Long Beach Branch NAACP

Report Date: September 17, 2017

NAACP CELEBRATE 108 YEARS OF CIVIL RIGHTS BY CONVENING IN BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

THEME: “STEADFAST AND IMMOVABLE”

The 108th Annual NAACP Convention was held in Baltimore, Maryland July 22nd through July 26th, 2017. The theme of the conference was “Steadfast and Immovable”. Founded in 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is the nation’s oldest and largest civil rights organization. With more than 250,000 members and 2,000 units in all 50 states and abroad (Germany, Italy, Spain, Korea, and Japan), the NAACP remains an important and vital progressive voice, focusing on major civil and human rights priorities including: strengthening access to quality education, improving health and environmental justice outcomes, building economic opportunity and security, advancing criminal justice reform and promoting political representation and civic participation. The mission of the NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination. The vision of the NAACP is to ensure a society in which all individuals have equal rights without discrimination based on race.

Naomi Rainey Pierson, President and Jesse Johnson, 3rd Vice President of the Long Beach Branch NAACP were delegates to the convention. The Long Beach Branch was a double national winner of the Thalheimer Award. The Thalheimer Award is given to branches for their excellence in the areas of programs and publication that have contributed most to the furtherance of the Association’s mission during the preceding year. The Long Beach Branch won 1st place in their class for programs and won 3rd place for publications. Our president Naomi Rainey Pierson is the Chair of the California/Hawaii State ACT-SO Program and has been with the program since its inception, nearly forty years. She was also elected to serve on the National nominating committee for At-Large Members to the National Board of Directors.

"Many have talked about whether or not we're relevant," said Interim NAACP President and CEO Derrick Johnson during the general meeting, held on the third day of the conference. "Let me remind you: Whether you come from Honolulu, Hawaii or Fort Pierce, Fla., whether you hail from Connecticut or Ohio, we are the NAACP. We are all that we have. Our relevance is as true as our actions in local communities across this landscape." Our Interim President was also asked by a reporter during the convention what we have to do in the face of groups like Black Lives Matter. "The beautiful thing about young people being activists is the fact that young people are being activists," he said. "We support the movement for black lives. We support the Justice League," Johnson said. "Many of the young people who are in the ranks of those organizations come out of the ranks of the NAACP. The NAACP understands that in civil rights advocacy there's room for everyone. And because there is room for everyone, it's an opportunity to make democracy work for all.” Derrick Johnson is a long time NAACP member and past Mississippi State Conference President and Vice Chair of the National Board of Directors.
All sitting United States Presidents are invited to speak at the annual convention but President Donald Trump was a “no show”.

Many movers and shakers such as Senators Chris Van Hollen and Kamala Harris, former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, Jr. spoke at an annual luncheon held in honor of famed Baltimore civil rights attorney Clarence Mitchell. Senator Bernie Sanders was also a convention guest speaker. During the Armed Services Affairs Luncheon veterans in attendance received a prestigious award including U.S. Army veteran Jesse Johnson. Long Beach Branch 3rd Vice President. Former NAACP President and CEO Kweisi Mfume and Ben Jealous were also keynote speakers. Mfume said “The fight continues for equal pay, economic development criminal justice and education. It is important that we engage our youth more”. Special sessions were held to listen to the concerns of youth and local branches. Leon W. Russell, Chairman of the Board agreed to having a "Listening Tour” to local branches to improve communications between local and national operations.

Some of the other activities, sessions and events that took place were General and Planetary Sessions, Health & Arthurs’ Pavilion, The Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO) competition, a Job Fair, the Commerce & Industry Show, Continuing Legal Education workshop, Women in the NAACP (WIN) Luncheon, the Health Luncheon, the Roy Wilkens Luncheon, the Prayer Breakfast, Regional Branch Forums and meetings, Delegate Receptions and Youth Receptions and meetings.

Thirty-six (36) Resolutions were passed during the convention. Please refer to “reference copy” located in display area for detailed resolution information. Some of the major resolutions that passes are as follow:

1. **Civil Rights**: Hate Crimes Against Muslims
2. **Criminal Justice**: Opposition to Gun Homicide and Calls for it to Rightfully be seen as a Public Health Epidemic
3. **Economic Development**: Support of Preserving Historic Places that Tell the Full African-American Story
4. **Education**: Public & Charter Schools Fulfilling the Promise of Brown vs Board of Education 1954 (This resolution was submitted by California/Hawaii during the 2017 State Conference).
5. **Health**: Addressing the Shortage of African-American Doctors in the United States (This resolution was submitted by California/Hawaii during the 2017 State Conference).
6. **Internal Affairs**: Provision to Allow Electronic Notification of Branch, College Chapter and Youth Elections

The 109th Annual Convention is slated for San Antonio, Texas.

The NAACP is “STEADFAST AND IMMOVABLE”.

Report prepared and presented by

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Long Beach Branch NAACP