our introduction to the Links Signature Arts Program: Classics Through the Ages. We have selected Ms. Chawnta Van as our student mentee to receive our financial and other support to continue to provide ballet class instruction to our students and to enhance her educational and career pursuits.

Impact on the Chicago Community the Theatrical Arts Program has a long range commitment to work with children ages 6 to 14 to develop their creativity and enhance their self-esteem. Through the excellent teaching of our Signature Arts mentee, Ms. Chawnta Van, we have noted improvements in discipline, attendance, performance and social skills of the children. They have gained self-confidence through artistic self-expression. Several students remarked that their participation in our program enabled them to perform better in their academic classrooms. We have noted a marked increase in parental involvement in ensuring that the children attend classes and participate in the performance showcases. As Ms. Van

continues to teach the ballet classes, the skills the students learn will enable them to live positively and become future leaders in Chicago. Through collaboration, Lake Shore Chapter has supported and enhanced the educational, arts and social service organizations that serve the West Side community.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- In October 2010 classical ballet was introduced for young children to promote self-esteem and discipline. This program marked the beginning of our participation in the Links Signature Arts Program: Classics Through the Ages in that we sponsored a classical ballet student to design and conduct ballet classes for the students in our program. In June, 2011, the students performed in concert for their families. More than 60 persons attended the concert and reception. The concert was captured on DVD.
- The Signature Arts Program provided mentoring and financial support for Ms. Chawnta Van, a student of dance at the Deeply Rooted Dance Company, an opportunity to develop her skills and support her educational and career pursuits.
- Ms. Van appeared as a solo dancer in the Deeply Rooted Dance concert in December, 2011 and 30 Lake Shore Chapter Links and friends attended. Ms. Van also appeared as a professional dancer in the "Porgy and Bess" opera company.

The Arts

Chapter Name: Jackson (Tn)
Location: **Jackson, Tennessee**
Facet: The Arts
Title: **Classics Through the Ages**

Number of Members in Chapter:	24
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	12
Number of People Served:	300

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Jackson Madison County Schools - Individual schools and teachers encouraged participation and offered input toward activities.
Rose Hill Middle School for the Arts and Jackson Central Merry High School art teacher Collaboration
Jackson Symphony Association - Student participation
Jackson Arts Council - Facility planning and judges selection, management of displaying artwork
The Jackson Sun and The West Tennessee Examiner - Publicity
St. Paul CME Church - Workshop venue
Ned McWherter Center for the Arts - Venue for culminating event
Lambuth University - Donation of tickets for "An Evening with Bill Cosby"
Premier Catering - Food donation and reception planning

Program Budget: Projected Cost - $300: Actual Cost - $1,117

Program Summary / Impact Statement:
Historically, the Jackson, Tennessee Chapter of the Links, Incorporated has been actively involved in encouraging the appreciation and support of the Arts. A conscious effort has been made to interface The Arts in programs and linkages. A part of the chapter's mission is to assist in empowering young artists by encouraging their interest and involvement in artistic activities. Our "Salute to Young Artists" is a program designed to increase cultural development, promote awareness, support and encourage appreciation of the visual and performing arts among our youth.

Rose Hill Middle School for the Arts was adopted in 2007. This school has a low socio-economic population. The school's art teacher remains excited by our presence. The students will further their awareness and appreciation of the arts by attending concerts presented by the Jackson Symphony Association and professional stage performances as supported and encouraged by the chapter. "We continue to encourage and promote the exposure of talented youth during community events. The "Salute to Young Artists" expanded its programming to include as a focus the African American male under umbrella programming. This was accomplished through the adoption of Mr. Eugene Clark's art classes at Jackson Central Merry High School. Art classes at this school encompasses a large population of African American males. The public will experience the understanding and recognition of our youth's development and that of the African American male with a focus on building self-esteem. Students receive continued recognition for noted improvement in the appreciation of the arts.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:
- The Arts program nutures and encourages young artists in both the visual and performing arts.
- It provides community awareness of the talent of young people in our community.
- It redirects the recognition and understanding of the fine arts among our youth and community.

The Arts

Chapter Name: Memphis (TN)
Facet: The Arts
Title: **ARTLINKS**

Number of Members in Chapter:	55
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	55
Number of People Served:	160

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Hatitloo Theatre, a local African-American owned and operated community theatre, with their "Hattiloo in the Park" series which presented free plays in various city parks for Memphis citizens.

Program Budget: Projected Cost - $18,000: Actual Cost - $18,000

Description of Program/Project:
ARTLINKS, an arts enrichment and appreciation program focused on music, drama, and the visual arts, provides some otherwise underserved children with an opportunity to learn more about three art forms. The instruction delivery model is to bring community resources into the Klondike Elementary School environment and work with children in grades 3 to 8. The program is designed to not only develop an appreciation for these art forms, but also to possibly identify children that have some particular skills and talents in these areas. Program facilitators and artists will help the children by promoting positive self-esteem, teamwork skills, and self-discipline. The program will also feature local artists of color who are active in the community.

The ARTLINKS program was established and implemented in 2008 as an after-school arts enrichment program at Klondike Elementary School. At the time, the school did not have an enrichment component to its after-school program. The program was structured such that students volunteered to attend music, visual arts, and/or theatre sessions on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. ARTLINKS provided the students weekly, hour long, classes on music, drama, or visual art. In the music session, children who had no prior music training or experience were taught to read music and play keyboards. In the visual arts sessions, students were taught various techniques on how to draw using charcoal, pencil, color markers, and water colors. Finally, the drama group was introduced to the theatrical world and they participated in a play. The program design also included a year-end event where the Chapter members and children presented a showcase event presenting to the parents, families, parents, school teachers, community and invited guests of the Chapter. As the Chapter's FY 2010 drew to a close, the ARTLINKS program committee members evaluated the program's outcomes, and were glad to see the program had accomplished its objectives. Even with this accomplishment, committee members wondered if ARTLINKS could create a broader impact by exposing more children to the arts. To that end, committee members decided to re-structure ARTLINKS' programmatic activities. In FY 2011, in an endeavor to involve greater numbers of people in ARTLINKS activities, "In-school field trips" were offered to Klondike students in grades 3 – 5. "In-school field trips" are art-focused activities in which the target population (120 elementary students).

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

1. Provides an opportunity for the children to express themselves artistically when otherwise there would be minimal if any organized opportunities.
2. Serves to reward for those children with behavioral problems who immerse themselves in the experiences and are able to positively focus their energies on participating in the activities.
3. The “in-school field trip” presenters work with the teachers to combine the activities and presentations with the curriculum, where applicable, to enhance the learning experience and teach the concepts in a less stringent, less stressful environment.

Health and Human Services

Chapter Name:	Central Illinois
Location:	Illinois
Facet:	Health and Human Services
Title of Program:	**Taking STEPS Together**

Number of Members in Chapter:	31
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	31
Number of People Served:	394

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:

American Cancer Society, Susan G Komen for the Cure and the Community Cancer Center

Program Budget: $27,648.00

Program Summary/Impact Statement:

Taking STEPS Together Saves Lives consists of a series of breakout sessions, information booths and mammograms to educate women on ways to live a healthier lifestyle while decreasing and/or eliminating medical issues such as breast cancer. In collaboration with OSF Hospital, Gale Keeran Center for Women, Community Cancer Center, 100 Black Men of Central Illinois, State Farm Insurance Companies, local churches and housing authorities, over 475 women during the last 4 years have experienced a workshop focused on healthier lifestyles, prevention, detection and treatment of breast cancer. Susan G. Komen for the Cure Memorial Affiliate has invested in this program for 4 years recognizing the impact the event has made in the African American community to assist in their mission to increase awareness of how to detect, treat and eventually cure breast cancer. Data from the Community Cancer Center in Bloomington indicates mammogram screenings have increased annually in McLean County since the onset of the event. State Farm Insurance collaborated with the Central Illinois Chapter in developing a breast health marketing campaign including photos and video to be used in the community. The Community Cancer Center has engaged members of the chapter to assist them and other community organizations to increase breast health awareness and specifically mammogram screenings throughout the year. We have expanded our program to the Decatur, Illinois community and had 10 attendees partake in our program in 2012.

Most Outstanding Qualities of this Program:

- Provide free mammograms to at-risk segment based on age range and socio-economic status;
- Provide mammograms to insured women who tend to be busy focusing on their work/life/family balance;
- And, bringing families together to learn techniques to improve overall health and wellness.

Health & Human Services

Chapter Name: Nashville
Location: Tennessee
Facet: Health and Human Services
Title of Program: **The Links Health Walk: A Journey to Good Health**

Number of Members in Chapter:	42
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	42
Number of People Served:	157

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity: Meharry Medical College

Program Budget: $7385

Program Summary/Impact Statement:

The Links Health Walk: A Journey to Good Health is a program of the Health and Human Services Facet that serves the Nashville Chapter of the Links, Incorporated and the community. In this program, each chapter member literally takes a journey to improved health and greater health awareness. The program spans an entire year in which health information is provided to chapter members on a monthly basis. This information is distributed each month via email and electronic means and reinforced by an oral presentation given during the chapter meeting. The health information focuses on ten educational health initiatives. Seven of these initiatives are derived from modifiable risk factors identified by the American Heart Association:

- Obesity
- Hypertension
- Cholesterol
- Sedentary Lifestyle
- Diabetes
- Healthy Diet

In addition to these educational initiatives, the program also focuses on the importance of mental health, dental health, and spiritual health in members of the community. Furthermore, the program develops and implements activities designed to engage chapter members, their families, and the greater community in pursuing a healthy lifestyle.

Most Outstanding Qualities of this Program:

- One of the outstanding qualities of the Links Health Walk is that it provides easy to understand health information that can save and change lives of chapter members and those within their sphere of influence.
- The program it is relatively inexpensive to implement. This program year the facet members distributed health materials electronic to save paper costs, and no cost was incurred by participants in the First Ladies Lunch, Grandparents Day and Meharry Health Professions Day. In addition, the cost to participate in the Susan Komen 5K was minimal. Activities planned for upcoming program years, such as mall walks, healthy picnicking in the park and line dancing cost virtually nothing for the chapter to sponsor and accomplish.
- The program provides a framework for participants to engage in fun, exciting group exercise activities that promote friendship and continued program participation.

Health & Human Services

Chapter Name: South Suburban Chicago
Location: Chicago, Ill
Facet: Health and Human Services
Title of Program: **Imagining a Healthier Future**

Number of Members in Chapter:	53
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	17
Number of People Served:	60

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity: King Elementary School in the West Harvey–Dixmoor Illinois School District

Program Budget: $3,695.00

Program Summary/Impact Statement:

The South Suburban Chicago Chapter of the Links, Incorporated has implemented a program aligned with the Links, Incorporated's National Childhood Obesity Initiative, utilizing the Can You Imagine ME? Curriculum. There are approximately 60 students currently enrolled in the third grade at King Elementary School. . The curriculum is implemented during the school day in collaboration with the Physical Education/Health instructional staff, with support from parent and community volunteers. The first phase of the program lasted for approximately seven weeks. The students have 45 minutes of classroom instruction followed by 45 minutes of physical activity in the gymnasium. Classroom instruction was augmented with supplemental activities (including interactive websites) and field trips. Theme books (healthy eating; gardening) were donated to the classroom libraries and each student received a pedometer and a water bottle. During the culminating activity, students were treated to a "healthy lunch" provided via Subway (turkey sandwiches/baked potato chips) and McDonald's (fruit & yogurt parfaits). A variety of sports/activity equipment was raffled off to students. Additionally, each student who participated in the program received a new bicycle.

Most Outstanding Qualities of this Program:

- Ability to successfully focus students on the importance of healthy eating and physical activity
- Parent education and community engagement

Health & Human Services

Chapter Name: Milwaukee
Location: Milwaukee, WI
Facet: Health and Human Services
Title of Program: **Can You Imagine Me**

Number of Members in Chapter:	34
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	10
Number of People Served:	29

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity: GE Healthcare and Metcalfe Elementary School, Milwaukee Public Schools

Program Budget: $2349.96

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
Our goal was to deliver this program as part of the health education curriculum to help educate and enhance preadolescent children and their family's healthy dietary decision-making skills and the importance of regular exercise. To achieve this goal HHS partnered with the Milwaukee Chapter Services to Youth Facet committee who had a longstanding relationship with Metcalfe Elementary School.

Most Outstanding Qualities of this Program:

- HS partnered with the Milwaukee Chapter Services to Youth Facet committee who had a longstanding relationship with Metcalfe Elementary School.
- We partnered with GE Healthcare who is currently working with the Milwaukee Public School System as part of their system-wide $21M Building Futures Program focused in increasing math and science skills in underserved populations and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
- The youth wellness programming was to help save the lives of those children and families who, are at high risk for obesity and chronic diseases. It will also serve as an integral component of our efforts to introduce interventions to their parents and extended family members.

