the ART of GIVING
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Add a little more to life

Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc. is proud to be a company with heart. Since the company’s inception, Build-A-Bear Workshop has donated more than $44 million in funds and in-kind programs as a result of hundreds of thousands of individual donations.

Today, Build-A-Bear and the Build-A-Bear Foundation are dedicated to adding a little more heart to life by celebrating the childlike spirit in everyone and providing opportunities for children of all ages to better their communities and share their heart with others.
For over a decade, Langston Patterson, Santa Claus, has been the main attraction at Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza during Christmastime. Photo credit: Jay L. Clendenin / Los Angeles Times

On The Cover:
Santa Claus sharing his gift, The Art of Giving, with members of the Central Area of the Links, Incorporated.
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
My Sisters,

During this time of the year, more than ever our thoughts are towards gift giving. Gift giving is an art and receiving a special gift that touches your heart, spirit and ultimately becomes a sweet memory is indeed priceless.

We as an Area have received a gift of that magnitude. Link Inetta Rogers, a member of the River City (TN) and on the Nominating Committee, sent a special card that I am honored to share the words with you, members of the Central Area. The foundation for the gift is from long ago, yet it remains relevant and has been incorporated into our guiding theme this biennium - The Power of One.

The card reads:

**COLLABORATE:** For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so…we though many, form one body and each member belongs to all the others. (Romans 12:4)

**CREATE:** We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. (Romans 12:6-8)

We kicked off the holiday season by giving thanks. The giving of gifts is now our focus and deciding upon the perfect gift to give often causes some undue angst.

The answer about what to give is quite simple. Filled with finesse like fine art - It’s our love, friendship, service and presence. These are the true gifts, which are given from the heart.

To you, your family, friends and communities, I wish you the blessings of the season and the hope for health, happiness and harmony in the New Year.

Sisterly,

Glenda Masingale Manson
Link Glenda M2
19th Central Area Director
Facebook: glenda.m.manson
Email: glendamanson1@icloud.com

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**The Art of Giving**

Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. (1 Corinthians 12:12,14)

**CREATE:** We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. (Romans 12:6-8)

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Glenda Masingale Manson
Link Glenda M2
19th Central Area Director
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Email: glendamanson1@icloud.com

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**MANY THANKS**

Thanking you
For the kindness
That lives inside your heart.
You are a friend that’s treasured
You are truly a work of art.

Your sincerity
Shows in everything you do
And people like me are thankful
For wonderful people like you.

-Unknown
The holiday season is upon us; hustle, bustle, making plans for travel, dinners, decorating the tree, and finding that perfect gift for a friend or loved one in your life. Whew! For such a time is this!

It is during these moments that we pause to acknowledge our many blessings. I share this message wishing each of you a spirit filled Christmas and bountiful health in the New Year!

In friendship and sisterhood, Monica Allen
Area Vice Director

MAY YOU HAVE

Enough happiness to keep you sweet,
Enough trials to keep you strong,
Enough sorrow to keep you human,
Enough hope to keep you happy,
Enough failure to keep you humble,
Enough success to keep you eager,
Enough friends to give you comfort,
Enough wealth to meet your needs,
Enough enthusiasm to look forward,
Enough faith to banish depression,
Enough determination to make each day better than yesterday!
And The Winners are...

Congratulations to our Central Area Chapters who were awarded competitive funding to enhance their chapter’s Health and Human Service facet transformational programming.

The Louisville (KY) Chapter received a $750 sub-grant award from The Links Foundation, Incorporated in support of increasing awareness of the hepatitis C virus. This award was made possible by the generosity of the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation. The National HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C Initiatives ensures that Links members and the communities we serve understand the incidence and prevalence of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C in the African-American community, how these infections are transmitted and how the diseases can be prevented. Through these initiatives, Links partner with national organizations that specialize in educating and preventing these diseases as well as partner with HBCUs and other African-American organizations committed to the fight against these diseases.

Two Chapters, Nashville (TN) and the Omaha (NE), were awarded $9,000 sub-grants made possible with funding from the National Institute of Health, Lung, and Blood Institute to support the execution of the Heart Links to Heart Health Program.

The HeartLinks to Heart Health Signature Program encourages Links members and communities to take an aggressive stance against heart disease, the number one killer of African-American women. HeartLinks accomplishes its goal by equipping Link chapters with numerous ways to implement heart healthy activities in their communities like Walk for a Healthy Living, Red Dress events, and cardiovascular risk reduction programs.

We are very proud of our winning chapters who are committed to Building a Healthy Legacy: Our prescription to the Future!

Link Karen P. Williams
At a corporation known for delivering the world to our doorsteps, Link Rose Jackson Flenorl, a member of the River City (TN) and the cover story of Meek School Magazine, represents the heart of the FedEx Corporation. Propelled by her philanthropic expertise and strong business acumen, she manages the company’s award winning Global Citizenship operation where she focuses on signature programs and relationships with national and international community outreach organizations. In this role, she directs corporate resources toward initiatives in the areas of disaster relief, pedestrian and child safety, environmental sustainability, education, and diversity.

Link Rose manages relationships with both internal and external stakeholders, acting as the social responsibility representative on the company’s internal Corporate Social Responsibility Roundtable, and communicating the company’s community philosophy, objectives and programs to audiences worldwide.

Her outstanding leadership qualities and humanitarian spirit have cultivated opportunities to improve lives throughout the world. Link Rose represents FedEx on the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Business Civic Leadership Center (BCLC) Board, the American Red Cross Corporate Advisory Council and the Conference Board Contributions Council.

An active participant in the community, Link Rose serves on the boards of the National Civil Rights Museum, the University of Mississippi Alumni Association, and the Accrediting Committee of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. She has also served on the boards of the Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship and the United Way of the Mid-South. She is a graduate of Leadership Mississippi, Leadership Memphis and Tennessee Leadership.

Link Rose’s achievements have earned her numerous honors including the Memphis Black Business Directory’s “Simply the Best...The Links featured lead by example. They embody the Power of One. We applaud, celebrate and salute them as they collaborate, include, and create in Linkdom, their careers, in communities throughout the Central Area and around the world.

“A candle never loses any of its light while lighting up another candle.” Rumi
Award,” the Girl’s Inc. “She Knows Where She’s Going Award,” the Silver Star News Lifetime Achievement Award, the Girl Scout Council of the Mid-South Character Award, and the Mertie Buckman Mentor Award from the Women’s Foundation. She is a recipient of the Memphis Woman Magazine “50 Women Who Make A Difference Award,” the National Society of Fund Raising Executives’ Crystal Award for Philanthropy, the Black Business Association Benny Award for Outstanding Community Involvement, the Urban League J.A. McDaniel Award, the AKA Sorority South Eastern Region Vanessa Long Humanitarian Award, and the Trumpet Awards’ High Heels in High Places recognition.

