

THE NIA ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2009

Volume 1, Issue 6

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW GRADUATES

Congratulations to the women of the 5th Nia Cohort who graduated August 15th at the ASHA Conference –

Bobbi Brown
Jean M. Brown
Deneisha Davis
Lorraine Davis
Frances Haynes
Lori Morton
Lynne Scott

Due to typographical errors in the July newsletter, we also want to give proper recognition to the men of the 2nd Cohort who graduated this past spring –

Carl Davis
Emmanuel Burton
Ryan Grant
Kenneth Knight
Andre Legister

NIA IS ON THE MOVE!!

As we are now in our 6th month of the Nia Alliance Newsletter, we thought this would be as good a time as any to highlight the events, trainings and ministering that Nia has done in the community. Nia has not only been a blessing to others, but we have been blessed as well! As you'll see on the following pages, we've summarized the various events, but have also provided you with links to obtain more information about these initiatives but more importantly, so you see the value in participating in these trainings and initiatives. With the exception of the DC trip, the trainings and events have all been free of charge and many of the trainings have also provided participants with certificates of completion which can be added to your resume.

Please note that we highlights these events not to boast our capabilities, but to let you know that Nia is in demand and we need people resources to help meet the needs of the community. In all that we do, we continue to give thanks and praises to our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ! He has truly blessed this organization and we urge you to participate.

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NIA IS ON THE MOVE! – CONTINUED

The year began planning to provide services by engaging churches in our communities for **The Black Church Week of Prayer**. When all was said and done, the Nia Alliance engaged over 30 churches from New Haven, Bridgeport and Norwalk and educated them about HIV and encouraged testing. The response was tremendous and very moving!

The Black Church Week of Prayer is an initiative of The Balm in Gilead. Click below to learn more about this initiative:

<http://www.balmingilead.org/programs/weekofprayer2008/>

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In April Nia hosted the Reverend Penny Willis of the Black Church Initiative where she provided a workshop on the topic of **Sexuality and the Church**. This workshop was well attended by 30 multi-generational people who were both pastor and lay persons. This was a frank discussion about what some of the obstacles are within the black church in seriously addressing the issue of sexuality from the pulpit. We discussed issues around teen and unwed pregnancy, homosexuality, HIV/AIDS and why the Black church has great difficulty in discussing this topic from the pulpit and how it presents obstacles in meeting the needs of the community it serves.

The Black Church Initiative is an initiative of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. Click here to learn more about this initiative:

<http://www.rcrc.org/programs/breakingthesilence.cfm>

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In May Nia hosted the **Women of Color Leadership Institute (WOCLI)** training. 35 women from Nia, various statewide organizations and churches participated in this informative three-day workshop. Three women from Washington DC provided an in-depth overview of how to become better advocates for our selves, our community and the issues that concern us. The overarching themes were Remember Healthcare Reform and Self-Care. As we know, the health disparities between African American women and our white counterparts is ever increasing. To close this gap, we must get involved and become better advocates for ourselves. The squeaky wheel gets the funds in this case!

While it would be difficult to compile three full days of learning into a newsletter, we would like to empower Nia with the following instructions:

1. Start with yourself when it comes to advocacy
2. Understand what your state's healthcare issues and initiatives are.
3. Data – learn where it comes from and how to use it.
4. Find out who your local, state and national representatives are.
5. Understand how the judicial system works and how laws are passed.
6. Don't just come to the table with a suggestion or an idea, come with a plan and a solution.
7. Devise an effective, concise communication strategy
8. Remember that grass root organizations have fueled many of the resolutions and bills that have passed on a local level.
9. Collaborate, collaborate, collaborate! Get organized and get people behind you – there is strength in numbers!

Women of Color Leadership Institute is an initiative of The National Minority AIDS Council. Click here to learn more about this initiative:

<http://www.nmac.org/index/wocli>

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NIA IS ON THE MOVE! – CONTINUED

In June Nia had its first **Sexually Transmitted Disease** training. Facilitated by a CT Department of Public Health associate, Nia had close to 30 people attend this value training about STDs. As we learn from the CDC, the number of STD cases are on the rise...and unfortunately, African Americans have the highest rate of infection. The trainer provided an overview of the most common types of STDs: Gonorrhea, Syphilis, Genital Herpes, Warts and Chancrids. There is a clear relationship to HIV and STDs – The presence of a STD increases your risk of contracting HIV ~ HIV infected persons may be at more risk for getting an STD.

For more information about STDs, please see the link on our resource page.

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July was a busy month for us! Members of the Nia Alliance went to Washington DC where they facilitated an HIV workshop at the 2009 Annual National Black Religious Summit on Sexuality. More than 600 African American clergy, religious leaders and young people gathered to seek new and effective ways to address high rates of teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS and increased poverty in their communities. The HIV workshop was spirit lead and was standing room only!!

The Black Church Initiative is an initiative of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. Click here to learn more about this initiative: <http://www.rcrc.org/programs/breakingthesilence.cfm>

July was also the month were we graduated our 2<sup>nd</sup> Men's Nia cohort. The graduation ceremony took place at Christ Centered A.R.M.E.D Ministries, where Johnny Garner, Sr. is the Senior Pastor. Pastor Garner had also attended the Sexuality summit in DC and was full of praise and worship for the work that God is doing through Nia. Pastor Garner offered his self and his congregation to partner with Nia, but more importantly, with the men of Nia! The members of Nia were moved by the outpouring of support and encouragement.