Health & Human Services

Chapter Name: Detroit
Location: Detroit, MI
Facet: Health and Human Services
Title of Program: **Back to Basics - Project: Healthy Kids**

Number of Members in Chapter: 38
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 38
Number of People Served:

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Detroit International Academy for Young Women as the first all-girl public school

Program Budget: $1000.00

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
To The Basics - Project: Healthy Kids lead by the Health Facet is a comprehensive program targeted to 6th grade level students in a two-fold approach. First, we provided a three (3) weekly sessions conducted by medical experts from our chapter on 1) body cleanliness and overall grooming healthy habits, 2) skin care and hair care basics, 3) mental and physical health to address mental stress relief and coping skills. Long term assistance with basic grooming needs were provided with continued supplies through the guidance counselor. The second approach was an 11-week program partnered with University of Michigan Health System to encourage healthy eating habits through education, environment and measurement with five simple goals: 1. eat more fruits and vegetables, 2) make better beverage choices, 3) perform at least 150 minutes of exercise each week, 4) east less fast and fatty foods, 5) spend less time in front of a screen. The 4H Club upper class students were identified as "train-the-trainer" to convey the message as the school wellness team for the 6th grades. The 11-week program involves changes through education, a kick-off school assembly with a school-wide wellness events, hands-on food learning activities, a Healthy Habits Challenge to encourage achievement through fun competition between classes. Environmental changes involve a Farm-to-School garden development, bulletin board displays promoting wellness, healthier food service and beverage option.

Most Outstanding Qualities of this Program:

- Enhance academic performance
- Enhance student experiences to provide relationships and interaction with positive role models
- To encourage an awareness in community advocacy and a commitment to volunteerism.

Health & Human Services

Chapter Name: The Greater Kansas City
Location: Kansas City, MO
Facet: Health and Human Services
Title of Program: **Childhood Obesity Program**

Number of Members in Chapter:	53
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	21
Number of People Served:	904

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Blue Cross Blue Shield, Boys/Girls Club, KC Missouri and KS School Districts

Program Budget: $2,046.44

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
Our project combined the leading health indicators of nutrition, exercise and knowledge in an interactive way that changed attitudes and behaviors for the achievement of personal goals as well as Healthy People 2020 national objectives. These changes in maintaining a healthy weight, reducing health risks, strengthening muscles, bones and joints and improving mood and energy levels will positively impact the children and their families. The teachers as well as the children were impacted by the project. They stated they had learned many things as well as the children, would incorporate information from the presentation into ongoing teaching, and appreciated assistance from this project helping to meet their classroom goals and objectives. Parents and chaperones which included Link volunteers also stated increased knowledge about health and wellness due to their visit to the Sports Lab. They were encouraged to make changes in wellness practices within their homes to change family attitudes toward healthy lifestyles.

Most Outstanding Qualities of this Program:

- Economical way to have broad impact on a chronic health issue;
- Self sustainable given commitment of community partnerships
- Signature program since Health and Human Services was initiated within the Chapter.

Health & Human Services

Chapter Name: Jackson County
Location: Jackson County, MO
Facet: Health and Human Services
Title of Program: **Link Up for Life**

Number of Members in Chapter: 49
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 49
Number of People Served: 535

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Hickman Mills C-1 School District, Mid America Sarcoma Institute of Menorah Medical Center and Cancer Action

Program Budget: $4,500

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
The Link up for Life Program was created as a multifaceted approach to address health literacy, strategies for the maintenance of good health and the elimination of health disparities experienced by African American children, women, and families in our community. The Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City has documented research that indicates "that more health literacy leads to better overall health". Link up for Life was not only designed to improve the overall health of the community but also to improve the overall health of our chapter members and their families. This interdisciplinary initiative is consistent with the facet's vision to "promote and facilitate programs that support the maintenance of good health and the elimination of chronic disparities in communities of color through education, health advocacy and optimal utilization of health resources". We focused on health literacy and screenings, organ donor awareness, heart healthy seminars, and cancer awareness and prevention.

Most Outstanding Qualities of this Program:

- The Links Walk receives more and more participation each year by persons of all ages.
- The Organ video has received public acclaim and support.

Health & Human Services

Chapter Name: Renaissance
Location: Detroit, MI
Facet: Health and Human Services
Title of Program: **The Working on Women("WOW") Initiative for Health**

Number of Members in Chapter: 48
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 48
Number of People Served: 2440

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
National Kidney Foundation of Michigan

Program Budget: 25,000.00

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
National Health and Human Services Program of The Links, Incorporated and through collaborations with other organizations who share our mission, the primary focus of our signature Working on Women initiatives is to link organizations to the community through events, seminars and the like that will provide education, information and resources that will empower women to lead healthier lifestyles: mind, body and spirit.

In our HeartLinks program, with our partnership with the American Heart Association's My Heart. My Life program, we committed to increasing awareness of cardiac disease and its prevalence among African-American women at a community health screening education event on November 4, 2011. We had over 200 participates at this event. Our continued efforts in our programming will aim to provide education to change lifestyle behaviors to those in our community that may reduce the risk of heart disease.

With Linkages to Life, with have partnered with the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan to educate and empower women to take necessary steps to prevent cancer-related illnesses and kidney disease. We further work to inform the community about donation services and offer opportunities to sign up for the Driver's license program through the Michigan Secretary of State. African-American organ donors are significantly less than other ethnic groups. In our Walk for Health Living efforts, we participate at the rate of 90% of our chapter members in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure which event raises funds and awareness and prevention to breast cancer. We have fully instituted a walking program with our chapter members using pedometers to track our steps and to encourage daily exercise. With our Girl Stars! , within our Services to Youth facet, our mentees participate in our volunteer education program with 5-8th graders at Old Redford Academy.

Our chapter members have been trained and volunteer at schools across the metro Detroit area, teaching the highly acclaimed Healthy Kids and Kidneys program over an 8 week timeframe. This program teaches healthy lifestyle choices, regarding exercise and eating habits to children. This is an evidence based program which assists with goals, outputs and statistics for going forward with this excellent program

Most Outstanding Qualities of this Program:

- The focus on improving healthy lifestyles in children to prevent childhood obesity;
- The low-cost approach to delivery. Costs are mainly associated with training and educational materials;
- The use of lay education volunteers, including our Girl Stars! menthes, in partnership with Michigan schools.

Health & Human Services

Chapter Name: Oklahoma City
Location: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Facet: Health and Human Services
Title of Program: **6th Annual African American Women's Health Forum**

Number of Members in Chapter:	40
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	40
Number of People Served:	2247

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
INTEGRIS Health underwrote the costs.

Program Budget: $166,640.00

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
The OKC Chapter of the Links, Inc. in partnership with INTEGRIS Health Corp. has planned and executed an African American Women's Health Forum. This Forum has become an annual event for African American women in Oklahoma City and the surrounding communities. (In 2010 we extended our reach to women of all colors by conducting a second 2010 forum.) The overall goal of the African American Women's Health Forum is to foster informed decision-making for healthier lifestyle choices and practices via the delivery of culture and gender specific credible information. We want to increase women's awareness and understanding of the latest advances in preventing and treating ailments that commonly impact women of color. We also want to provide local and national healthcare professionals "of color" to educate and discuss predominant health risks faced by African American women. In 2012 we wanted to create awareness and educate African American women about the importance of bone marrow donation and joining the National Marrow Donor Program. We want to increase women's commitment to adopt healthier lifestyles through established prevention and intervention practices.

Most Outstanding Qualities of this Program:

- The Opportunities for collaborative work with many diverse groups and individuals interested in improving the well being of African American women and their families;
- The accomplishments of bringing women together to discuss, plan and commit to improving their health choices and lifestyles;
- The introduction of African American physicians to the Oklahoma City community.

Health & Human Services

Chapter Name: Queen City
Location: Ohio
Facet: Health and Human Services
Title of Program: **A Healthier You Program with Church Outreach and Link Sister In Reach**

Number of Members in Chapter:	39
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	39
Number of People Served:	325

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Women's Health Fund

Program Budget: $5165.98

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
The program umbrella theme is "A Healthier You". For the past four years, we have focused on inviting the Valley Area of Cincinnati (Lincoln Heights, Woodlawn and Lockland)/Greater Cincinnati to health screenings and knowledge clinics for an afternoon in partnership with Saks Fifth Avenue. The program impacted 100 to 200 people during the event for health screenings; and as of 2012-2013 continues to impact hundreds in the following months. We had a record participation in 2012-2013, with right under 200 participants. Additionally, The Queen City Chapter of The Links, Incorporated established and has continued the Women's Health Fund (WHF). Since it's inception, the chapter has raised and contributed over $50,000.00 to help provide support to the uninsured and medically underserved women and children in our area. The funds have supported several UC Health Women and Infants care initiatives such as the Cribs for Kids® program as part of a multi-faceted Health Promotion effort to reduce Sudden Infant Deaths. In addition, an Infant Car Seat Safety program was also created to help reduce infant mortality in our community. Specifically, through 2012, the Women's Health Fund has supported the purchase of: 118 Infant Car Seats, 90 Cribs For Kids Program (Pack N Plays) totaling approximately $10,500 in Grant funds.

Most Outstanding Qualities of this Program:

- Valley/North Central Quadrant of Hamilton County/Greater Cincinnati participants have increased their health education and understand their health key factors to increase disease prevention, improve nutrition, and drive exercise ongoing.
- Our local Church Scholarship winners are able to have a greater impact on health education in their community by sharing knowledge and being able to reach a broader audience with their partnership with Queen City Links' financial support and knowledge sharing among churches.
- The Links and Queen City Links' mission in the community is better known and recognized based on making direct partnerships with credible, trusted advocates (known, credible Black/African American local churches), and ensuring Public Relations/Branding occurs with our efforts.

Health & Human Services

Chapter Name: Youngstown
Location: Youngstown, Ohio
Facet: Health and Human Services
Title of Program: **300 Sisters' In Red Health Conference: African American Women Taking Control of Their Health**

Number of Members in Chapter: 19
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 19
Number of People Served: 400

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Anthem, Blue Shield –Blue Cross, The American Heart Association, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Youngstown State University and Community Churches

Program Budget: $ 9,000.00

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
The 300 Sisters In Red Health Program is an annual comprehensive health program that started in 2005 and was called the Sisters' in Red Program. Since then it has expanded to increase the number of participants and name change to 200 Sisters' in Red. As more women become aware of the program our revenue from sponsors increased from $4,000 to $ 8,000. It became one the largest and most successful health program in the community. More than 300 women were attending representing several ethnic backgrounds. The name was changed again in 2008 to 300 Sisters in red expanding our services, increasing the number of facilities, speakers, vendors and a change in focus to include numerous medical conditions and diseases that affect women.

Most Outstanding Qualities of this Program:

- We provide free blood testing and other health care provisions, they would not be able to afford;
- They are given information about risk factors of many conditions and how they can improve their health issues with proper diet and exercise.
- They are provided with information about assess to numerous free health clinics, where they can get vaccines for Flu, HVB, HVA, HVC Testing for HIV and other STDs

Health & Human Services

Chapter Name: **Music City (TN)**
Facet: **Health and Human Services:**
Title of Program: **Field Trip day to Colgate Oral Health Education Center @ Meharry**

Number of Members in Chapter:	32
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	25
Number of People Served:	150

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry, Department of Pediatric Dentistry. The school provided us with the Colgate Palmolive Oral Health Education Center, as well as a body of students to help facilitate the field trip. Link Ruth Ross Edmonds designed a four station activity for the second grade students. The Students at the dental school facilitated the four stations. We also partnered with two schools, Buena Vista EO Elementary School and Kirkpatrick Elementary school. They provided us with access to all of their second grade students, and supported and promoted the field trip.

Program Budget: $ 920.00

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
Tooth decay remains one of the most common diseases of childhood. Failure to treat tooth decay can lead to serious problems due to problems eating, speaking, playing and learning. Tennessee ranks especially low in oral health. The Music City Chapter of the Links, Inc. chose to address this critical issue by working to improve dental health in children, focusing on second graders, to enable them to build healthy habits for a lifetime. The Music City Chapter partnered with the Dental School at Meharry Medical College to implement the Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures program. The Bright Smiles objectives were met by teaching the proper dental health techniques, the impact of certain foods on dental health, and providing a dental screening for each child. The Bright Futures objectives were met by exposing these young students to higher education and health professions. For many students, this was the first time they experienced this environment and interacted with African American dental health providers. Now in the second year of implementation, it is clear that the program is having an impact on the students, as measured by pre- and post-test scores, identification of follow up issues in the screenings and the response from students, parents and schools. The impact will continue to grow as the chapter works expands the program to more children and finds new ways to improve the program.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- Children in an underserved area are able to meet dental students and take a tour of a historically black dental school. The schools that these second grade students attend, do not have the budget for field trips and the parents to do not have the money to pay for them. They have an opportunity to visit and experience a place that they normally would not be able to.
- The Children learn about the parts of the tooth, receive and learn about healthy snacks, meet Dr. Rabbit, (an animatronic), learn how to properly brush and floss, and receive a dental screening.
- We have been able to collect data year after year by giving the students a pre-assessment of their dental knowledge and a post assessment, given after the field trip.