A ’79 graduate of the University of Mississippi, she was the first black female named to the student Hall of Fame and was chosen by Glamour Magazine as one of the top 10 college women in the United States. Rose continues to make an impact as a leader at her alma mater; she was inducted into the Alumni Hall of Fame in 1998 and in 2008 served as president of the national Alumni Association. She also serves on the Ole Miss Journalism Advisory Board and is a charter member of the Ole Miss Women’s Council.

Congratulations Link Rose on your many firsts! May you continue to shatter glass ceilings!

Three Dot Dash
How do WE address our growing region’s health needs? At OhioHealth, WE do it with 28,000 talented physicians, associates and volunteers. There for you where and when help is needed most. And by carefully expanding care while containing costs. Our efforts to improve quality and efficiency have been recognized by Truven Health Analytics, who named us one of the nation’s 15 Top Health Systems for the sixth time. And WE will continue to look for innovative ways to keep the communities we serve stronger and healthier.

Get connected at OhioHealth.com/Connect, Facebook and Twitter

Women of Achievement Honoree: Link Karen Morrison

Link Karen Morrison, a member of the Columbus (OH) Chapter of the Links, Incorporated, was chosen as a YWCA 2016 Women of Achievement Honoree. Link Karen serves as a corporate officer in her roles as president of the OhioHealth Foundation and senior vice president of OhioHealth Corporation. She has been with OhioHealth for over twenty years serving as a health care executive, attorney and lobbyist currently leading the enterprise strategy for external relations including community relations, corporate reinvestment and government and regulatory affairs. Link Karen manages the local, state and federal advocacy strategy for the enterprise and is an experienced leader in health care public policy. In her role as the Foundation president, Link Karen provides executive fundraising leadership to advance the philanthropic mission of the enterprise and she oversees all aspects of the Foundation’s strategic operations.
Each year for the last 31 years, the YWCA of Columbus honors a select group of Columbus women who have made extraordinary contributions to their families, workplaces, and communities. The Women of Achievement Honorees are chosen because they represent the mission of the organization: eliminating racism and empowering women. Link Karen will be formally recognized during a luncheon on April 6, 2016 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center Batelle Grand Ballroom.

Link Karen was profiled for The Women’s Book, a Columbus, Ohio print and online publication, that asked her thoughts on mentoring. Link Karen responded, “It’s important to surround yourself with good mentors including wise women who have a strong work ethic and a belief in continual learning and development.”

Link Karen’s passion for health and wellness is cited often. Her expertise is sought after by many who cover the healthcare profession. She was profiled in the inaugural edition of “The Women’s Book,” and was recognized as one of the “12 Women You Should Know” by the Women for Economic and Leadership Development. Link Karen was also chosen as 20 to Know in Health Care by the Columbus Business Journal who shared her thoughts about being in the healthcare industry with us.

Why did you get into this profession?

I am attracted to health care because, at its core, it is a caring profession. Growing up in a family of health-care professionals, my parents were advocates for healthy living and inspired us to take care of our health. I admired the way my father, who was a physician, looked forward to seeing his patients because it was an opportunity to empower them to improve their health and minimize risk of disease. As a result, I was inspired to pursue professional degrees in preventive medicine and law and I learned about the numerous opportunities within the health-care industry. I realized that I could add value and favorably impact the health status of a community in a role where I could influence public policy. Health care and the law seemed like a great combination to pursue a role in advocacy.

Is it as fulfilling as you thought it would be?

On the heels of what seemed like a never-ending debate on health-care reform, I must say that I wouldn’t want to be working anywhere else. While I have been in this industry for more than 25 years and thought I already had lived through significant policy changes in health care, today we are at a crossroads where we have never been before. I believe we are at the most transformational point health care has seen in decades. We have an enormous opportunity to get it right, knowing that we must focus on the end goal, which is to keep people healthy.

What’s the most exciting thing happening today in your industry?

In addition to the exponential growth of effective, new treatments in virtually all areas of medicine, the most exciting thing has to be the renewed focus on prevention and wellness. While many of us in the health-care industry embraced the value of prevention years ago, it seems to be resonating more intensely with our partners in care, such as the payers and employers. It is very exciting to learn about the growing focus in the business community on workplace wellness. Our colleagues are excited about going to the gym, participating in Weight Watchers and watching their pedometers keep track of their steps. It’s encouraging that employers are providing incentives for their employees and associates to assume more responsibility for their own health.

Link Karen completed her undergraduate degree at Vanderbilt University; her graduate degree in Preventative Medicine at The Ohio State University College of Medicine and Public Health; and her law degree at Capital University, where she recently served two terms on its Board of Trustees.

She also serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, Experience Columbus, and McConnell Arts Center of Worthington. She is a member of the Fifth Third Bank Advisory Board of Directors, Central Ohio and is a member of the Board of Directors for the Columbus Urban League. In March 2012, she was appointed by Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman to serve on the Board of Health for a second term and serves as chair. She was recently appointed by Governor John Kasich to the Bowling Green State University Board of Trustees.

Congratulations on being selected as an honoree in the YWCA of Columbus’ 31st Class! Your sisters in Linkdom are very proud of you!
Adebesin, a member of the Indianapolis (IN) Chapter of the Links, Incorporated, was the first of 10 siblings to graduate from college with a four-year degree—and the only one to obtain a master’s.

“I did not come from a wealthy family,” said Adebesin, who grew up in inner-city Cleveland. “Many people in my community didn’t have the opportunity to go to college.” Nor did some aspire to it. “We didn’t have a doctor or lawyer next door,” she added. As such, she’s acutely aware of how challenging it is for kids without role models.

“Sometimes you need someone to hold your hand and say, ‘Yes, you can do it. No matter what your circumstances, you can achieve as well.’” And achieve she has. With an accounting degree from Chancellor University in Ohio and an MBA from Cleveland State University, she now serves as senior vice president of community and economic development for Fifth Third Bank’s Greater Indiana Region. She manages the company’s community reinvestment initiatives and develops community
partnerships. She also chairs Fifth Third’s Diversity and Inclusion Council for the region. “I stumbled into banking,” Link Scenario said. After a lengthy stint with the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (including serving as interim CEO), she happened to be at a Fifth Third in Cleveland where a casual conversation led to an employee’s telling her, “You’d be a great fit here.” A few days later, a call came from HR, followed by an offer to work on mortgages. A transfer to Indianapolis was part of her climb up the Fifth Third ladder.

Link Scenario has leveraged millions in charitable giving and equity investments benefiting underserved communities, individuals and small businesses. Fifth Third pledged $100,000, for instance, toward plans to create a quality-of-life project for the south-side neighborhoods around the University of Indianapolis. Link Scenario also arranged Fifth Third’s adoption of Clarence Farrington School 61 as part of the IPS Business Alliance, leading to the purchase of more than 800 books to stock the library and 60 computers to increase student access to technology. More than 400 organizations throughout the state are recipients of assistance from Fifth Third.