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This concludes our recap of the first half of the year and we hope that we've inspired you to join us for the events that Nia has planned for the remainder of the year. We also hope that you take the opportunity to research the initiatives that have occurred to date.

NIA ON THE WEB



Nia is now on Facebook! You can become a fan at: **Nia Alliance for People of Color**

Online you'll find updates, inspirations, pictures and other relevant information regarding the Alliance. As always, if you would like to submit content, please send your content to: nkingwood@gbapp.org

We look forward to seeing you on Facebook!

2ND ANNUAL NIA ALLIANCE RETREAT

To All the Wonderful Women in the Nia Alliance

You are invited to attend an all day retreat on August 29th 9-5 at St. Joseph's Manor (the lodge) in Trumbull. We will serve a continental breakfast, a full hot lunch, inspiring and empowering discussion entitled ***Journey to the Well.***

Please come out and join us as we reflect and as we are daughters of change!! Should you need transportation, please let me know. I am looking forward to seeing you at the 2nd annual Nia Alliance Retreat.

Please note that I will be on travel next week however, I will have access to my emails. After this week I will not be in the office before the retreat.

Nancy

NIA EVENTS—WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!**National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month Event**

Theme: "There is a Plan!"

Date: Saturday, September 12th

Time: 12pm-4pm

Location: Victory Temple Church

Apostle Cheryl Jones, Senior Pastor

2335 E Main Street, Bridgeport, CT 06610

Save the Date for World AIDS Day

Date: Sunday, November 29th

All other details to be announced

UPCOMING
EVENTS:

ENGAGE!
EDUCATE!
ENJOY!

NIA LIVE!!**NIA IS LIVE ON THE RADIO!!**

Listen in to our own Rev. Peggy Hill and her guests as they educate the listening audience of WDJZ about various topics related to HIV/AIDS.

Tune in every Thursday at 4pm on 1530AM!

RESOURCES: WHERE TO FIND IT...

Need HIV, STD or Static info and not sure where to find it?
See the list of resources below.

FREE LOCAL HIV TESTING LOCATIONS**GBAPP**

258 Mill Hill Ave, Bridgeport, CT 06604
Hours: Mon-Fri., 9am-5pm
203- 384-3629

Optimus Health Care Incorporated

982 East Main St, Bridgeport, CT 06608
Hours: Mon-Fri., 9am-5pm
203-696-0085

Southwest Community Health Center

361 Bird St, Bridgeport, CT 06605
Hours: Mon-Fri., 8:30am-5pm
203-330-6000

Yale-New Haven Hospital (AIDS Care Program)

20 York St, New Haven, CT 06651
Hours: Mon., 9am-3pm; Tues., Thurs., Fri., 8:30am-5pm; Wed., 9:30am-3pm
203-688-3298

Norwalk Health Department

137 East Ave, Norwalk, CT 06851
Hours: Mon-Fri., 9am-5pm

HIV/AIDS Statistics

Local Stats: CT Department of Public Health (DPH)

<http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3135&q=393048>

National Stats: Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/index.htm>

Other Related Information:

STD info: Fact Sheets, Statistics, STD testing Sites, etc:

<http://www.cdc.gov/std/default.htm>

Substance Abuse: Treatment facilities, etc:

<http://www.ct.gov/DMHAS/site/default.asp>

2-1-1: referral services for the entire state of CT:

<http://www.infoline.org/>

REFERRAL
SOURCES:

TESTING
SITES,
STATISTICS,
ETC...

ABOUT NIA

THE NIA ALLIANCE

GBAPP
158 Mill Hill Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06610
Tel: 203-366-8255
www.gbapp.org

The Nia Alliance is an initiative with the goal to develop a volunteer network of men and women who are dedicated to learn and respond to the growing HIV epidemic among women of color. In August 2006, GBAPP, Inc. developed a training curriculum to prepare men and women of color to serve as volunteer liaisons to faith-based organization. Objectives for participants completing the training workshop are 1) enhance knowledge of HIV, 2) develop skills to engage peers in HIV-related services, and 3) serve as community liaisons and planning body for HIV awareness events sponsored by GBAPP.

NIA ALLIANCE MISSION STATEMENT

The Nia Alliance is a community mobilization initiative dedicated to equip people of African descent to respond effectively and emphatically to the AIDS epidemic in communities of color through education, advocacy, direct services and community collaboration. Grounded in faith, we recognize the importance of being inclusive and nonjudgmental as we empower our participants to make informed decisions.

For more information regarding the Nia Alliance and GBAPP, please contact:

**Contact: Nancy Kingwood, MSHS, CHIVC
Director of HIV and Faith Based Services
GREATER BRIDGEPORT ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY PROGRAM
158 Mill Hill Avenue
Bridgeport, CT. 06610
Tel: (203) 384-3629
Fax: (203) 367-9588
Email: nkingwood@gbapp.org**

Would you like to contribute to the newsletter?

Please email your article, event, pictures, etc to nkingwood@gbapp.org by the 10th of each month.

NEXT MONTH'S EDITION

Next month we will provide an overview from Nancy regarding Nia's direction and upcoming initiatives.