International Trends and Services

Chapter Name:	Windy City (IL)
Facet:	International Trends and Services
Signature:	Education Across The Miles
Title of Program:	**Friends Across Borders**

Number of Members in Chapter:	46
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	46
Number of People Served:	450

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Partner Organizations include: 1. SOUTH AFRICA: Mofu Primary School, Maphephetheni; Inanda Health Clinic, Inanda; Soul City Institute, Johannesburg and Proctor and Gamble/South Africa, Johannesburg. 2. CHICAGO: South African Consulate/Chicago; Sister Cities Durban Committee; Comwell Inc. (Tele-Health); Midwest African National Congress (ANC) Centenary Coordinating Committee; Crerar Church; Chicago State University; Off the Street Club; South Side SUVA/Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana; Time, Inc.; University of Chicago-Urban Health Initiative. Partner organizations provide a range of in-kind resources including: facilities for meetings and exhibits, brochures and videos, pedometers and educational and youth leadership materials. Representatives of these partner organizations also served as speakers, workshop trainers, hosts for international social and education events, volunteers for cultural presentations, and facilitators/volunteers for pen pal exchanges.

Program Budget: Projected Cost - $4,605: Actual Cost - $4,950

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
The International Trends and Services Facet of the Windy City Chapter, The Links, Inc., is in its 8th year of our "Friends Across Borders" project which is a unique model of international, community based collaboration directed at African-American and South African women, children and families. The goal of the project is to promote educational awareness about a healthy lifestyle, community-well being and to foster cultural exchange within targeted neighborhoods in Chicago and South Africa. The partnership between Windy City Links and Mofu Primary School is also an exemplary model of the Links International Signature Program, Education Across the Miles. Moving beyond its initial contribution to support building construction, the collaboration between the school and the Links has had a positive, direct and long lasting impact on the lives of the school's children and the surrounding community.

Through sponsorship, incentivizing and promotion of health related activities such as nutrition workshops, cooking demonstrations, arts contests, gardening, learner health debates, physical activity challenges, sports teams and competitions, the international component of Windy City HEALS has empowered our local and South African partner constituencies to use timely information and resources to assess their personal health risks and develop appropriate responses. The impact of the program has resulted in Friends Across Borders participants making informed decisions in selecting and eating nutritional foods as well as staying active and incorporating healthy practices into their lifestyles.

Full chapter participation has been achieved in support of the international facet program. Friends Across Borders has created and sustained 14 linkages with national, local and African based organizations to provide tangible support, services, activities, and donations to impact the issues surrounding health living and international exchange. An additional outcome has been the acknowledgement of Windy City Links' actions to make the world a better place by media outlets, community recognitions and awards. With the upcoming international events scheduled through April 2013 a total of 450 individuals will have been touched in one or more ways by the Windy City Chapter's international program, Friends Across Borders.

Most Outstanding qualities of this program:

- Community Recognition: There has been wide acknowledgement of Windy City's contributions by SA community leaders, district officials, and parents involved in Links sponsored activities. In compiling Mofu's SWOT analysis for the Ed. Dept., the Mofu principal described the Links partnership as a major strength -"to let them know how big we are". Students participate in quarterly competitions proudly wearing soccer and netball uniforms embroidered with "Windy City Chapter, The Links, Inc." A large sign featuring sponsoring Links chapters is prominently displayed at the school entrance.
- Impact: With its platform of healthy eating, physical exercise and self esteem, student enrollment has increased by 30% and Friends Across Borders has touched 425 individuals in Chicago and South Africa.
- Partnerships: During 2011-2013, 14 partners have provided tangible support to impact the issues of heart disease, community well-being, gender equity among South African and African American families.

International Trends & Services

Chapter Name: Twin Rivers (OH)
Facet: International Trends and Services
Title of Program: **Feed a Mind-Help a Nation**

Number of Members in Chapter:	39
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	24
Number of People Served:	445

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
We collaborated with Lifeline Christian Mission and The Voice of children. These are two (2) organizations that have a long history of implementing programs and providing services to the residents of Haiti. Through these organizations we are able to meet the goal and objectives of our "Feed a Mind – Help a Nation" program. A missionary from the Lifeline Christian Mission transported and distributed the clothing and personal care that we collected and donated for the orphans in the Children's Home, and the new mothers. This donation allowed the children to have a new and clean outfit and for the babies to have a new layette. Through our partnership with The Voice for Children we are able to pay the annual salary of a total of ten (10) teachers. This organization also used the funds we collected from our members to purchase clothing in Haiti for the children who live in Leogane, Haiti.
Partnered with Principal Ladies Club of Eastmoor Academy HS. They collected school supplies.

Program Budget: Projected Cost - $15,000: Actual Cost - $15,000

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
Since 2008, the Twin Rivers Chapter of The Links, Incorporated has partnered with Lifeline Christine Mission and The Voice of Children to provide aid to Haiti. These partnerships have enabled us to provide safe shelter for several families, to help decrease the illiteracy rate and increase the financial stability of several Haitian families. By funding the construction of a two-room concrete home several families were able to move out of their tin home and into a safe and secure home. Providing school supplies helped to educate elementary school students that otherwise would not receive an education. This effort also makes it possible for teenagers to receive a salary for teaching the elementary school students. Earning these wages equips the teenagers with an opportunity to provide financial support to their families. Since the school supplies and food are purchased in Haiti, the merchants where these items were purchased are also receiving financial resources that allow them to provide food and shelter for their families. Partnering with Lifeline Christian Mission and The Voice of Children has positioned us to create a program that by helping over 600 children and families we have also had a positive impact on countless other children and families in Haiti. The primary community that benefited from the "Feed a Mind – Help a Nation" programs was Gran Goave and Leogane regions of Haiti.

Most Outstanding qualities of this program:

- Helping to improve the financial conditions of several families in Haiti providing 200 children with the opportunity to receive an education
- Providing 200 children with the opportunity to receive an education
- Providing mothers with new clothing for their newborn babies.

International Trends & Services

Chapter Name:	Greater Wayne County (MI)
Facet:	International Trends and Services
Title of Program:	**All Terrain rescue Motor vehicle/Ambulance Program-Safe Motherhood Program in rural Hawassa, Ethiopia**

Number of Members in Chapter:	43
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	35
Number of People Served:	200,000

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Ethiopian North American Health Professionals Association (ENAHPA), assisted in the needs assessment for the ambulance, transport of the vehicle to Ethiopia, training of the local drivers and healthcare professionals and starter medical supplies for the emergency ambulance service.

Program Budget: Projected Cost - $16,000: Actual Cost - $16,014

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
In rural Ethiopia, women face potentially difficult childbirth either at home or while traveling via foot, rickshaw or donkey to the nearest clinic or hospital. Too often, these women or their newborn children die en route or suffer from avoidable complications. They are in desperate need of reliable, safe and rapid transportation. In February 2011, a maternal child health center was opened in Hawassa, Ethiopia and was intended to treat high risk mothers; however, the need for transportation to this center remained.

An all-terrain medical rescue motor vehicle/ambulance has been purchased by the Greater Wayne County Chapter-Links Inc.(GWCC) to support the need for an effective and efficient way to transport expectant mothers to the Maternal Child Health center in Hawassa. This use of vehicle is intended to bring high-risk mothers to the center quicker than the traditional method of transportation that currently exist (donkey, bicycle, rickshaw or walking).With trained drivers and health-care professionals, the all-terrain ambulance meets the needs of the high-risk mothers in the community and in outlying areas that are difficult to reach. Women who are experiencing the complications of pregnancy and childbirth can now be somewhat assured that the timeliness and efficacy of this vehicle will not only decrease the time it takes but also the worries associated with not knowing that the impact of arduous journey will have on the delivery of the infant and the health and well-being of the mother.

Studies have shown that by using this type of vehicle, maternal-infant morbidity and mortality rates can be significantly decreased. Previous means of transportation and the inability to reach adequate health-care services in a timely manner have had disastrous results, even preventable death.

Other advantages of this type of transport service include low maintenance of the vehicle and the ease to implement training for the operation, maintenance of the vehicle and the identification of responsible personnel at the health care center for implementation and maintenance of records associated with its use. In conclusion, the utilization of this type of vehicle will have a positive sustainable impact on the health-care system, the high-risk family in local and rural communities surrounding Hawassa, Ethiopia. It is expected that maternal child health mortality resulting from lack of availability of transportation to the clinic will decrease with the use the ambulance.

Most Outstanding qualities of this program (up to three):

- The first of its kind to provide emergency medical transport service to the rural areas of Ethiopia
- The ambulance will provide emergency motor vehicle service connecting rural areas to life saving health care at the MCH Center.
- The ambulance will provide access to obtain prenatal care for the high risk expectant mothers of rural Hawassa, Ethiopia

International Trends & Services

Location: Cream City (WI)
Facet: International Trends and Services
Title of Program: **Expanding the Global Platform - Our Links to Africa (2011 to 2015)**

Number of Members in Chapter:	36
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	28
Number of People Served:	4.110

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
The Milwaukee Pan African Community Center invited us to help them tutor their members in basic skills. The directed us in our service. The Milwaukee African Women's Assn. invited us to participate in their Silent Auction. Both groups bonded with us and put us in touch with the Soppo Likoko community village elder and thus we became involved in writing the grant for their bridge. Engineers Without Borders funded the project in the amount of $12,000.

Program Budget: Projected Cost – $13,000: Actual Cost – $13.000

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
Cream City Wisconsin Chapter, The Links, Incorporated has engaged in a two prong journey to make the lives of Africans in Milwaukee and in The Cameroon better. International Tends and Services members are tutoring for the Pan African Community Association in Milwaukee helping 10 refugees obtain their GEDs by tutoring them in core areas. They are all working towards completion.

Through our affiliation with the group we were introduced by the leadership to the Soppo Likoko village in the Cameroon. Through their village elder, we were informed that they lack health care because there is no bridge over the river connecting them to healthcare thus no access. Link Felicia Thomas Lynn, International Trends and Services Chair wrote a grant to Engineers Without Borders and was successful in being awarded $12,000 for materials for the bridge. A true collaboration, the village elder committed his community to provide the labor, the grant provides supplies and in time the bridge will be built and the 4,100 villagers plus 60,640 others will for once have access to health care. Babies will live, longevity and mortality will be greatly improved, nutrition, medical help and preventative health will be accessible. We are very proud of this accomplishment which was achieved only because we opened our hearts to new collaborations and opportunities. We gained the trust of our collaborators and we are making a real difference in Milwaukee and in the Cameroon. We are being effective and directly meeting the needs of African Sisters and Brothers.

Most Outstanding qualities of this program (up to three):

- African immigrants and refugees in Milwaukee have the support of the Cream City Wisconsin Chapter, The Links, Incorporated as they improve their lives and prepare for enhanced employment and higher education
- 4,100 African villagers and 60,640 indirect beneficiaries will now have access to health care and medical assistance because of a bridge we helped to make happen
- Soppo Likoko villages will live longer, children will survive, mother's will have assistance with nutrition, preventative health and medicine.

International Trends & Services

Location: Cincinnati (OH)
Facet: International Trends and Services
Title of Program: **Volunteering to Make a Difference**

Number of Members in Chapter:	40
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	10
Number of People Served:	25

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Bond Hill Academy - Provided access to the students - some who live at home with their families while others live in a nearby orphanage. Planned and conducted a needs assessment with the school. Matthew 25: Ministries - an international humanitarian aid and disaster relief organization provided the venue for the student service activity and education for the students on how children and other families live in impoverished communities in developing countries.

Program Budget: Projected Cost - $1,000: Actual Cost - $761

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
During 2011 and 2012, the Cincinnati Chapter of Links, Incorporated International Trends facet initiated an international volunteer program with 7th and 8th graders in the Student Ambassador Program at Bond Hill Academy. Students engaged in planning to learn about international charities prior to participation in a hands-on service activity at Matthew 25: Ministries, a locally-based charitable organization that distributes clothing, nutrition, and medical and other supplies to impoverished and disaster-stricken countries around the world. Twenty five students participated in a day-long volunteer service experience that included an educational presentation about poverty around the world and packaging of baby products and other supplies for shipment to Haiti and other developing countries. A follow-up evaluation program was held where students uniformly expressed an improved understanding of the needs of impoverished citizens around the world. In 2013, the program is being expanded to include a speaker series about Latino/Hispanic cultures and a fundraising project (bake sale) to raise funds for the students to purchase animals from Heifer International. The students will again participate in a day of service and volunteering at Matthew 25: Ministries packing food, clothing, and supplies. This unique program empowers inner city youth to understand how their actions can have positive impact on a global level and perhaps influence them to be a positive influence in their own neighborhood and city.

Most Outstanding qualities of this program (up to three):

- Student participation in planning and selecting charities and activities to provide service and support the charity;
- Direct student engagement in hands-on international service to benefit families in impoverished countries.
- Increased student awareness of international charitable needs and the direct impact each can have on the lives of others in need in other parts of the world.