Charitable giving breaks down into four areas: affordable housing/neighborhood revitalization, education, diversity/inclusion, and health care and wellness.

“If you know anything about Fifth Third, the community is part of our DNA,” she said. “We’re a financial institution built on relationships. Yes, at the end of the day, we are here to make a profit, but at the heart of it is our community.” She knows that “Scenario can’t do it all,” as she puts it, which is why she is committed to mentoring.

“It try to be really real with people,” she said. “I feel pretty blessed to be able to provide words of advice or coaching to help individuals who otherwise would have made a wrong turn.” One project she coordinated provided bank funding to establish a partnership with Providence Cristo Rey High School, which has led to students working under her supervision at the bank. “So many individuals just need a little help getting from one point in life to another.”

Among her many distinguished awards and honors, Link Scenario is the recipient of the 2011 “Glass Ceiling Award” as recognized by the National Diversity Council; 2012 “Minority Achievement in Financial Services Award” as recognized by the Center for Leadership Development; 2012 Inspire Awards Finalist, as recognized by College Mentors For Kids, profiled in the Indianapolis Woman Magazine and the Women’s Issue of the Kaleidoscope Magazine; “100 Most Influential in Northeast Ohio” as recognized by the Call & Post Newspaper; “Who’s Who” as recognized by the Cleveland and Indianapolis Magazines; “Member on the Move” as recognized by the National Black MBA Magazine; “Idealism In Action Award” as recognized by City Year; “40/40 Club” Inductee as recognized by Kaleidoscope Magazine; “President’s Award for Outstanding Service and Support” as recognized by the Black Professionals Association; “Exceptional Contribution Award” as recognized by the FBI Office in Washington D.C.; and selected to serve as an “Honorary Participant” in the CHIP Homeless Memorial Service Candle-Lighting Ceremony.

Congratulations Link Scenario! Thank you Link Scenario for all you do in the community! Indianapolis Business Journal, Photos: Facebook

Link Scenario Adebesin

CRA Council, Boys & Girls Clubs of Indianapolis, Women’s Fund of Central Indiana, Marian University’s 21st Century Board of Visitors, and more.

“Understanding your finances through saving money and Successful Budgeting: Simple Ways to Boost your Credit Score: Preparing for Homeownership & more

“Congratulations！” Indianapolis Business Journal, Photos: Facebook

Link Scenario has leveraged millions in charitable giving and equity investments benefiting underserved communities, individuals and small businesses.
This custom designed pin is a symbol of our commitment to building a healthy financial legacy for The Links Foundation, Incorporated. The three white roses are representative of our intergenerational sisterhood. Debuted at the National Leadership Summit in November, the pins sold out within 48 hours!

The Legacy Pins have been reordered and are now on sale. A portion of the proceeds will support the Vision 2020 Campaign and help us build our Legacy Fund endowment. $20 of each pin sold is tax deductible and will be credited to the purchaser.

It's the perfect gift for your Link sister! Pins will begin shipping December 28, 2015.

This custom designed pin is a symbol of our commitment to building a healthy financial legacy for The Links Foundation, Incorporated. The three white roses are representative of our intergenerational sisterhood. Debuted at the National Leadership Summit in November, the pins sold out within 48 hours!

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Click below to order:
Online Boutique | Order Form
The White House is decked out with 62 Christmas trees and more than 70,000 ornaments — ready for what will be tens of thousands of visitors in the coming weeks. Most of the decorating is done each year by volunteers from all over the country who apply for the chance to deck the halls of America’s house. Each year, hundreds apply but fewer than 100 get the chance. Of the lucky volunteers chosen, the Central Area of the Links, Incorporated boasts of having not one but two Link sisters chosen for a once in a lifetime opportunity to decorate 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, the official residence of the leader of the free world, President Obama.
ink Chalon Anderson, Central Area’s Financial Secretary and a member of the Oklahoma City (OK) Chapter, and Link Edna Jean Harper, president of the Springfield (OH) Chapter, will have memories to share with their children’s children’s children!

When our White House Christmas Decorating Ambassadors returned from their trip to D.C., both were elated to give us behind the scenes details of their amazing experience!

Link Chalon:

Being selected to serve as a volunteer to decorate the White House for Christmas was a great thrill. Actually decorating the iconic residence was an experience I will always cherish.

I was in absolute awe as I entered the White House. There is so much rich history in the beautiful mansion. Initially, I was assigned to decorate two trees in the East Room and two in the State Dining room. Later, I was among a group of only 10 who were assigned to decorate trees in the West Wing. My assignment included President Obama’s Oval Office, Vice President Biden’s office, the office of the Chief of Staff, and the West Wing Lobby. I was truly overjoyed!

I felt so privileged as I volunteered in the Oval Office as I thought of all the issues that have been decided in this room. I envisioned all of the Presidents that have had this office, and the countless dignitaries that have walked through the doors of this treasured space. I marveled at the President’s desk that has been a part of the Oval Office for over 200 years. I moved from office to office adorning Christmas trees using beautiful ribbons and colorful ornaments.

The next day, I moved to the East Wing of the White House. The team created silver and crystal masterpieces for the trees. The crystal teardrop ornaments glistened under the light of the massive chandeliers. In the State Dining Room, we created a fantasy for children. We decorated the trees with toys, bright colorful balls, shimmering gold snowflakes and elf hats topped each of the trees. I also had a chance to play with the First Pets!

In the course of 5 days, I wired, sorted, handled and hung hundreds of ornaments. On the final day of my adventure, I helped in other rooms in the East Wing. All our efforts made the White House look spectacular! A reception for the volunteers ended our undertaking. We were warmly greeted by Mrs. Obama who I had a chance to speak with about a mutual friend. The wonderful White House chefs treated us to an extraordinary feast. It was an amazing ending to a perfect week.

HGTV taped us as we worked. I was interviewed by the crew. I was as jubilant as child on Christmas morning!

Link Edna Jean:

I absolutely love Christmas! To have the opportunity to spend three full days in the White House, as a member of the Holiday Volunteer team, was amazing! Everyone on the team was equally thrilled to be there. We walked around with huge smiles covering our faces. One woman said with laughter, “I’m going to include this experience in my obituary”. That’s how special it was.

Most people have asked me if I saw the first family. Yes, I had the pleasure to see some members of the family. On my first day at the White House, one of my teammates urged me to come down off of the 6 foot scaffolding, from which I was weaving snowflakes into chicken wire, in the East Hall. Bo and Sunny were coming through. I leaped down, and cuddled the first family’s pets.

On the second day a volunteer whispered, “the President is going to leave for Paris soon.” Several volunteers and I swiftly moved from the East Room into the Green Room to see him off. We were like kids peering though a window, waiting anxiously for the President of the United States of America to board his helicopter, “Marine One.” We saw him, from about 50 feet away. However, it felt as if we could literally reach out and touch him. We were ecstatic!