National Trends and Services

Chapter Name:	Shelby County
Location:	Tennessee
Facet:	National Trends and Services
Title of Program:	**Empowering, Enlightening and Elevating the Diaspora through the creation of the Institute for Women's Empowerment**

Number of Members in Chapter:	55
Number of Members who Participated in the Program:	16
Number of People Served:	214

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:

The American Heart Association (AHA) - taught one session of IWE with other Link sisters, provided materials, and exercise bands.

Dress for Success (DFS)- taught proper attire for interviewing, work, and professional environments and workforce skills classes.

Invited IWE Fellows to a personal book signing by Steve Harvey.

Minority Enterprise Development Week's Business Awards Luncheon (MED). Danver's Restaurant - provided dinner for Fellows before visiting the Hattiloo Theatre.

LeMoyne Owen College Community Development Corporation (LOCCDC)- provided first time home ownership, credit, and tax counseling, research and statistics.

Urban Strategies Memphis Hope ($2,000), City of Memphis provided access to the target population and transportation for fellows.

The University of Memphis Economic and Community Development Department - charting, tracking and evaluation.

Methodist Healthcare - provided jobs Memphis/Shelby County Health Department ($300) provided speakers and Health Seminars, gift bags, pedometers, health information on heart health, obesity, and weight loss. The RISE Foundation provided Individual Savings Plans.

$2,000 Women's Foundation of Greater Memphis - 8 South 3rd Street, Suite #110, Memphis, TN 38103

$3,000 Cummings, Inc. 4155 Quest Way, Memphis, TN 38115

$5,000 The Links Incorporated - First Place Award, National Trends and Services, 1200 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, DC 20005

$50.00 Link Teresa Jenkins, 7344 Splinter Oak Cove, Germantown, TN 38138. Stress balls

$2,500 Memphis Health Center, 360 East E.H. Crump Boulevard, Memphis, TN 38126 Glucose, blood pressure screenings for participants.

$500 Shelby County (TN) Chapter Link members and the general public for Cultural and social activities

$500 Minority Economic Development Corporation, 283 North Bellevue Blvd., Memphis, TN 38105- Activities include Dinner and Theater activities.

$2,500 Minority Economic Development Corporation and Black United Fund of TN, 3100 Walnut Grove Road, Memphis, TN 38111- Interns to work and play with children during sessions.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - The Office on Women's Health 2012 Calendar – Healthy body. Healthy mind. Healthy spirit.

Program Budget: Projected Cost – $6,000: Actual Cost – $6,000

Program Summary/Impact Statement:

The Links, Incorporated, Shelby County Chapter (SCC) utilized its 20th Anniversary to begin to model, embrace and align with the vision, mission and goals of the national organization through 2011-2012 Strategic Planning. The Links, Incorporated, which stresses strategic planning, programmatic relevance and impact, as well as development and utilization of meaningful collaborations to provides services to women of our Community. Environmental scanning was done by chapter members who are experts in the various fields of health care, education, finance, bankruptcy, minimum wage issues and social services, and are well respected by officials within the Memphis and Shelby County communities. Current research reveals and confirms that 76% of people living in poverty are women and children. The numbers are daunting in Memphis as well as throughout the United States; consequently, our conclusion finds that we must create a model that will eradicate the root of the problem and can be replicated by others. The Institute for Women's Empowerment (IWE), our chapter's vision in motion, is an intensive eight-month life skills program using an interactive curriculum experience. We are proud to have graduated 66 women in five (5) years and helped to transform their lives. Eighty Five percent of our graduates are either employed, attending school, have graduated or are entrepreneurs. With the collaborative efforts and partnering of The Women's Foundation of Greater Memphis, Urban Strategies Memphis Hope, Methodist Healthcare, First Tennessee Bank, Exchange City, The Junior Achievement Program, LeMoyne-Owen College, LeMoyne Owen College Community Development Corporation, the RISE Foundation, WREG-TV Channel 3, the American Heart Association, the Blues City Cultural Center, Cummins, Inc., Black United Fund of TN, and the Minority Enterprise Development Corporation, Inc., The Links, Incorporated, Shelby County Chapter greatly impacts the Memphis community by empowering, enabling, enlightening, elevating and assisting African American women and their children in breaking prevalent cycles of poverty. SCC yields families and a community that is financially stable, adamant about good health habits and poised to survive and thrive.

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:

- Seeing lives/families being transformed as a direct result of the leadership, vision, involvement, mentoring and sharing of black women: The Shelby County (TN) Chapter helping other black women in our community. The establishment and operation of the IWE program which affords SCC, its partners and the Memphis, TN community a new vehicle to change the results of community and supportive services data.
- The women and their children, some of whom have been dislocated from four (4) Hope VI projects, now have the opportunity to learn new skills. The interactive experiential curriculum at Biz Town and The Financial Literacy Curriculum at Junior Achievement, allowed the Fellows and their children to experience a different view of the world. The expansion of the Program to include women from the Servant Leadership Program, addresses other affected women in our target group.
- Watching the growth and development of our members making a difference for future generations.

National Trends & Services

Chapter Name: Omaha
Location: Omaha, Nebraska
Facet: National Trends and Services
Title of Program: **Trash-Talking: It's No Joke!**

Number of Members in Chapter:	14
Number of Members who participated in the Program:	12
Number of People Served:	40

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Girls, Incorporated, 2811 N. 45th Street, Omaha, NE
Omaha Public Schools, Facilities Rental, Material duplication, access to students
Applebee's Restaurant
Franklin Elementary Community Learning Center - Collective For Kids
In Kind Girls, Incorporated (meeting room for 20 girls)
JP Carter, videographer, Development of Video and Reproduction

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $1,000/ Actual Cost $1,250

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
The Omaha Chapter of The Links, Incorporated was one of eight chapters selected to pilot the new National Trends Initiative - Trash-Talking: It's No Joke! The program was designed to create awareness about bullying and to empower young people with strategies to prevent bullying. In order to sustain the impact in the community, the Chapter is working in partnership with the local school district and youth serving agencies to institutionalize this program throughout the Omaha Community.

The Omaha Chapter of The Links, Incorporated will share at least key results of the questionnaire with staff in the Omaha Public Schools after school programs. The results of the questionnaire can help stakeholders realize how prevalent bullying is and how crucial this intervention is to your school and the well-being of all students. The results should also be explored in more detail in discussion groups throughout the schools and community. Sharing selected results with parents and the community can raise awareness and understanding about how effective programs can be safeguards for all students, and it can provide a forum for presenting plans for the intervention.

This can improve parental support and participation. As with sharing information with parents and community members, the Chapter can use this program as an opportunity to talk about what the adults in the school community can do to address bullying, and for students to brainstorm and work on ways they can help be part of the solution.

The conceptual framework focused on the social and cultural factors which make bullying and cyber-bullying unique to elementary students and pre-teen girls. The information provided awareness for service providers working with young people to understand the most recent research and best practices designed to prevent and address relational aggression among pre-teen age girls. This program presented the opportunity to discuss strategies to eliminate

bullying in the Omaha community. It further created a network of professionals who now have a laser focus on this national epidemic.

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:

- There were many strengths of this pilot program. The conceptual framework focused on the social and cultural factors which make bullying and cyber-bullying unique to elementary and pre-teen girls
- The information provided awareness for service providers working with young people to understand the most recent research and best practices designed to prevent and address relational aggression among pre-teen age girls.
- This pilot program presented the opportunity to discuss strategies to eliminate bullying in the Omaha community. It further created a network of professionals who now have a laser focus on this national epidemic.

National Trends & Services

Chapter Name: The Greater Kansas City
Location: Kansas
Facet: National Trends and Services
Title of Program: **HOPE – Helping Others Parent Effectively**

Number of Members in Chapter: 53
Number of Members who participated in the Program: 36
Number of People Served: 90

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:

Southeast Community Center/Kansas City Parks and Recreation – provided the venue for the workshops
The Local Investment Commission - 3100 Broadway, #1100, KCMO
The members of the Greater Kansas City Chapter of Links, Incorporated
Caring Communities/LINC – Provided child support activities and workshops for children
Presenters and Resource Materials were provided by: Parents As Teachers, Swope Parkway Health Center, Second Wind Counseling and Consultant (LLC), UMKC School of Law, Carl Boyd and Dr. Phillip Hickman, Dietician Persely, Medical Professionals from The Greater Kansas City Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, the Kansas City Health Department, The Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, YMCA, Family Court and Drug Court.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $1,900/ Actual Cost $1,369

Program Summary/Impact Statement:

The HOPE program is making an impact in our community by providing a forum for parents to gain knowledge, resources, and skills that are designed to assist them in becoming effective and positive role models. As stated by Franklin, (2008) “poor parenting is inherited.” Those who have not had good parents as role models themselves often struggle to create nurturing environments for their own children. Good parenting is a key influence on the entire society thus giving credence to why the HOPE program will be instrumental in filling a void in the greater Kansas City community. The Greater Kansas City Chapter of the Links, Incorporated continues its commitments to providing workshops to help with parenting issues. The driving force of this program was generated as a result of data from agencies in the city that serve a population who have experienced life altering circumstances. Subsequently, the series of workshops are designed to meet the participants where they are and assist them through the planning process to become productive citizens. The Greater Kansas City Chapter fully supports the HOPE program and will continue to work with community partners to help parents handle their life changes and challenges. In closing, the children who become adults become our society. Noted physician and researcher, Karl Menninger is quoted as saying, “What is done to children, they will do to society.”

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:

- Opportunities for parents to impact their family’s future development in all aspects of physical, emotional , intellectual and social behaviors to enable them to become productive and caring members of the community.
- The overall quality of the content delivered and the passion of the presenters helped participants raise their parenting and life management skill levels.
- The opportunity for parents to become positive role models thus reducing the number of families with chaotic home lives evident by poor parenting, domestic violence and child protection concerns

Services To Youth

Chapter Name: Circle City (IN)
Location: Indiana
Facet: Services to Youth
Title of Program: **Real World for Real Girls**

Number of Members in Chapter: 37
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 12
Number of People Served: 205

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Circle City (IN) Chapter has partnered with The Center for Leadership Development of Indianapolis to participate as yearlong facilitators with their Precious Miss Program.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $3,000/ Actual Cost $1,500

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
It must be acknowledged that African-American females, just as other groups, are confronted with challenges that are unique to them based solely on culture or ethnicity. Real World for Real Girls™ explores certain character traits which may heighten or conversely hinder one's efficacy as well as seek alternatives to behavioral patterns that may, in fact, be a hindrance. Real World for Real Girls™ endeavors to give participants the knowledge and confidence they need to help them become a self sufficient decision maker, overcome obstacles, push pass failures, embrace individual talents and gifts and achieve greatness in "The Real World".

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:
- Student interaction with peers and expert facilitators
- Strengthens and maintains character of attendees
- Creates and strengthens an educational pathway to success

Services To Youth

Chapter Name: Cleveland (OH)
Location Ohio
Facet: Services To Youth
Title of Program: **Cleveland Chapter Services to Youth Report**

Number of Members in Chapter: 46
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 39
Number of People Served: 70

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity: None

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $1,700/ Actual Cost $3,000

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
The ultimate challenge of The Links Academy for Girls has been to improve the quality of life for at risk children who have been identified as having critical needs. The ultimate reward has been to improve the self-worth and confidence of the "whole child". By providing rich experiences and opportunities for academic growth and cultural awareness in a nurturing environment, we have witnessed improved self-esteem and the desire to achieve. Working in tandem with the school systems and their curriculum has proven to be invaluable in understanding the areas which we can enhance in the planning of our activities. Our charge is to plan, implement and evaluate programming in order to measure the long term impact and relevance in our community. Although our monthly workshops delve deeply into the difficult problems and situations which afflict these children, we also provide joyful occasions to expand their horizons with an array of varied cultural experiences. We offer a safe haven for open discussion, hard questions and exploration. The success of The Links Academy for Girls has been achieved through careful guidance and surefooted stability of the mentors who have so gladly given of their time.

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:

- Improved interpersonal and communication skills
- Focus on literacy and writing
- Improving the girls' cultural awareness

Services To Youth

Chapter Name: Gateway (MO)
Location St. Louis, MO
Facet: Services To Youth
Title of Program: **Encompass, Remediate, Implement Children's, Youth, Women's Seniors and Community Needs Through Services to Youth**

Number of Members in Chapter: 36
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 11
Number of People Served: 47

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Mayor's Office Of East St. Louis
Vantinus Cosmetology
Macy's Department Store
Auriel Triplett (Miss Black Missouri)
Thyme Table Restaurant

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $500/ Actual Cost $1,120

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
While the results appear minimal, Services to Youth remains committed to developing mentoring relationships with girls who are not aware of the possibilities. The members of the facet expressed a strong committed to partner with an agency that had the vision and the capacity to align with Services to Youth for the 2012-13 program year. After much thought, the new chairs for Services to Youth began by reassessing how services might look with new initiatives. Realizing that in the past that lack of sustainability of our program was due to fluid participants and time restraints of committee members. The new goals were to: (1) Engage with an agency program where outcomes could be captured and our involvement sustained. (2) Fill the gaps in services that were compatible with our National Initiatives. (3) Match service gaps with committee interest. (4) Maximize committee participation. A decision was made to explore a maternity shelter called, The Haven of Grace, as a possibility. The Haven of Grace serves women who are young, homeless and pregnant. The Haven of Grace is celebrating 25 years of existence. During this time, there has not been a predominately African American organization involved with this agency. 98.9 % of the women served, are African American. As a ministry of faith, the mission is to empower young women to overcome homelessness and to achieve stability.
The Gateway Chapter will focus on: (1) The Maternity Shelter – provides food, shelter, and basic needs for pregnant women ages 18 to 24 and their children. The Haven staff offers guidance and support as residents work towards elf-sufficiency. They also offer a rigorous educational program and one-on-one case management as the women learn to take personal control of their future. They establish personal and educational goals. (2) Transitional Apartments – Furnished apartments with continued support from staff are available to shelter graduates as a stepping stone to full independence. The young women continue to advance their personal and professional goals. Women would have to have reached their educational goals, and be gainfully employed to graduate from the shelter program. (3) The Safety Net: An Aftercare Program with Community –Based Supports for up to ten years. This program is designed to support young mothers in their process toward self-sufficiency after they leave the shelter.