On the last day, I saw the First Lady in the White House Grand Foyer. We were honored to be
invited to the Volunteer Reception, which was magnificent in every way! My guest and I were waiting, trying to choose an accessible place to stand, so we could see her. She came down the decorated staircase in a beautiful green sleeveless dress. She was even more beautiful in person than in pictures. Mrs. Obama was the icing on my cake...on her way out, I extended my hand and she graciously and warmly embraced me. Life is good!

I’m so glad I applied to be a 2015 White House Holiday Volunteer. The experience continues to make me smile, whenever I think about it!

Link Chalon and Link Edna Jean truly embody the spirit of the heart of Linkdom! Our Link sisters collaborated with other volunteers to make the White House special, included us by sharing their story, and created décor that elicits oohs and aahs from young children and the young at heart!

Link Chalon Anderson, Link Edna Jean Harper, Link Genma Stringer Holmes Photos: White House
Link Symone D. Sanders tapped as National Press Secretary for Presidential Hopeful Bernie Sanders

Before a crowd of more than 12,000 at the Alaska Airlines Arena on the campus of the University Of Washington, a new public face for the Sanders campaign appeared in August. Link Symone Sanders, a volunteer organizer with the D.C.-based Coalition for Juvenile Justice and a member of the Omaha (NE) Chapter of the Links, Incorporated, was announced as the new national press secretary of Sanders’ campaign and was tasked with introducing the 73-year-old senator.

Link Symone Sanders, daughter of Link Terri Sanders, president of the Omaha (NE) Chapter, is a young, black criminal justice advocate and supporter of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. She is also a progressive political activist right out of the Sanders mold: Her last job was at Ralph Nader’s Public Citizen. In an interview, Link Symone Sanders said she first connected with the senator about three weeks before becoming his press secretary, offering him advice on how to better understand the message of Black Lives Matter activists in an hour-long chat.

“One of my suggestions, he took it and ran with it on Meet the Press, is that racial inequality and economic inequality are parallel issues,” she said. “[I told him,] you know, economic equality is an issue. It’s something we need to address. But for some people it doesn’t matter how much money you make, it doesn’t matter where you went to school, it doesn’t matter what your parents do. It doesn’t matter that Sandra Bland had a job and was on her way to teach for her alma mater. It doesn’t matter. None of that matters.”

Bernie Sanders took to the advice, Link Symone Sanders said. She also confronted him with one of the criticisms he faced earlier in the summer, when Black Lives Matter activists rejected his statements about his past civil rights movement work.

“Educating America, the community, letting people know who Bernie Sanders is and what he’s about,” she said, “and not just, ‘Oh, I fought for civil rights and I protested and I sat at the lunch counters.’ That’s important and that’s great but that was 50 years ago and he has a lot more to stand on than just what he did 50 years ago.”

At the end of the meeting, Bernie Sanders offered her a job. Her address at the Seattle arena rally was her first public statement as a Sanders campaign staffer. Among her jobs, she said, will be helping to sell a promised comprehensive criminal justice policy package she helped to craft that will be coming from the Sanders campaign in the near future.

People who have worked with her describe a smart, ambitious progressive who’s been engaged in politics since she was a teenager growing up in Omaha. In 2006, a 16-year-old Sanders learned that Bill Clinton would be addressing a year-end fundraiser for Girls Inc., a nonprofit that trains young women to be confident and skilled. Sanders, a Girls Inc. member, told executive director, Roberta Wilhelm, that she needed to be the one introducing Clinton onstage.

“She lobbied me like a pitbull -- I say that with all due respect,” remembered Wilhelm. “She got that coveted spot on the stage and she blew everybody away.” A contemporary report from the Omaha World-Herald quoted Clinton’s praise: “Link Symone, you spoke so well, I kind of hate to follow you.” A year later, Clinton published a book about giving to charity, called Giving. He singled out Sanders as a woman who’d “come a long way and is going a lot further.”

After being hired by Sanders, the importance of her role was felt immediately, at her first rally appearances in Seattle and Portland. At both rallies, Link Symone Sanders got considerable onstage time to walk the crowd through the Bernie Sanders criminal justice pitch. In Portland, another speaker accidentally introduced the candidate -- Link Symone Sanders took back the mic, because her speech was meant to precede his. Just that morning, a “racial justice” page on BernieSanders.com had finally gone live.

“‘A year ago today, Officer Darren Wilson shot and killed Michael Brown and left his body lying in the street for four and a half hours,’” she said in Portland. “‘Following Michael Brown’s death, protesters and activists took to the streets of Ferguson, Missouri, and they stayed in the streets for 365 days, galvanizing young people to do the same. A year ago today, young people in America today were galvanized to say that these killings must end.’”

She read the names of black people killed in encounters with police officers -- then came then turn.

“It is important that we say Black Lives Matter, but it is also important that we have people in political offices who will turn those words into action,” she said. “Racial justice meant not just sitting at the same table as power, but ‘owning the establishment,’” as Martin Luther King had said. Quotes that could set off protesters when Bernie Sanders used them were pure applause lines when coming out of the mouth of 25 year old Link Symone Sanders.

“When you look into your hearts, deep into your hearts, you know which candidate for president will shut down the private prison industry, mandatory minimums, the death penalty,” said Link Symone Sanders. “You know which candidate will have alternatives to incarceration for nonviolent offenders, and which candidate will really use his justice department to protect black lives.”

She closed with a call for “multi-racial political revolution.” Only then did the crowd hear from Bernie Sanders, candidate for president.

Congratulations Link Symone! We are very proud of you!
Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign has hired Burrell Communications, an African American advertising and media firm. Based in Chicago and Los Angeles, the firm is owned by two African American women, McGhee Williams Osse and Faye Ferguson, both seasoned marketing and advertising professionals. Faye Ferguson is a member of the North Shore (IL) Chapter of the Links, Incorporated.

Burrell Communications, founded in 1971, will assist the campaign in focusing on African American voters, targeting their concerns and issues as Clinton moves forward towards the first primary and caucus tests.

In 2012, African American women showed up big at the polls and delivered the highest voter turnout of any voters, between the ages of ages 18 to 29, in the U.S. electorate.

Though many political observers wonder if that level of voter participation was only possible because President Obama’s name was on the ballot, Clinton is expected to fight hard to assemble Obama’s coalition of voters as the cornerstone of a winning strategy.

It’s likely Burrell Communications’ influence will be seen in South Carolina, where Black voters are a big key in a race primarily between Clinton and Sen. Bernie Sanders. (Ms. Williams Osse even completed her completed post-graduate advertising studies at the University of South Carolina.) The South Carolina primary is on February 27th and currently Clinton is polling ahead.

“...and we believe that we are responsible to the community to whom we speak - the African-American community; our community,” the Burrell website reads regarding the company’s overall mission. The firm has designed campaigns for major corporations ranging from McDonald’s to Toyota to General Mills to American Airlines.

These new hires add to other African American hires who are currently working for Clinton.

The most prominent of those hires includes LaDavia Drane, who is Hillary Clinton’s Director of African American Outreach, Marlon Marshall, who is Clinton’s Director of Political Engagement, and Karen Finney, Clinton’s strategic communications adviser and spokesperson. Finney also worked for Clinton during her run for Senate in 2000.

The campaign also hired well known political veteran Ron Lester to focus on the campaign’s African American polling.

Congratulations Burrell Communications! The Central Area is very proud of your success!
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**Business Performance Award:**
**Link Arvetta Powell**

“Diversity is a key priority for the company when we look at our business’ strategic goals,” she said. One aspect is making sure products on shelves are appealing to diverse customers and that associates engage with a variety of customers. “In the U.S., our guests that are coming through our doors, what do the guests look like? Do we have Spanish-speaking associates in the stores? When we look at our workforce, how do we attract and retain diverse talent?” she said.

Prior to Build-A-Bear Workshop, Powell was the senior human resources director for Walmart Stores’ Real Estate division. She also worked previously at Venture Stores as corporate human resources manager.

She holds a bachelor’s degree in business management from Webster University. In addition being dedicated to her chapter, Link Arvetta is a member of the Society of Human Resource Management and the National Association of African Americans in Human Resources, St. Louis Chapter. She is a member of the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis Board of Directors.

**Standing by Girls Inc.:**
**Link Cheryl Jones**

It’s a common story: A 13-year-old girl falls in with the wrong crowd, starts skipping school and watches idly as her grades tumble. The difference, however, is the young girl in this story had attended after-school programs at Girls Inc. of St. Louis since she was 7, and when she started acting out, her mentor noticed and took action. “We had a choice,” says Link Cheryl Jones, president and CEO of Girls Inc. and a member of the Gateway (IL) Chapter. “We could kick her out of the program or we could try to help her.” Link Cheryl chose the latter. “She decided she was better than how she was showing up. Now a sophomore with a 4.0 GPA, she wants to become a doctor or pharmacist.”

Girls Inc. of St. Louis offers summer, after-school and outreach programs in safe environments to more than 5,000 girls, ages 5 to 17, each year. Most of them come from underserved city and North County school districts. The organization uses educational curricula, delivered by trained professionals, to help young girls achieve academically, lead healthy and physically active lives, understand media messages, and develop an interest in science, technology, engineering and math. “Our organization exposes girls to the possibilities,” Link Cheryl says. “If you put a dream in front of anyone and show them how to get there, it can become their reality.” Part of the 150-year-old Girls Inc. national nonprofit, the St. Louis office was recently named the 2015 affiliate of the year!

Girls Inc. of St. Louis held its ninth annual “Strong, Smart, Bold” Luncheon at The Ritz-Carlton in Clayton on Nov. 19. The event honored several local chapters of sororities, and paid tribute to girls in its programs who epitomize the organization’s rallying cry: “Inspiring all girls to be strong, smart and bold.” Money raised from the luncheon supports Girls Inc.’s sizable
transportation costs, Link Cheryl says. “Getting safe and reliable transportation for our kids to come from their schools to our center or to go on field trips is the second-largest expense in our budget.”

Focusing on the whole child, Girls Inc. offers programs in art, music, theater, culinary arts, literacy, health and fitness, gardening, character development and more. Jones is particularly proud of Eureka!, a multi-year program that introduces girls to careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields. Participants spend summer breaks between seventh and 12th grades getting hands-on experience in everything from robotics to computer coding. The sessions are led by professors at the University of Missouri St. Louis and Maryville University, which are partners in the program, and by professionals at MasterCard, Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals and Express Scripts, which sponsor Eureka! “For some of these girls, this is the first time they’ve thought about going to college,” Link Cheryl says. “It gives them a chance to have a different trajectory than many of their family members.”

Town & Style

The following day, The Knight ADRC’s African American Advisory Board (AAAB), in partnership with the St. Louis (MO) Chapter, held its 4th annual workshop luncheon, which actively promotes the research mission and participation interests of the Knight ADRC in the African American community while serving as ambassadors and liaisons in building strong, individual and local partnership to enhance research participation. Link sisters advise Washington University investigators in the development of culturally appropriate and sensitive education and outreach materials, recruitment and retention strategies, and other products and programs. Link Ida Woolfolk, Board Chair of AAAB, chaired the workshop luncheon which consisted of members from the Archway (MO) and Gateway (MO) Chapters and over 250 participants. The luncheon was underwritten by the Centene Corporation.

President Mary H. Thomas accepted an award on behalf of the St. Louis (MO) Chapter from Dr. John Morris, the Knight ADRC’s Director and Principal Investigator, Dept. of Neurology, Washington University School of Medicine, for their impact and continued support to the community.

Link Mary H. Thomas

St. Louis (MO) Chapter: Engaging the Community

Today, five million American are living with Alzheimer’s disease. Yet, half of those affected never receive a formal, written diagnosis. With Alzheimer’s projected to rise exponentially in the years to come, the St. Louis Chapter of The Links Incorporated, the first chapter in the Central Area, will continue to raise awareness of this disease and the importance of early detection while providing education and support to families and those with caregiving responsibilities.

In October, The St. Louis (MO) Chapter hosted a reception for the 10th Annual Normal R. Seay (Civil Rights Leader, Advocate & Supporter of Alzheimer’s Research) Lecture sponsored by the Charles F. and Joanne Knight Alzheimer Disease Research Center at Washington University. The featured speaker was Richard D. King, M.D., PhD., the Director of the Alzheimer’s Image Analysis Laboratory at the University of Utah, shared his clinical observations in a presentation titled, “Exploring Brain Complexity and Other Imaging Insights into Alzheimer Disease.”
Links were friends and outstanding role models in the community. The St. Louis Links has been historical in its service to the community. They gave scholarships to girls to go to summer camp, supported African-American applications for election to the St. Louis Board of Education, donated funds to NAACP, presented – and starred in – a drama for the St. Louis Public Schools, and held rummage sales that clothed some families until their children were adults.

The St. Louis (MO) Chapter of the Links, Incorporated was chartered on March 15, 1948. Link Frances Vashon Atkinson, a charter member of the Philadelphia chapter and sister of Blanche Vashon Sinkler, conducted the induction. This was the first installation. The charter members were: Joy Blache, Ollie Carpenter, Mary Evans, Charlotte Ford, Alice Harding, Anna Lee Scott, Blanche Sinkler and Melba Sweets.

Link Blanche Vashon Sinkler served as President from 1948-1950. The group decided to sponsor at least one charitable project yearly. Monthly meetings were held in members’ homes on the third Thursday of the month at 8 p.m. Dues were 50 cents per month for each member.