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:
- Focus on relationship building
- Relevance of the topics to the participants
- Working with the participants to develop a product

Services To Youth

Chapter Name: The Greater Kansas City (MO)
Location Kansas City, MO
Facet: Services To Youth
Title of Program: **ROCKS (Reaching Out To Kids) Program**

Number of Members in Chapter: 53
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 25
Number of People Served: 1664

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Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
The Theater League awarded the four grants to the chapter.
Santa Fe Elementary School provided their school building, students and thank you letters.
Allen Village Charter School provided their school building, students, thank you letters and photos of the students at the performances.
Banneker School of Technology provided their students and thank you letters.
Symington Elementary School provided their school building, students and thank you letters.
Silver City Elementary School provided their students.
Holliday Montessori School provided students and thank you letters.
Warford Elementary School provided students and thank you letters.
Awesome Ambitions young ladies assisted with the selection of plays to attend.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $11,000/ Actual Cost $11,000

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
The Theatre ROCKS program has made an impact in our community by exposing underserved students to live theatre performances at no cost to the student or their school. As a result of grants received, our chapter pays all expenses. Each year student attendance, school participation and positive feedback from teachers and students increased.

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:

- An annual increase in students' attendance at live theatre performances
- An annual increase in funds/grants for our chapter
- Enthusiastic feedback from parents, students and administrators about this project's impact on students

Services To Youth

Chapter Name: Jackson (TN)
Location Jackson, TN
Facet: Services To Youth
Title of Program: **Beautillion/FOCUS**

Number of Members in Chapter: 23
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 21
Number of People Served: 970

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:

1) The following school systems referred participants: Jackson Madison County, Haywood County, Humboldt, Hardeman County and Fayette County.
2) St. Paul Christian Methodist Episcopal Church provided the facility for the Founder's
3) Day program and workshops.
4) Local principals, doctors, attorneys, teachers, and business representatives served as
5) Workshop presenters.
6) Tennessee legislators during the legislative sessions allowed participants to serve as pagers-Photograph shot of participants with the Governor.
7) Tigrett Middle School provided the facility for rehearsals.
8) Connecting Links provided food and transportation for the participants to visit the state capitol.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $45,842.64/ Actual Cost $25,000.00

Program Summary/Impact Statement:

An alarming and over whelming number of African-American males in our community are not displaying motivation for positive achievement. Due to this sad fact, the Jackson, Tennessee Chapter of The Links, Incorporated has developed and implemented program to facilitate activities and provide resources to help make a difference in the lives of these young Africa-American men.

These programs include:

1) Beautillion which focus on young men in grades 10-12 in Jackson and the surrounding areas.
2) The Founder's Day Programs which spotlights the achievement of selected young men in the community. This program also includes each parent being presented a medallion to be given to the achiever.
3) The scholarship component which includes individual scholarships given to the university or college of their choice, and an additional scholarship made to the United Negro College Fund (Lane College) which states that "A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Waste".

They were designed to provide educational opportunities, cultural development, and financial assistance for higher education.

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:

- The program provides the opportunity for Africa-American young men to complete a degree in post-secondary education.
- Students are exposed to career opportunities and college preparatory activities.
- The program provides a wide range of services to a diverse group of African-American high school students.

Services To Youth

Chapter Name: Jackson County (MO)
Location Kansas City, MO
Facet: Services To Youth
Title of Program: **National Cares Mentoring/Pen or Pencil Program**

Number of Members in Chapter: 49
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 35
Number of People Served: 1,451

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
We have been successful because of the collaboration with Susan Taylor who personally came to Kansas City to get this concept started, the Hickman Mills School District for their facilities and student and teacher participation; KC Metro Cares Mentoring Movement Board of Directors for facilities, incentives for students, oversight, Addie Richburg and the National Alliance of Faith and Justice for funding, curriculum, books, videos and materials, Susan Taylor and National Cares Mentoring Movement for the concept, support, publicity and guidance, Dr. Bryan Walls for his book, visit to his museum on the Underground Railroad tour, Niagara University and Dillard University for college readiness materials, Niles Home for Children and the students for facilities usage, staff and Mr. Jermaine Wilson, principal and administration of Smith-Hale College Preparatory School for their support and participation, the Greater KC Links for support and two Board of Director members.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $0/ Actual Cost $30,000

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
National Mentoring Cares/Pen or Pencil (POP)program is a mentoring program using a national curriculum developed by Addie Richburg of the National Alliance of Faith and Justice (NAFJ) which partners with National Cares Mentoring Movement and the Association of Black Psychologist. “PEN" is short for penitentiary and "PENCIL" represents education”. POP promotes the idea that students should get a good education and go to college (Pencil) versus going to the penitentiary (Pen). POP involves developing a caring relationship between mentors (teachers) and mentees (students) which encourages bonding, trust and resilience. Smith-Hale College Prep School was chosen as a POP mentoring site due to its low academic performance and population of at risk middle school students "who are more likely than their peers to drop out or get pushed out of school due to suspension, discipline and expulsion and are the most likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system"(Source Addie Richburg). Students are mentored in small groups. During the two years of implementation, students have been exposed to over 83 mentors. In the mentoring group sessions, students study the history of the 1800’s,the Civil Rights era of the 1960’s and Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) concepts so that they can compare the strong character traits of persons trying to overcome adversity during those periods with the character traits needed today to ensure positive character development and future career success. The students are mentored during the school day in advisement or Social Studies classes. They learn concepts and compete by teams in a Stock Market game that captures the information about the lessons they learn. Pen or Pencil lesson plans and activities have been developed by the National Alliance of Faith and Justice and include national standards and a variety of the new Common Core Standards. The standards addressed are in English and the Language Arts, Social Studies, Civic Education, Literacy in History, Mathematics, Science, STEM subject matter and college and career readiness. The program is being evaluated by the Association of Black Psychologists to ensure that programmatic goals and school goals are being met. As a result of their participation, students will learn to analyze information, learn that they have

options for behavior, develop social advocacy skills and be encouraged to resist crime and violence opting to go to college, not jail.

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:

The program has become very popular not only in Kansas City but throughout the NAFJ and National Cares Mentoring Movement. The implementation has been a model program used as an example to many POP programs across the nation. Locally, the program has received acclaim and has benefitted students by keeping the focus of many students on finishing school and going to college in support of the College Prep theme in which they attend. Further, the continuous cooperation of the Principal, Board of Directors and administration in the Hickman Mills School District, the National Cares Mentoring Movement and Kansa City Metro Cares Movement demonstrates their desire to continue this effort. Additionally, members of the Jackson County (MO) Links, the sponsoring agency, serve in leadership positions on the KC Metro Board. As a result of the success of this program, another school in another district has considered a possible POP implementation.

The Pen or Pencil Program is being used in twelve sites across the country and in both Kansas City, Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri by other POP affiliates. Our National Cares Mentoring Pen or Pencil Program is unique in that it has been publicized as the only school-wide program with that has had over 83 mentors and over 1,000 students in the two years of implementation. Our program has be written up in several District communications that have gone out to the entire district constituency. We have been featured in several local newspapers and in press releases. Many seminars, community and parent meetings have been held. Susan Taylor of National Cares has personally come to Kansas City twice in support of mentoring and has highlighted this program. Power point presentations have been given throughout the city and by word of mouth, parents and students have disseminated information on this program.

Services To Youth

Chapter Name: Lansing/East Lansing (MI)
Location Lansing/East Lansing (MI)
Facet: Services To Youth
Title of Program: **Young Women for Change**

Number of Members in Chapter: 30
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 20
Number of People Served: 3500

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Young Women for Change is a collaboration with the Michigan Women's Foundation (MWF). MWF created The Young Women for Change program, girls-as-grant makers, community change agents and philanthropists program. YWFC is a statewide program with chapters in five cities across the state. MWF provides the curriculum, support and funding for the program.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $16,000/ Actual Cost $11,000

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
Young Women for Change, a local group of high school girls, gave three $1,000 grants to local nonprofits with programs that benefit women and girls at its fashion show in June. The high school girls have also, over the last two years, raised and donated funds to the Lansing City Rescue Mission shelter for women and girls and to Shared Pregnancy, a local non-profit that provides services for pregnant women and girls.
YWFC is a collaboration of the Lansing/East Lansing Links Incorporated and the Michigan Women's Foundation. Young Women for Change is a signature program of the Michigan Women's Foundation. YWFC provides leadership development and philanthropic education to high school girls through an adult-led curriculum. Members learn about leadership, community service, fundraising, and grant making. Members directly impact their communities by giving time, talent and treasures and as decision-makers in the grant making process, directing much needed funds to local organizations benefitting women and girls. Members regularly meet during the school year. In addition, they visit potential grantees, perform community service activities, and come together once a year for an overnight leadership retreat on a college campus - free of charge.

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:

- This is a unique program that exposes young women to career paths in philanthropy and community service. These are career paths they might not otherwise be exposed to.
- This program is an action program that involves young women in providing community service, fundraising and the grant making process.
- This program uses items #1 and 2 above to instill in young women skills in leadership, teambuilding, decision making, entrepreneurship, interviewing skills, life skills that will valuable in their future success. leadership, the young women get practice

Services To Youth

Chapter Name: Nashville (TN)
Location Nashville, TN
Facet: Services To Youth
Title of Program: **Meharry Health Professions**

Number of Members in Chapter: 42
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 15
Number of People Served: 30

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
The Nashville Chapter collaborated with faculty and staff members of Meharry Medical College to arrange campus meeting spaces, food for the day, and recruit students/health care professionals. Facet members reached out to medical professionals in the Nashville community to identify participants and to structure informational presentations. Facet members also interfaced with organizations that serve minority student populations like Jack and Jill, The Boys and Girls Club, local schools and community churches to recruit participants.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $6,500/ Actual Cost $6,500

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
The Annual Meharry Health Professions Day is a program designed to carry out the mission of the Services to Youth facet to provide exposure to STEM careers and implement programs that eliminate health disparities in communities of color through education and optimal utilization of health resources. In this program, students in the 7th-12th grades and early college students are involved in an entire day devoted to educating, challenging, and encouraging young people to pursue careers in the medical field. Participants engage in hands-on learning activities related to medicine, dentistry, and scientific research. The chapter operates this program in conjunction with Meharry Medical College. The program accomplishes its goals by serving as a primary pipeline for increasing the number of minorities entering the medical profession. Furthermore, the program provides exposure to African American role models in the health sciences that participants could not receive anywhere else except Meharry Medical College.

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:

- The most outstanding quality of this program is the personal hands-on exposure participants receive as part of their introduction to the medical profession. By allowing the students to actually participate in operating medical equipment and viewing medical procedures, the program provides a window to a profession that these participants would not have otherwise.
- The exposure to exposure to health care professionals and Meharry Medical College students. The participants had many opportunities to ask questions and interact with people involved in multiple areas of health science.
- The exposure to Meharry Medical College, a local HBCU that remains a leader in the education of minority health care professional within the United States.

Services To Youth

Chapter Name: Shelby County (TN)
Location Memphis, TN
Facet: Services To Youth
Title of Program: **The Leadership Academy, Shelby County Chapter: Connecting the Dots....Bridging the Gap from High School to Success**

Number of Members in Chapter: 55
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 28
Number of People Served: 315

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Federal Express Corporation Legal Department - Mentoring
Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity/Delta Boule and Memphis Morehouse Alumni - Mentoring;
Kipps Diamond Academy - Faculty (2 years);
Baptist Memorial Healthcare Corporation - Health Screenings(1 year)
Hyde Foundation - underwriting Professional Basketball Game (3 years);
LeMoyne Owen College - hosting entire Father/Son event(3 years),
St. John's Mission - Volunteerism and Community Donation
Midsouth Foodbank - Community Service
American Red Cross - Emergency Preparedness
Memphis Challenge - Health Screenings
Urban Strategies - (3 years)
Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis (3 years).