Link sisters discussed projects for raising funds to support programs, including sending a girl to camp, bringing a choir from Philadelphia to St. Louis, a professional style show, a carnival dance, as well as the George Washington Carver House, a multi-service community center founded in 1935 that provides services and programs to promote the development of healthy African-American families and youth in the area. At this meeting, new members were voted into the club. On May 20, 1948, Naomi Guthrie Reef, Dorothy Hunter, and Lillian Mosee were new members inducted during one of these meetings.

A television was purchased and donated to the Ferrier Harris Old Folks Home at a cost of $326. This was the beginning of the yearly rummage sale held at the Parish House church, with a profit of $88.95.

In 1950, Link Naomi Guthrie Reef was the delegate to the annual conference in Atlantic City, NJ, where one delegate from each chapter attended.

St. Louis (MO) Chapter: The First Chapter in the Central Area

The Central Area of the Links, Incorporated, the heart of Linkdom, has produced many firsts in our beloved organization. Like Link Vivian J. Beamon, the first National President from the Central Area and the fourth national president of the Links, Incorporated, the St. Louis (MO) is the first chapter located west of the Mississippi River, and the fourth chapter in Linkdom, following Philadelphia, Atlantic City and Washington, D.C.

On Friday, February 20, 1948, six ladies met at the home of Mrs. Blanche Sinkler to organize a club. The club, under the sponsorship of Mrs. Sinkler, became the “St. Louis Links.” The women of the St. Louis Links were friends and outstanding role models in the community. The St. Louis Links has been historical in its service to the community. They gave scholarships to girls to go to summer camp, supported African-American applications for election to the St. Louis Board of Education, donated funds to NAACP, presented – and starred in – a drama for the St. Louis Public Schools, and held rummage sales that clothed some families until their children were adults.

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The St. Louis (MO) Chapter received the first grant ever awarded by the Links Foundation at the 28th National Assembly of the Links, Incorporated in Dallas, TX. The $11,350 grant supported the purchase of Smithsonian prints from the collection, Women Achieving Against the Odds. The prints were used as aids to teach girls residing at the Annie Malone Children and Family Center how various African-American females achieved uncommon success. Students were afforded opportunities to interact with professionals representing the careers of the women depicted in the collection, including Katherine Dunham.

The St. Louis (MO) Chapter participated in the Project Walking Fete walk-a-thon in friendship with the two other Links chapters in the St. Louis area. Other participants included the Annie Malone Children’s Center, Hopewell Center, sororities, Hope House and Jack and Jill of America-St. Louis Chapter. Donations were given to the UNCF during the annual Lou Rawls Parade of Stars Telethon, the Grace Bumbry Black Musical Heritage Ensemble Concert, and the Cameron Youth Orchestra.

In 1998, the St. Louis Chapter celebrated 50 years of Linkdom with “Ritzy and Glitzy at Fifty”, a dinner and concert that included a 30-piece string ensemble and the Motown Review at the Missouri Athletic Club. More than 350 guests “mingled and jingled” with friends. Civic awards were also presented in honor of each facet, and corporate underwriting was provided.
40 Ruby Years of Friendship and Service: The Central Illinois (IL) Chapter

The Links, Incorporated, Central Illinois (IL) Chapter recently recognized 40 years of Friendship and Service by honoring its 15 charter members, renewing their commitment to Linkdom and thanking their community partners and supporters.

On Saturday, November 14, 2015, members of the chapter celebrated its anniversary at Ewing Cultural Center in Bloomington, Illinois, the same location the chapter was dedicated in 1975. The celebration at Ewing consisted of a re-dedication ceremony, fellowship lunch and a community service project with their “Providing Education and Training to Achieve Lasting Success” (PETALS) girls mentoring group. Through the service project, four needs based community agencies were the recipients of holiday baskets and 40 disaster kits were prepared for the Red Cross.

The chapter hosted a reception the following day on Sunday, November 15 at University Galleries in Normal, Illinois to thank community partners, sponsors and supporters. During the reception, the chapter also held a dedication of the Central Illinois (IL) Chapter archives, which will be housed, at Illinois State University. The Illinois House of Representatives also recognized and congratulated the Central Illinois (IL) Chapter for its commitment to serving the communities of Central Illinois.

Link Renee Thompson Fletcher
The Heart of the Central Area

Look for these New Programming Initiatives for 2016

NEW Signature Projects

We are pleased to introduce you to the Central Area’s Two NEW Signature Projects. These exciting initiatives are intended to provide chapters with additional options for expanding the wonderful programming that is underway taking place in the Central Area. They can be implemented under a single facet, integrated with other facets and/or part of umbrella programming.


Photography is a dynamic communications tool. At the same time, it can capture complex social justice issues. With the use of a camera or mobile phone a photograph is able to give voice to those whose voices might not be heard and change how people view the world. Photography allows a person to communicate to others beauty and relevancy. Chapters are encouraged to creatively expand or enhance their programming in any of the five facets. The theme See My World, should encourage students to express vocalize their understanding of society through visual images and utilizes photography as a means of self-expression and self-awareness for students in grades 5-12.

More to come from Link Iris Hayes, Arts Chair.

Honoring Our SHEROES Women in the Military Initiative

With the onset of the 1980’s, activities were initiated to increase public awareness about services for women in the military and women Veterans. In 2011, First Lady, Michelle Obama and Jill Biden, PhD., launched Joining Forces, a nationwide initiative calling all Americans to rally around service members, veterans and their families and support them through wellness, education and employment programs. The Central Area of the Links, Incorporated has launched an Area initiative targeting women in the military and veterans. This initiative will focus on supporting and engaging veteran and service women who are making a difference in our states, nations and world.

The National Trends and Services Facet Committee has designed a 16 month challenge for Central Area Links. The goal of this challenge is to create an awareness focused on our spending habits and to redirect the savings to worthy causes.

More to come from Link Janice Garnett, National Trends and Services Chair.

Something for Links

From February 1, 2016 to May 31, 2017, The Central Area Links Just Want to Have FUNds Challenge to encourage members to brown bag it at least one day per week and calculate your average daily lunch cost. At the end of the month, determine the amount saved and share with your chapter’s National Trends and Services Chair and keep a record of your savings. Are you up for the challenge? Do you just want to have FUN saving funds? Take photos of your cost saving meals and upload your photos to your chapter’s social media accounts. Be sure to tag them #calinksinc. Do not forget to share how much your chapter saved each month. Have fun by being creative tracking your funds!

Link Karen P. Williams, Link Iris Hayes, and Link Janice Garnett

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Wilberforce (OH) Chapter Commemorates Veteran Members

With more than two hundred years of military service, female veterans have served with sacrifice and great pride. For this, the women of the Wilberforce (OH) Links are grateful. We are pleased to honor two of our members who have served our country with honor and great respect. We present to you, Link Dorothy C. Vivians, (Colonel, United States Army Retired) and Link Margaret Charles (Lieutenant Colonel, United States Air Force, Retired.)