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $12,000/ Actual Cost $11,376

Program Summary/Impact Statement:
Provide a summary of the chapter program that can be used for publication. Include information on how the program made an impact on your community. The African American Male has been a focus of the Shelby County (TN) Chapter for over twenty-five (25) years. In 2008 we tactically assessed what programming would have a substantial impact on the success of our young African American men. While education is important to success, it is not the only component that leads to one's accomplishments. These tangible/intangible skills that are central to achievement also may not be taught in the home. Further, the media's portrayal of the African American male is frequently pessimistic and in the absence of a strong positive male role model, these images can have adverse consequences on the development of our young males. Our objective is to expose our Fellows to positive African American role models to combat these repeated negative images of them in the media, in our community and this country. Our target group includes young men from diverse parental units and socio-economic groups to mirror our current society. The blending of these young men via dialog and exposure provides learning and bonding experiences for all. The Leadership Academy of Shelby County (TN) Chapter has provided many life-changing experiences: 2011: 1. First airplane trip for several of the fellows; 2. First trip to Washington, D.C. and if they had been to DC, first time visiting museums and tour sites 3; First time leaving Memphis, TN; 4. First time being exposed to a large number of professional African American men; 5.

First time attending a symphony performance; 6. First time attending an NBA game at FedEx forum in a corporate suite/skybox.

In 2012, one major highlight was the Civil Rights trip taken over the Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend. The fellows were touched in so many ways. 1. None had been to the “birthplace” of the Civil Rights movement 2. All were able to see and understand what our forefathers endured in order for them to enjoy freedom 3. All were able to see the role that young children played in moving the cause forward 4. All were challenged to make sure that they leave a mark on this earth. Taking the 2012-2013 Sr Fellows on the Civil Rights trip, we believe, will also inspire them to leave a mark on this earth. Armed with information, resources, experiences, and skills they are empowered and are prepared to “connect the dots” towards success.

Most Outstanding Qualities of the Program:

- Each Leadership Academy Fellow was given a durable leather 3 ring binder containing written materials that cover each topic in the Life Skills workshop. These materials can be retained and kept for years as valuable reference on the subject matter throughout their young adult life.
- The Leadership Academy Fellows were able to work together, shoulder to shoulder, on community service initiatives while being taught an hands on lesson on their duty and obligation to give back to their communities and the world throughout their lives.
- For the first time, some of the Fellows were able to engage and interact on personal level with professional African American men who are successful in their own careers and who provide a living example of what could happen when lessons taught to them are fully applied in their lives.

Best Practice – Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: **Toledo (OH)**
Facet: **Umbrella**
Title of Program: **Toledo Chapter Links, Inc. Learning Academy**

Number of Members in Chapter:	37
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	25
Number of People Served:	250

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
The YWCA of Greater Toledo - The YWCA provides the trained facilitators for the Girls Circle Program.
Samuel M. Jones at Gunckel Park Elementary School (Jones) - Allows the program to be implemented after school at the school with their students.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $16,100/ Actual Cost $16,100

Program Summary / Impact Statement:
The successful pilot last fiscal year lead the Toledo Chapter Links, Inc to provide even stronger financial commitment/investment to support the dynamic Girls Circle Program. Working closely with the trained facilitators provided through the YWCA of Greater Toledo and the principal and staff at Jones School, girls are provided a safe space to discuss "risky behaviors, build on protective factors, and improve relationships among girls." Supplemented by activities provided by the Links Chapter and its facets, the Arts, Services to Youth, National Trends, International Trends and Health and Human Services, the Girls Circle program is enhanced and reinforced by community leaders and role models.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- It provides opportunities for girls in need of support
- The issues that the Girls Circle Program examines are fundamental to the development of strong, self-assured young women, including body image and goals for healthy living, exploring goals and dreams, getting along with others, feeling good about myself, mother-daughter relationships, dating, violence and abusive relationships, being included-being left out, body wisdom, etc.
- The collaboration among the Links, the Jones of the Toledo Public Schools and the YWCA of Greater Toledo.

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: **Twin Rivers (OH)**
Facet: **Umbrella**
Title of Program: **Closing the Achievement Gap by Expanding Opportunities**

Number of Members in Chapter:	39
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	39
Number of People Served:	535

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:

Partnered with three high schools in Columbus City Schools to identify students to participate in the Boot Camp. A school was provided as the site for the Boot camp. We partnered with the Upward Bound Program of Ohio Wesleyan to identify instructors that they use for their ACT preparation program. They also provided books for the sessions at a reduced cost. We partnered with CCS Family/Parent Engagement office for the Parent Summit to identify workshops, to get the word out, and to identify speakers. We partnered with Head Start to include their parents in the Parent Summit and to create opportunities for families to learn about and practice healthy eating habits. We partnered with the Columbus Foundation who administers the scholarship for the Chapter. We partnered with F.A.C.E.,who supports Urban Strings, a youth group who play string instruments. And finally, we partnered with Nationwide Children's Hospital who provided the health screenings.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $25,250/ Actual Cost $20,975

Program Summary / Impact Statement:

The chapter has successfully established partnerships with schools, community agencies, college and universities, as well as parents and educators. After two years, data from the ACT project indicates that on average, students improve their composite score 3 points and many improved their reading and science scores by as much as 5 points. The power and significance of the Parent Summit project is that parents receive information that they can utilize immediately to make positive and impacting change in their children's lives which will help in Closing the Achievement Gap. Our last Parent Summit had over 100 participants in attendance and our expectation is to increase attendance this year by 50%. These activities have allowed us to have a bigger footprint in the community and we are reaching more parents and students in a variety of ways to deal with many of the gaps that lead to the Achievement Gap. We continue to explore ways of collaborating and building partnerships with the community to have a significant impact on the lives of students and their parents.

Most Outstanding Qualities of this program:

- Provide students with a low cost ($25.00) or free ACT preparation program to increase their scores on the ACT; a high stakes test that could be the difference between receiving or not receiving admission and/or financial assistance to college;
- Provide parents in Central Ohio workshops and information that will empower them to be positive advocates for their child's education;
- Addressing the achievement gap of our students in multiple ways.

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: **Archway (MO)**
Location: **Missouri**
Facet: **Umbrella**
Title of Program: **The Women's Safe House Project**

Number of Members in Chapter: 42
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 40
Number of People Served: 290

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:

1. Neiman Marcus and the Archway Chapter collaborated on a "Prequel to the Sequel" fashion show designed to recognize TWSH and generate interest in the Archway's upcoming fashion show and fundraiser. Neiman Marcus provided invitations for 150 guests, drinks and appetizers, raffled items, models and mini make-up stations.
2. Susan G. Komen partnered with Archway for the National Breast Cancer Awareness programs in Oct 2011 and 2012 by providing a speaker and gifts for the residents.
3. St. Louis Chapter of National Association of Black Accountants partnered with Archway by providing a speaker and gifts for the residents regarding Finance 101 in Jan 2013.
   State Farm agents and a local bank partnered with Archway by providing presenters and handouts for the residents regarding Finance 101 in Feb 2012.
4. St. Louis Art Museum awarded Archway a $7,000 two-year grant for a mural at TWSH and workshops for pre-teens and adolescents to express themselves through art.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $11,300/ Actual Cost $11,300

Program Summary / Impact Statement:
The Archway Chapter of The Links, Incorporated is a dynamic organization of diverse, talented, and professional women empowered by friendship and sisterhood which ignites the flame leading to a legacy of world class service that makes a positive difference in the lives of individuals residing in the St. Louis Metropolitan and global communities. The Archway Chapter has adopted The Women's Safe House, a full-service temporary shelter for women and their children who are victims of domestic violence. TWSH is the first and largest domestic violence shelter in St. Louis, Missouri since 1977. TWSH is unique because it accepts male children up to the age of 18. Since 1999, TWSH has provided over 150,000 bed nights for nearly 6,000 abused women and children. All programs are provided at no cost, so that a woman can save for her family's future. Annually, TWSH serves over 500 abused women and their children. The Archway's program addresses the overall lack of empowerment, education, survival skills and economic awareness of these women and children. Archway Chapter has presented approximately 18 programs at TWSH over the past three year period resulting in increased empowerment, economic stability and resources of TWSH's residents.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- The Archway Chapter is assisting an organization, TWSH, that is completely dependent upon funding sources.
- The Archway Chapter is contributing on a daily bases to women and children who have many times felt completely alone, isolated and without resources.
- The Archway Chapter members are more aware of the plight of abused women and children and as a result make contributions at TWSH and other segments of society impacted by abuse.

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: **Kalamazoo (MI)**
Facet: **Umbrella**
Title of Program: **Linking Youth with Community to Enhance Youth Development.**

Number of Members in Chapter:	22
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	22
Number of People Served:	250

Names of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Ann Kellogg Elementary School in Battle Creek, Michigan
Edison Environmental Science Academy
Principals and Staff at each school encouraged the students to participate in our program.
Southwest Michigan Affiliate of Susan G Komen for the Cure
Collaboration Effort to sponsor the "Pink Tie Ball"
Southwest Michigan American Heart Association
Black Arts and Cultural Center
provided speakers for Youth Leadership Academy

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $15,000/ Actual Cost $21,886

Program Summary / Impact Statement:
The Kalamazoo Chapter draws its membership primarily from two communities; Battle Creek and Kalamazoo, Michigan. The communities have very difficult cultures; each offering rich opportunities for preparing students for bright futures. Low income families may not always see available opportunities for take advantage of available opportunities got enhancing the learning of their children. The Kalamazoo Chapter partners work with two k-6 grade schools; Edison Environmental Science Academy in Kalamazoo and Ann J Kellogg Elementary in Battle Creek to stimulate and encourage these families to engage more with the schools and other community events to increase exposure to learning opportunities and to gain skills that will make students more competitively better for selection into available programs such as the Kalamazoo Promise and the Battle Creek Merit Scholars. The Kalamazoo Promise has gained National attention as a model that guarantees support to students who graduate from Kalamazoo Public Schools who are admitted to state supported Michigan colleges.

Most outstanding qualities of this program (up to three):

- The ability to provide participants with opportunities to be actively engaged in programs outside of their norm.
- Presenting our youth to individuals who would not otherwise encourage or support their participation.
- Increase awareness of our youth to community and global issues that impact their lives.

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: **Dayton (OH)**
Facet: **Umbrella – Signature: Links To Success**
Title of Program: **Links to Literacy-Ready to Ready, Ready to Learn**

Number of Members in Chapter:	42
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	42
Number of People Served:	1038

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
WRCXTV40- Ross Communication assisted with documentation of events through still photography and creating a documentary.
Learning through Art- Books Alive! for Kids curriculum provided the foundation for our umbrella programming.
Scholastic Literacy Partners- provided books at ½ price that are distributed to students for their personal library.
Wogaman and Louise Troy Elementary Schools entire staff assisted in the planning and implementation of event/activities.
Dayton Contemporary Dance Company- to present this book through narration and dance to enhance the picnic theme.
De'Lish- provided reception (dinner and a box)
Barnes and Noble- discounted books for our students and delivered the books to the school at no cost.
Victoria Theatre Association- provided the mask-making workshop with the ZOOT Company.
Vectern -awarded grant funding
Leadership Dayton- [Class of 2013] provide grade level appropriate books for every child to expand their personal library.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $15,100/ Actual Cost $13,583

Program Summary / Impact Statement:
Dayton Chapter of The Links mission to positively impact life in our global community through service and friendship is a living document. In our strategic planning, each facet under the guidance of the programming chair and the president was charged with (1) determining what tools to enhance the umbrella project, Links to Literacy, (2) determine the focus of their signature project. To that end, we would minimize the what and focus on the doing to accomplishing our goals.

The Links to Literacy: Project Ready to Read, Ready to Learn was launched at Wogaman PK-8 School four years ago in an effort to improve the academic achievement and success of the students who attend Wogaman. Wogaman is one of 22 elementary schools in the Dayton Public School System. The school is located in an area in the Dayton community that has been significantly impacted by the economic crisis. Wogaman has an enrollment of 474 students of which 96.5% are African American.100% of the student population has been identified as economically disadvantaged. Of the 22 schools, Wogaman ranks last in its effort to improve student achievement. Within the four years of the program the scores improve by 34 % on the Reading Ohio Achievement Assessment. The third grade scores for 2010-2011 were 15% above the district average.

With a sense of urgency, summer planning sessions were held with the purpose of outlining the month-to-month programming activities to align with the school's calendar to have programs in place by August. It was

determined based on the school's data that the team would provide tools to support the school in improving reading in grades kindergarten through grade three. The chapter selected Books Alive! for Kids® curriculum as the means of increasing literacy during the 2008-2013.

We believe that we have been successful because (1) the curriculum selected is a tool the teachers can align to what is currently taught in the classroom; (2) professional development and all of the resources available to every teacher ; (4) funding supports this initiative and; (5) the evaluation is reviewed for their input and is valued. As a chapter, it's an awesome experience to see the children excited and engaged in reading. Through class instruction, cultural activities, infusion of the arts and live performances, the students experienced and embrace reading as fun and exciting.

The chapter is fortunate to have community partners who ask, "What we can do to assist you?"

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- The most outstanding quality is the ability to engage 100 % of the membership in the Umbrella Project. our members can articulate their individual's role in meeting the needs of the K-3 population. We average approximate 18 members per session with the remaining members participating in the preparation and planning of the project. While most members schedule will not allow them the opportunity to attend the session, there are multiple opportunities to engage members in the work.
- Teachers are excited about the work and the students know who we are and look forward to our visits. We have 100% of teachers participating in the program. In three years, the school has made 34% gains in the area of reading for grade 3 on the state reading assessment. (2008 (34%); 2009 (58%) and 2010 (69%)
- Each facet has a two year plan to creatively provide the tools to support the teachers.

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name:	**North Shore (IL)**
Facet:	**Umbrella**
Title of Program:	**Healthy Communities Now: Holistic Approach to Wellness Focus on Childhood Obesity, Literacy and Culture through the Mind, the Body and the Spirit in an at risk African American Community in Evanston, Illinois**

Number of Members in Chapter:	45
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program:	45
Number of People Served:	385

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:

Family Focus: Family Focus provide the building complete with utilities and comfort accommodations, in which our program operates saving us rental and insurance costs of $12,000.00 per program year. Evanston 150 Evanston Community Foundation and Evanston 150 Planning Committee: promotional partners providing publicity for our activities through the Evanston and North Shore communities. The value of promotional services is $2,000.00. McGaw YMCA provides trainers and a physical fitness curriculum for our program. The trainers meet with the children encouraging journaling by the children of their physical activity and daily eating choices. Evanston/Northwestern Hospital, St. Francis Hospital: Nutritionist meets weekly with the parents of our children for healthy choice cooking classes. The value of the nutritionist's services is $100.00 a week and is valued at$3,400.00 per program year. Colgate-Palmolive: Provides a staffed dental van to promote oral healthcare valued at $2,500.00 per year.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $25,000/ Actual Cost $25,578

Program Summary / Impact Statement

We have adopted a holistic approach to addressing the pressing needs of our community in the areas of health and wellness, literacy and cultural involvement in the arts through music and fashion. We are working to develop the body, the mind and the spirit. Though this umbrella project we are incorporating the talents and time of all of our chapter members including the wisdom and expertise alumni as we address the needs of our target community, African Americans in Evanston Illinois. Our health and wellness program directly target childhood obesity through exciting and energizing Zumba classes, fun and family oriented nutrition events and it indirectly impacts obesity in the family though parent participation in these activities. We are helping our target community develop healthy lifestyles which nourish and build the body. Text talk builds literacy reading skills and vocabulary acquisition though entertaining, interactive, reading sessions. We are helping our target community acquire skills which feed the mind. However, we can not just attend to the needs of the body and the mind; we use the Arts through the classical and classical pop music of the Sinfonietta to nurture the soul. We support emerging local African American fashion designers as they attempt to break the invisible fashion color barrier by introducing them to new markets with the financial means and cosmopolitan sophistication to appreciate their talents. Mind, body and spirit, renewal, and revitalization means new and better lifestyles for African American children, their families, entrepreneurs and the community at large.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- Therefore our efforts will directly affect for the better the health, wellness and longevity of children and their families in the Evanston community. We have 205 children participants but when we count the participating family members we are affecting approximately 350 community members and we expect that number to grow exponentially.
- We are addressing issues of literacy through Text Talk (for the mind) and cultural exposure to classical and pop music through the Sinfonietta (for the spirit) and our arts facet poster competitions.
- Addressing the problem of under representation in the fashion industry of African Americans became the guiding focus of our fundraiser, the MadHatter, and an opportunity for the Arts facet to showcase local Chicago fashion designers with emerging but viable businesses on the verge of production but in need of exposure to the community at large. To this end we would fulfill the national Arts facet goal of supporting emerging designers.

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: **Renaissance (MI)**
Facet: **Umbrella – National Mentoring Initiative**
Title of Program: **Renaissance Links Paying It Forward with Girl Stars!**

Number of Members in Chapter: 48
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 48
Number of People Served: 300

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
We collaborated with the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan, Wayne County Community College ("WCCC") and Comerica Bank to assist with our goal objectives for the Girl Stars! We further reached out and had conversation with several non-profit leaders in the community.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $4,500/ Actual Cost $4,500

Program Summary / Impact Statement
Beginning in 2011, Girl Stars! was designed to empower Old Redford Academy High School 10th grade girls and equip them with the information, tools and vision to become successful, well-rounded women with the innate desire and ability to achieve their dreams. Fully aligned with the Renaissance Links Chapter's Working on Women(""WOW") program and working with all of our facets in developing and implementing this program for these young ladies, our Girl Stars! are guided towards positive lifestyle choices with concrete, progressive and relevant skills, exposure and lessons.

The Girl Stars! program pillars are: Health and Wellness, Etiquette, Education, Life Planning, Positive Relations, Leadership/Character Building and Career Exploration. Now in the completion of its second year, Girl Stars! will be further expanded to reach additional students at Old Redford Academy. We will continue to reach out to these girls , as to many students with our school career day for the entire school as well as the assistance from our partnership with Wayne County Community College in advancing the entire student body with seminars and educational opportunities.

The program has had a very positive impact on the young ladies who participate in the program as well as their families. We have received testimonials from both the girls and their family members indicating the true difference in the direction that their girls have have made with positive lifestyle changes and goals. Once bullied or having a lack of self-esteem, through the continued efforts of our chapter members with the programming that we have developed, our Girl Stars! will be equipped to succeed in any environment that they choose for the direction of their respective careers.

Additionally, our chapter members participate in the school's annual Career Fair each May , which further increases the chapter's impact on the entire school community.

Most outstanding qualities of this program (up to three):

- The development of high self-esteem for the Girl Stars!
- The development of positive health and wellness choices for the Girl Stars!
- Educational Support for the Girl Stars! By way of test preparation, school projects, college preparation and career development.

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: **Topeka (KS)**
Facet: **Umbrella**
Title of Program: **Links to a Bright Beginning**

Number of Members in Chapter: 16
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 15
Number of People Served: 185

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Living The Dream, Inc during its Martin Luther King Week long activities had the donation for people attending the Drum line concert in 2012 donata baby item or two dollars, 1700 people attended and we collected over 240 items. 2) The Stormont Vail-Healthcare Stork Cradle Program worked with us to educate and support mothers of newborn babies. 3) State of Kansas Blue Ribbon Infant Mortality Panel & the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Office of Minority Health provided funding to help implement the preconception peer "train the trainer" programs to be held September 17-18, 2012. 4) Kansas African American Affairs Commission serves as the lead organization in the coordination of efforts of reaching the African-American community to impact the infant mortality rate in this population and to bring the collaborating organizations to the table for discussion and implementation. 5) USD 501 School Districtw will provide groups of high school students to receive the information.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $5,500/ Actual Cost $5,500

Program Summary / Impact Statement
According to statistics there is a high infant mortality rate in Kansas, particularly affecting the black community. Overall, Kansas ranks 29th in the nation for infant mortality, and in 2007 the state ranked 17 percent higher than the average rate in the U.S. Of note, infant Mortality in Shawnee County is one of the the highest in the state of Kansas as reported by the Kansas State Health Department and the March of Dimes (9 per 1000 lives births in Shawnee County.18.9% of the lives births in Shawnee County are born to mothers without a high school diploma. African American babies are 3 times more unlikely to reach one-year of age than babies of other ethnicities according to Per the Black Health Care Coalition of Kansas City.

The 2012 Healthy Shawnee County Community Health Needs Assessement revealed that the Infant Mortality rate of African American babies in Shawnee County is still of grave concern. Of the 14 community health issues identified, Infant Mortality was identified as being influenced by access to care and education. The Topeka Chapter of Links initiated the "50 Bright Beginnings Program" in 2008 in partnership with Stormont-Vail Healthcare's Stork Cradle Program to provide infant healthcare information and resources and basic supplies for infant care. In 2012 the chapter decided to respond proactively and expand the program to reach a broader base of young teens and mothers to educate them about preconception healthy living styles and habits.

The objective of the program is to decrease infant mortality by 25% (6/1000)in Shawnee/Topeka community as a result of executing the following tactics: 1) Increase high school students awareness of preconception health with the goal of educating 30 teens by 2012, 60 by 2013 and 90 by 2014. 2) Provide prenatal and infant health awareness and health supplies for pregnant mothers in Shawnee County with the goal to educate and mentor10 young mothers in collaboration with Stork Cradle program by 2012. 3) Establish mentorship program by soliciting appropriate peer-to-peer mentors consisting of local college students and high school students and young mothers. 4) Broaden awareness of HIV-AIDs as a key risk factor for infant mortality by engaging local

college students, high school students and young mothers in the Black Doll project for a South African orphanage girls 5) Increase community awareness and solicit community support of "Links to a Bright Beginning through annual Living the Dream Drumline concert.

Most outstanding qualities of this program (up to three):

- Ability to provide needed items to young mothers and fathers so that they are able to focus on the healthy care of their newborns.
- The collaboration of organizations that are involved from the community in the outreach process locally and internationally.
- The engagement of college aged Preconception Peer Educators and their willingness to to provide education to young mothers and teens regarding healthy living habits and the value of preconception healthy living habits and styles.

Chapter Name: **Central Illinois (IL)**
Facet: **Umbrella**
Program Title: **A Better Mind, A Better Life**

Number of Members in Chapter: 48
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 48
Number of People Served: 300

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
Midwest Food Bank, 1703 Veterans Parkway, Bloomington, IL - provides snacks and beverages on a monthly basis
Bloomington Housing Authority, 115 E Washington, Bloomington, IL - for provision of a weekly meeting location, an administrator for computer room and overall assistance as needed with the program at the Woodhill Towers
Craig Gilmore, State Farm Insurance Agent, 200 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago IL 60604

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $7,000/ Actual Cost $6,250

Program Summary / Impact Statement
Central Illinois Chapter, The Links, Incorporated sponsors "The Best of All" 4-H Club. The organization's program "A Better Mind, A Better Life" has been introduced to 25 children ages 5 – 17 in the Bloomington Housing Authority. The program goal of increasing self-esteem by helping children to learn to positively express feelings, demonstrate cultural knowledge and improve academic, physical and nutritional education can be seen through a variety of experiences. They will also learn about STEM careers and careers in education as recommended by President Barack Obama. The children are sharing information on balanced nutrition in their households. Spirit, intelligence, and creativity were brought to light. The ultimate and long range impact on the community is when these children break the cycle of dependence and become contributing members of society. The children are also supported in their efforts by the City of Bloomington, Bloomington Housing Authority and the McLean County Extension of University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana (4H).

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- Participants are exposed to a different environment, new information, career options, and introduced to techniques to assure that they are successful and competent students
- Participants are exposed to an environment where their intelligence is nurtured and publicly recognized in which their self-esteem journey has traveled from low valleys to high mountains and will continue to soar in a safe environment
- Participants are offered an opportunity to dare to be different by becoming leaders in their peer group and community and become sound decision makers as they continue to grow and develop life skills

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: River City (TN)
Facet: Umbrella
Program Title: **License to Live: Closing the Gap, Education and Beyond**

Number of Members in Chapter: 55
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 55
Number of People Served: 2916

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
River City Chapter partnered with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Omega Psi Phi, Alpha Phi Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, Urban League Young Professionals, National Council of Negro Women, Memphis City Schools, Shelby County Election Committee, Operation Push, Lemoyne Owen, Metropolitan Baptist Church, Bluff City Medical Society and Masonic Order and NAACP

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $83,060.97/ Actual Cost $79,968.61

Program Summary / Impact Statement
Over the past 20 years River City (TN) Chapter continues to strive to excel each year and has made service a reality by impacting hundreds of lives through providing transformational programs. From 2004 to November 2012, over 25,000 volunteer service hours have been logged equaling approximately $1,000.000. Our Strategic Plan for 2012-2015 clearly articulates the vision to deliver and sustain transformational programs. “The River City Chapter will provide outstanding service through its circle of friendship that is a model of excellence and innovation. The Chapter will be recognized throughout Memphis as a collective voice of talented and professional women committed to improving the quality of life in the community.” River City Chapter serves the community by providing programs that impact the quality of life of African Americans and persons of African descent. The Links, Incorporated defines programs as a comprehensive approach to solving a problem or addressing issues in our community. River City Chapter used the Umbrella Programming approach where all facets worked together on one program to direct more resources to that one program; thereby making a greater impact.

All program activities were implemented in partnership with professional groups; community based agencies, government and businesses and had measurable outcomes. The program theme was License to Live: Closing the Gap, Education and Beyond. The goal was to promote education for African American youth and their families through community partnerships and program strategies that strengthened families, promoted achievement, improved health, enhanced the arts, and fostered post-secondary learning by 2013. This goal was achieved by providing students, and parents: with career information, college preparatory resources and exposure to artistic careers. Health screenings were administered and students received healthy snacks. Students also participated in Voter ID/registration drives.