Link Dorothy C. Vivian

In 1977, Dorothy C. Vivians was commissioned at the rank of Major into the Nurse Corps of the U.S. Army. She was activated for Desert Storm in December 1990 and served as the Chief Nurse of Kenner Army Hospital, Ft. Lee, Virginia. Prior to activation for Desert Shield/Storm, Dorothy was promoted to the rank of Colonel and following the end of the tour, she was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for stellar performance.

One memorable event during her career that Link Dorothy recalled was the processing of soldiers back from Desert Storm and her witnessing the comradeship and pride that existed among the soldiers. She says that one particular unit had returned from the war zone and was standing in formation complete with their gridiron which was frayed and paled from the bleaching of the hot sun. As she stood there watching them she wondered why they had not replaced their flag with a new one so it would look better. She reports that she found out that the gridiron was the one they had carried in battle and that it held a special place for them upon their return. She watched them stand with pride and togetherness. She had a stampede of goose bumps at the awesome sight which spoke volumes about the brotherhood and sisterhood that existed between returning veterans.

Link Dorothy retired in 2001 after 24 years of service, 11 of which she was a “full bird colonel.” She is proud to be an American and a retired officer of the United States Army Nurse Corps. When asked what advice she would give young women contemplating military service, she stated that young women should carefully select the corps based on their education, experience, and passion because it is a wonderful opportunity to serve our country and to gain valuable career opportunities.

Link Margaret Charles

Link Margaret Charles served in the United States Air Force for 22 years as an Acquisition Program Manager, responsible for acquiring various military equipment and services. She also acquired military aircraft for our foreign military allies such as Italy, Denmark, Greece, and Australia. She attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

One of her memorable experiences was during the time she served in Korea as a Logistics Plans and Program Officer. While working the night shift preparing and assessing the wartime efforts of our enemy, she received a call early one morning from a senior officer who asked questions about her role and responsibility. She was very surprised to receive the call from the One Star General as she was a Captain at the time of this call. He ultimately informed her that she had been promoted to Major. She was shocked and happy at the same time; the General laughed and stated that she should start planning the promotion party.

When asked if she would recommend military service to young women; she said, “Yes, but only after they receive a college degree.” Link Margaret Charles entered the military as an officer. The military, she says, will offer many opportunities for young women to lead people, travel worldwide, and learn to live and function in many changing environments. She says that putting in the hard work will pay off.

Link Cheryl D. Marcus

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Celebrating your service to our community.

KeyBank is proud to sponsor the Friendship Awards Luncheon of the Links Incorporated. We congratulate the honorees being recognized for their significant contributions and thank the Central Area Chapter for its ongoing commitment to “Serving with Excellence and Grace.”

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Mediterranean Herb
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Sea Salt + Pepper
Simplicity at its best. Only the finest sea salt and Tellicherry pepper.

Habanero Heat
The Original Blend on fire! Better get the hose out.
The Central Area of the Links, Incorporated held its first Executive Board meeting in Music City, Tennessee, Oct. 23-25, 2015, to begin laying the foundation for a new program year under the administration of 19th Central Area Director, Glenda Masingale Manson.

The Frist Center for the Visual Arts, one of the country’s premier arts institutions, was the backdrop for the three-day meeting, where the Central Area unveiled its major arts project, “My Community through the Eyes of the 21st Century African-American Child – Linking Images” and other service initiatives for the upcoming year. The new initiative places high emphasis on empowering children by engaging them creatively in the arts.

“I am elated with the possibilities that the future holds for our beloved organization and I could not think of a more perfect place to begin laying the foundation for my administration than in Nashville, Tennessee at the Frist First Board Meeting of 19th Area Director Held in Music City. Masingale Manson said, who was also greeted by several members of the four chapters in the city – Nashville, Hendersonville Area, Music City, and Parthenon. The Nashville Cluster of the Links, Incorporated were joined by members who traveled from KY, OH, East and West TN, GA, and AL.

Declared, “Links Day at the Frist Center,” the Frist Center recognized the ongoing work of the Links by offering free admission throughout the day in honor of the Central Area.

During a special presentation in front of a crowd of more than 200 members of the Links, Incorporated, community partners and friends, Masingale Manson introduced her new programs and saluted women in the local community who demonstrated commitment to service through their time, resources, and personal acts of courage.

The Central Area honored Lt. Col. Daphne Young, USA, (retired), a member of the Parthenon (TN) Chapter, who selflessly served in the military for many years before retiring last year. Award recipients were Dr. Carol Creswell-Betsch, a Platinum member of the Nashville (TN) Chapter, who received the “Keeper of the Flame Award” for her dedication to mentoring and contributions to the arts; Dr. Patricia Matthews-Juarez, received the “Candle Lighter Award” for her generosity to many Link chapters’ initiatives focused on health care disparities in minority communities; Dr. Judith Presley, a member of the Parthenon (TN), was awarded the “Shining Light Award” for her steadfast devotion to increasing awareness and educating black

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women about breast cancer; and Gemma Stringer Holmes, National Social Media Manager and member of Team 68, received the inaugural “Power of One” Award for her volunteer work with members of the military and veterans, children and her support of the arts community. State Representative Brenda Gilmore (TN-District 54), a member of the Music City (TN) Chapter, also made a presentation sharing a proclamation recognizing the Central Area of the Links, Incorporated and announcing October 24, 2015 as “Glenda Masingale Manson Day” in Tennessee.

“Links Day at the Frist Center” also featured music by retired BMI executive Connecting Link Thomas Cain, a powerful vocal performance by Link Debra Tillery, and an awe-inspiring and heartwarming welcome by students of Nia House Montessori School in Nashville.

“One of my passions is The Arts and this project is expected to give the Central Area the unprecedented opportunity to show others what today’s world looks like through the eyes of a child,” Masingale Manson said. “My plan is for the Central Area to foster the growth of children with a powerfully exciting new initiative that expands our commitment to The Arts. This effort has the potential for a widespread, long-range impact.”

Also, as part of Masingale Manson’s “Power of One” administrative theme, her service platform seeks to inspire Link members to use their individual talents for the collective success of the organization building off the quote, “A candle never loses any of its light while lighting up another candle.”

“The Central Area of the Links, Incorporated was excited to be in the beautiful city of Nashville – Music City USA – to share the wonderful service initiatives we extend to communities throughout the globe,” Masingale Manson said. “We seek to be a vessel and a positive light focused on uplifting and encouraging women to use their gifts and talents to ignite change.”

Link K. Dawn Rutledge and Link Bonita Cornute
Images from the Executive Board Meeting, Dinner at Mad Platter, and Links Day at the Frist.
The members of the Toledo (OH) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated were honored with a two day visit by Link Johnetta B. Cole, Ph.D. in October. The iconic leading Link was featured at two major events where Toledo (OH) Links played vital roles.