Long term goals include: 1) By end of 2013 to fully operationalize the Service Delivery Model as a tool for planning, implementing and evaluating programs for their long term impact and relevance on communities, 2) By the end of 2014 develop additional target focus areas within health/well-being and education for community relevant program development and 3) support program sustainability through engagement of community partners and collaborators in the design, implementation and delivery of all programs.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- The program enabled the Chapter to double the number of partnerships through effective planning, leveraging resources among the facets and having more time to devote to a single program activity. The Service Delivery model allowed members to outline specific steps for program success.
- The Umbrella Approach encouraged members to participate in and support all activities; not just those assigned to their respective facet. The membership also had accumulated a record number of service hours. This approach resulted in the use of more national resources to implement our objectives and track progress over time.
- The Chapter served more clients than in previous years and work resulted in measurable outcomes. Members began to see the value of fundraising efforts and marketing our programs to the public. Program alignment with the strategic plan made it easy to direct key activities and eliminates those that did not address our main theme and goal.

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: **Louisville (KY)**
Facet: **Umbrella**
Program Title: **The Louisville Links Academy Young Achievers Program**

Number of Members in Chapter: 28
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 28
Number of People Served: 67

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
First Gethsemane Baptist Church - partner in the Health Fair – held at the church, provided vendors and hostesses.
Metro Councilman David James – Health Fair Partner/college tour bus sponsor
Metro Parks – Provided staff to support the implementation of program activities
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Pi Lambda Omega Chapter – co-sponsor Health Symposium

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $10,000/ Actual Cost $10,000

Program Summary / Impact Statement
"Headed for Campus" was the theme for The Louisville (KY) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated Young Achievers Student Showcase and Awards Program held at the University Club on the campus of the University of Louisville. Students from the Olmsted South Academy and the Park Hill Community have participated in this college readiness program which focuses on and encourages academic achievement and fosters a college going culture. This year the program has had an emphasis on the S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) subjects and has exposed students to local professionals in various areas serving as session speakers and mentors. Students were able to participate in hands on activities and experience field trips to the Science Museum and other local points of interest, as well as college tours to Kentucky State University, the University of Louisville and Simmons College of Kentucky.

The local chapter has joined with Greater Louisville, Inc., (who initiated the study discovering the low rate of college graduates in Louisville and made the challenge) and other businesses and organizations to improve and increase the number of students in Louisville, Kentucky receiving a college degree. Through the 55K/15K Initiative, the city has set a goal of 55, 000 persons earning a degree by the year 2020 and 15, 000 of those being African- Americans.

The Louisville (KY) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated has made a commitment to the 55K/15K Initiative and signed a "Count Me In" Pledge to continue our work of encouraging and supporting the students in The Louisville Links Academy Young Achievers Program to set goals that will lead to high academic achievement in middle and high school and ultimately college enrollment.

During the Student Showcase Awards Program, Students were presented awards by well know local professionals who model success. Mayor Greg Fischer, Mayor of Louisville and Dr. Hargens, Jefferson County Public Schools Superintendent, Dr. Donna Hargens, issued a challenge to the students to continue to achieve and strive to reach all of their goals. Awards were given in the categories of STEM Achievement, Service Projects, Technology, Best Essay, Best Designed Pamphlet, Best Book Report, and Perfect Attendance. A trip to N.A.S.A. in Birmingham, Alabama will be awarded at the end of the school year to a deserving student. Our students are "Headed for Campus" as they plan intentionally for this future endeavor.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- The Program has allowed the chapter an opportunity to showcase the gifted and talented youth of our program to our community at public events, while giving students more exposure to our community and what it has to offer on many levels – the arts, colleges and universities, job opportunities, etc.
- The Chapter has joined with Greater Louisville, Inc. businesses and community groups to create and support a college going culture among persons in the Louisville Community. By coming together, we will have an opportunity make a greater impact on the growth of our community and its residents.
- Through STEM program awareness, the chapter has the potential to redirect African American students and be proactive in preparing students to be prepared for the future job market.

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: **Oakland County (MI)**
Facet: **Umbrella**
Program Title: **Fiscal and Physical Health**

Number of Members in Chapter: 43
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 43
Number of People Served: 4.410

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:
First Gethsemane Baptist Church - partner in the Health Fair – held at the church, provided vendors and hostesses.
Metro Councilman David James – Health Fair Partner/college tour bus sponsor
Metro Parks – Provided staff to support the implementation of program activities
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Pi Lambda Omega Chapter – co-sponsor Health Symposium

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $102,895/ Actual Cost $ 81,976

Program Summary / Impact Statement
FAITH-BASED: Welcome Missionary Baptist Church, Pontiac, MI

HEALTHCARE / PHYSICAL FITNESS: McLaren Oakland Hospital; Visiting Nurses of Oakland County; Deer Lake Racquet Club of Clarkson, MI

BUSINESS: Heritage Works African Dance Studio; Virgil Carr Cultural Center; Cobb's Funeral Home – Pontiac, General Motors Design Organization

NON-PROFIT: Heifer International; Mid-American Model UN; Kids Against Hunger - Great Lakes Metro Coalition; Green PATH; United Way of Oakland County; Grace Centers of Hope

EDUCATION: Administrators, staff, students and parents of the Pontiac Middle and High School, and Pontiac International Tech Academy; Wayne State University; the Pan African Christian Exchange in Nyahururu, Kenya; St. Mary's Preparatory School in Montego Bay, Jamaica

GOVERNMENT: Office of Congressman Gary Peters; the Pontiac Organizing for America Office

CIVIC: Friends of the Pontiac Public Library; Greater Pontiac Community Coalition Committee of 50

Program Summary / Impact Statement
For more than 30 years, the Oakland County (MI) Chapter of The Links, Inc. has served the city of Pontiac, a community with the greatest need in Oakland County Michigan - and perhaps the State. All members of the chapter participate enthusiastically in hands-on programming activities.
Our 3-year 'Fiscal and Physical Health' umbrella program has made a significant impact on the community. Since May 2011, an estimated 4,410 residents have been reached by our diverse curricula and targeted initiatives. We address critical needs with practical solutions, while teaching skills that can be maintained long-term. We provide expert information to help improve finances and reduce health risks particularly that related to obesity and heart disease more prevalent in African Americans.

Our impact is apparent in the formal and informal feedback received, improved finances and fitness reported, and enlightened decision-making demonstrated.

The partnerships we have cultivated and expanded reflect the additional support we have garnered and influence we have achieved. Our reach into the Pontiac community has been extended, increasing chapter visibility and generating greater interest. One insightful example of a mutually beneficial partnership is an opportunity we pursued last summer with First Book, Inc., a non-profit organization that provides new books to at-risk children. Since August 2012, we have distributed nearly 2,850 free books at various activities around Pontiac. A substantial number also was given to one of our major supporters, Welcome Missionary Baptist Church, for their after-school tutoring program, and some were distributed to children who attended the Pontiac Christmas Parade and annual chapter Festival of Giving holiday celebration.

Another unique program our chapter supported this past year is designed to encourage and support deserving Pontiac students with college aspirations. This effort is in done in conjunction with the McLaren Foundation's 'Riley Scholars In-Class Tutoring Program', the Pontiac High School Administration and the Michigan Promise Zone. One of our longer term goals is to funnel select middle school students we mentor into this program to assist with college prep and access.

The Oakland County Chapter will continue to fine-tune umbrella programming for the Pontiac community. We plan to provide even more focused, life-enhancing, sustainable initiatives with the help of our ever-expanding network of partners.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- The Oakland County Chapter's umbrella program meets critical needs and significantly impacts major issues facing the underserved in our primary area of service, Pontiac, MI, by providing key fiscal and physical health skills for successful living.
- It expands our reach and targets broader, more diverse segments within Pontiac's predominately African American and Hispanic community -- students and seniors; the unemployed, workers and business owners; individuals and families; males and females.
- Our umbrella program also attracts and retains notable partners to provide ongoing support, information and resources to our target audiences.

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: Windy City (IL)
Facet: Umbrella
Title Name: **Windy City Area Program Report 2011 - 2013 - WC H.E.A.L.S**

Number of Members in Chapter: 46
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 46
Number of People Served: 1,404

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:

Windy City Chapter, The Links, Incorporated, Mayo Clinic and Chicago State University co-hosted a free health symposium, "Links to Your Heart,". 300+ Participants received complimentary health screenings and health related exhibits from the American Heart Association, Women Heart, Gift of Hope and AARP.

Students from the Colleges of Health Sciences and Pharmacy, as well as nurses from Metro South Medical Center conducted health screenings.

Windy City collaborated with Girl Scouts of Chicago and Northwest Indiana, YMCA, and the Lighthouse Youth Center, by offering activities to children and adults that focused on heart healthy foods, exercise and fitness, and nutrition. Chicago Public Library, Chicago State University, Lighthouse Youth Center, Bronzeville Children's Museum, Levy Senior Center, Akarama Foundation, Inc. and Crerar Presbyterian Church, provided space for our activities.

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $30,050/ Actual Cost $9,761

Program Summary / Impact Statement

Health disparities between African Americans and Whites are narrowing throughout the country. The reverse is true in Chicago. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for African Americans in Chicago. Through education and increased awareness, Windy City H.E.A.L.S. has served as a community-based prevention program that addresses heart disease in African American women and children on the South side of Chicago and African youth and adults.

Objectives/Outcomes:

1. Utilize the umbrella programming service model to deliver tailored information. In the first seven years of its operation 2006-2013, The Windy City H.E.A.L.S. message reached over 11,000 African American and South African women and children. The Chapter sponsored 23 activities during the 2011-2013 program years.
2. Partnerships were formed with globally recognized organizations in order to enhance the program's impact by reaching a larger audience and expanding the program by partnering with additional organizations, churches and corporations. WC chapter has created over 25 partners to provide tangible support, services, activities, and donations to impact the issues surrounding heart disease.
3. Windy City has worked with at least two nationally aligned partners to increase awareness amongst the AA community targeting areas that complement WC H.E.A.L.S. Currently, the WC chapter has formed partnerships with Heart Links, AARP, Linkages to Life and Wallet Wise.
4. To date, at least 95% of the participants at each activity improved their knowledge on a health related subject based on the scores on their pre and post assessments completed on the day of the activity. Over the course of 16 months (by April 2013), we have increased the knowledge of at least 1,400 African American men, women and children on the South Side of Chicago through addressing obesity, hypertension, lack of physical activities, poor nutrition and stress reduction.
5. In recognition of the similarity of need for healthy lifestyle choices for others of African descent, to extend Windy City H.E.A.L.S health awareness programming onto the international stage with a target of 287 men, women and children through a collaboration with the Mofu School, South Africa and the community it serves.

Through International Trends facet (IT), the chapter extended the Windy City H.E.A.L.S. heart-healthy message to children and teachers at the Mofu School near Durban, South Africa as well.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- The program has reached thousands of African American and African women and children over the years (2006 - 2013 program years).
- The program aligns with National initiatives and utilizes over 25 partnerships in order to provide tangible support, i.e. services, activities, donations and other resources, to impact the issue of heart disease on the south side of Chicago and in South Africa.
- The program is designed to be easily replicated and able to provide 95% of our participants the opportunity improve their knowledge on a health related subject based on the scores on their pre and post assessments completed on the day of every activity.

Best Practice - Umbrella Program

Chapter Name: **Great Lakes (MI)**
Facet: **Umbrella**
Program Title: **GLC Links - Heart Links: A Vision for Michigan**

Number of Members in Chapter: 40
Number of Members Who Participated in the Program: 40
Number of People Served: 883

Name of Collaborators/Partners and Sponsorship Activity:

Wayne County Pharmacists Association - Partnered with group to host a community health fair including free health screenings

National Minority Organ Tissue Transplant Education Program (MOTTEP) - Provided education advocacy and information at 2011 and 2012 Project Walking Fete

Boys Hope Girls Hope - Participated in Enrichment Seminars for teen scholars in the residential program

Program Budget: Projected Cost: $231,000/ Actual Cost $231,000

Program Summary / Impact Statement

The Great Lakes Chapter of the Links Inc. is a community partner implementing A Vision for Michigan: A Strategic Plan for Heart Disease and Stroke - 2009-2012 with the Michigan Department of Community Health and the Michigan Cardiovascular Alliance. To this end we partnered with the Detroit Medical Center to promote the DMC Sophie Womack Women's Health Empowerment Series. Dr. Womack was a well known and respected physician who died before her time. Her community advocacy on prevention domestic violence and infant mortality had a great impact on many lives. Through this partnership over 500 women were served and approximately 100 have been linked to primary care and specialty medical services. The format for the series has included a Red Dress Luncheon for heart health, a walk a thon, cooking demonstration, fitness work out with trainers and presentation from DMC physicians and other health experts teaching seminars designed to help women live health lives. Additionally health fairs, health observances, walkathons and community activities have been hosted in conjunction with partnerships with National Minority Organ Tissue Transplant Education Program (MOTTEP), the Wayne County Pharmacists Association, DMC Children's Hospital of Michigan and Boys Hope Girls Hope. Over 800 people have been served in the community and 100 women have been linked to primary care and specialty medical services.

Most outstanding qualities of this program:

- Increased access to primary and specialty health care for African American Women
- Ongoing partnership with a major medical institution in Detroit Michigan
- Working with youth

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