Scholar, author and activist, Link Johnnetta has broken ground with a host of history-making firsts: the first African-American woman to lead Spelman College; the first woman elected to the board of Coca-Cola; and the first African-American to chair the board of the United Way. Link Johnnetta was awarded the 2015 “BET Honors” Education Award for her work on diversity and inclusion. In addition to Link Johnnetta’s role as the director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, she is the president of the Association of Art Museum Directors.

The first program featuring Link Johnnetta was a free Masters Series Lecture hosted by the Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) and TMA Director, Brian Kennedy, on the evening of October 8, 2015 in the museum’s historic Peristyle auditorium.

With Toledo (OH) Links in attendance, Link Johnnetta praised Director Kennedy and TMA for including a
diversity strategy in the museum’s strategic plan, while addressing “A New Day” in the world of art museums as officials work to increase diversity outreach with staff and guests to the captive audience.

The Masters Series was sponsored in part by the TMA Ambassadors and Yark Automotive Group. Toledo (OH) Chapter Links, Billie Johnson and Cynthia Thompson, are board members of the Toledo Museum of Art. In December 2015, Link Cynthia was named TMA’s Board President.

On October 9, Toledo (OH) Chapter’s Technology Chair, Link Rhonda Sewell, moderated an engaging and intentional discussion titled “Straight Outta College” featuring panelists; Link Johnnetta, TMA Director Kennedy and the University of Toledo (UT) President, Sharon Gaber, Ph.D, UT’s first female president.

When trying to inspire students to succeed after college, who better to motivate them than individuals who have made it to the top. “Straight Outta of College” was held on UT’s campus and attended by students, faculty and community members. The engaging leaders gave a brief history of their journeys to their respective presidencies and were asked questions by Link Rhonda about their college experiences and their current and future goals. Students asked questions about the panelists’ roads to success.

Willie McKether, Ph.D, associate professor of anthropology and associate dean of UT’s College of Languages, Literature and Sciences, and Toledo attorney, Pariss Coleman, were the key architects of the panel discussion. “Straight Outta College” was sponsored by the UT College of Languages, Literature and Social Sciences; Brothers on the Rise, the departments of Sociology and Anthropology, Women’s and Gender Studies, Africana Studies, and Art; Alpha Phi Boule, which is the local chapter of the service-based professional fraternity Sigma Pi Phi; the Association of Black Faculty and Staff; and the Toledo Museum of Art.

Toledo Links were proud to play such an intricate role in Link Johnnetta’s highly publicized community appearances hosted by two of the city’s leading institutions. Toledo Links Rock!

Link Rhonda Sewell
It is no secret that exercise is good for the heart and many of us already make an effort to work-out on a daily basis. But did you know that major recent studies have found that even if you already hit the gym or participate in some other type of regular workout, prolonged sitting may be as dangerous to you as cigarette smoking? While higher levels of physical activity are associated with less pronounced risks of premature death, even high levels of exercise do not eliminate the risks of a sedentary lifestyle. In other words, you cannot work out for an hour in the morning and then sit the rest of the day! The good news is that five minutes of movement every hour can help reduce some of the risks associated with physical inactivity.

The surgeon general of the United States recently launched a call to action to promote walking and walkable communities in an effort to make walking a National priority.

Walking for 30 minutes a day for five days a week is the minimum recommended amount. Walking for an hour a day (450 minutes/week), according to researchers with the National Cancer Institute, Harvard University, is the ideal amount of time to achieve maximum health benefits.

Now that we know better, let us do better! The Central Area is encouraging our Link sisters to “Walk to Vegas!” Central Area Links are being challenged to step up and commit to walking at least 5000 steps a day (10,000 would be even better!) beginning January 1, 2016 until the National Assembly in Las Vegas in June 2016. With more than 2500 Links in the Central Area walking 5000 steps per day until June, we can strut into the National Assembly bringing 2.2 Billion steps with us. That’s enough steps for every Central Area Link that attends the 40th Assembly to have walked to Vegas!

So how do we get there? We are encouraging sisters to purchase a pedometer to track her steps. At the end of each month, sisters should record total steps and report them to the chapter’s HHS chair who will keep a record of them until June 28, 2016 when we leave for our 40th National Assembly.

Link sisters, get ready, get set, we are walking it out! Las Vegas, here we come!

#LinksFitby50

Link Karen P. Williams and Link Lauren Barton
Greetings Sisters,

As a wonderful year comes to a close, here are a few reminders that relates to the 1 in 5 Certification. By now, the Chapter Secretaries have run the 1 in 5 report and distributed to members to verify the information. If there are any discrepancies, please notify me at jillol@comcast.net by December 17, 2016. I will work with National to make the appropriate corrections.

The chapter secretary should provide an accurate 1 in 5 report to the Vice President of Membership by December 30, 2016. Members that have not met the requirements will receive reminder letters by January 30, 2016. Please contact me if you have any questions. Our leadership team wants to ensure that no Link is left behind due to this requirement.

Also, please take note of our Monthly Chat Schedule:

**Presidents Chats - Link Glenda**
1st Wednesdays at 8EST.
January 6, February 3, March 2, April 6, May 3

**Vice Presidents Chat - Link Monica**
2nd Wednesdays at 8EST
January 13, February 10, March 9, April 13, May 11

**Program Pearls - Link Karen**
2nd Mondays at 8EST
December 14, January 25, February 8, March 14, April 11, May 9

Wishing you and yours a Happy and Safe Holiday Season!

Sisterly,

Jill Bryant-Veneable
Link Jill
Central Area Secretary

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**UPCOMING DATES & Reminders**

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**CALL FOR CONTENT**

Link Sisters,

The feedback for our Link Up e-Magazine has been extremely positive! We greatly appreciate your ideas and input. We thank all of our Team 68 members who keep us informed of the transformational programming our sisters are implementing in the communities we serve throughout the year. Thank you for sharing positive news about our Link sisters who collaborate, include, and create positive change locally, in our area and nationally. It is important to celebrate each other accomplishments.

Send your chapter news and editorial submissions to bugsact@gmail.com to post to the Central Area’s social media accounts and for consideration for our e-Magazine. Our social media is updated daily and our magazine is published quarterly. **Deadlines for the March issue of Link Up is January 16, 2016. Please send photos in JPEG format. The word count should be 300 words or less.**

Our next social media campaign is Go Red with the American Heart Association. We are looking for sisters to share why they Go Red! The deadline is January 16, 2016 also.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sisterly,

Glenda Masingale Manson
Link Glenda M2
19th Area Director

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**IN CLOSING**

Know Your Story. Know Your Power.

Know your family history. Know the red flags of heart disease and stroke, which kill 1 in 3 women.

Thank you to The Links, Incorporated for your passion in helping give the power to prevent it. Schedule your well-woman visit today.

GoRedForWomen.org
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