



Building our future by supporting our youth

# Our Community's Children

January/February 2010

## Ready by 21 Summit Peaks Interest of Many

Community participation and support was ever present at the *Ready by 21 Summit* at New Hope Baptist Church on January 14, 2010. Participants included Mayor George Heartwell, City Commissioner Elias Lumpkins, County Commissioners Dick Bulkowski and Jim Talen, Grand Rapids Board of Education member Lisa Hinkel and representatives from faith based organizations, school districts, businesses, non-profits, health and human services, foundations, neighborhood associations, youth organizations and more. Participants learned about the Ready by 21 Model created by the Forum for Youth Investment. This framework is a big picture approach to looking at the supports and systems a child needs from age zero to 21 that will make him/her most likely to succeed in college, work and life.

The Ready by 21 Dashboard, a tool of the national model, was customized by the Grand Rapids Youth Master Plan Steering Committee and used by participants in the day-long summit facilitated by Karen Finn, Consultant for the Forum for Youth Investment. This dashboard displays

result statements for success and indicators that measure that success. Finn took participants through a process using the dashboard to identify the contributing factors of trends in the areas of teen pregnancy, infant mortality, school attendance, civic engagement, juvenile crime and more. Participants identified the following as contributing factors: Parental and Adult Involvement, Lack of Education, Poverty and Economic Realities, Unsafe/Unhealthy/Inappropriate Relationships, Low Self-Esteem and Hopelessness, Increase Youth Participation and Access and Availability of Resources. Input from the Summit will inform the Youth Master Plan, a blueprint for the community to improve outcomes for youth so that they are ready for college, work and life.

The Youth Master Planning process has been made possible through the support of the National League of Cities, Forum for Youth Investment, Academy of Educational Development, and the U.S. Department of Justice/Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Programs. Log onto [www.grcity.us/ourchildren](http://www.grcity.us/ourchildren), for more information.



Karen Finn, Facilitator



Attendees engaged in round-table discussions



Mayor's Youth Council members singing an inspirational song



Young people enjoying food from Sandmann's



Mayor George K. Heartwell

### **State of the City Address**

Saturday, January 30, 2010 at 9 a.m.

DeVos Place Convention Center • 303 Monroe Ave., NW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Call 616.456.3168 for more information.

## ***GRPS "LEEDS" State in Green-Built Schools***

Burton Elementary and Middle School has been "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" (LEED) certified by the U.S. Green Building Council. This certification verifies that Burton has met the green building standards under the LEED green building rating system. Burton is the fourth Grand Rapids Public School to receive LEED certification behind Gerald R. Ford Middle School in May of 2009, Harrison Park Elementary and Middle School in September of 2008 and Sibley Elementary in June of 2008. Some features include:

- ◆ Rain water reclamation system for a portion of the roof. This system uses a 10,000 gallon underground tank to collect and store rainwater. The water is then recycled back into building for use in the restroom toilets.
- ◆ Roof rain garden to grow plants and grasses, diverting excess water from the sewer system. The roof rain garden reduces the roof temperatures in the summer.

### **Earthquake Relief Efforts for Haiti**

**Below are just a few local and national organizations providing aid to the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. Please lend your support.**

#### **American Red Cross**

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)  
616.456.8661

#### **Haiti Needs You**

[haitineedsyou.com](http://haitineedsyou.com)  
616.454.9875

#### **International Aid**

[www.internationalaid.org](http://www.internationalaid.org)  
616.846.7490

#### **Rays of Hope for Haiti**

[www.raysofhopeforhaiti.com](http://www.raysofhopeforhaiti.com)  
616.633.4258

#### **Salvation Army**

[www.usc.salvationarmy.org/grandrapids](http://www.usc.salvationarmy.org/grandrapids)  
616.459.3433

#### **Text "Haiti" to 90999**

\$10 donation billed to cell phone

- ◆ Low emitting adhesives, paints, carpet and wood were used throughout the building to enhance indoor air quality.
- ◆ Day light windows and curtain walls to increase the amount of natural daylight in classrooms, offices and hallways, decreasing the need for artificial florescent light.
- ◆ Occupancy sensors in each room to control lighting and promote energy conservation.
- ◆ A state-of-the-art heating and cooling system provides optimum comfort for occupants and energy savings for the District.



*Photo of the Month*

### ***Factoid***

#### ***How Teens Spend Their Free Time***

**58% With friends • 44% In sports • 28% On computer/games  
27% With Family • 24% Sleeping (Respondents selected their top two choices)**

- GR Teen Profile 2009, [www.grcity.us/ourchildren](http://www.grcity.us/ourchildren)

## ***Honoring the Past, Illuminating the Present***

In 1926, Black History Month, originally known as Negro Week, was created by Dr. Carter G. Woodson to honor the many achievements made by African-Americans. Black History Month has also been a time to share the contributions made by African-Americans in the United States with citizens of the world. As much as it is important to recognize and honor past luminaries, it is equally important to identify and support the present trailblazers. The Grand Rapids Press Newspaper recently highlighted local "Giants" in the Grand Rapids community and below are just a few nationally recognized professionals who are working in all sectors of the larger community to improve the world with their expertise and talents.



**Lisa P. Jackson**  
Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency



**Dr. Ben Carson**  
Neurosurgeon



**Angela Burt-Murray**  
Editor-in-Chief  
Essence Magazine



**Travis Payne**  
Choreographer  
Film, Television, Video



**Karen Pittman**  
Co-Founder, President  
& CEO  
Forum for Youth  
Investment



**Lee Daniels**  
Director  
Film

*Photos courtesy of Google Images  
and Essence Magazine*



"I think Black History Month still has great and abundant relevance in every teens' life. It challenges us and gives us something in which to look back and be proud."

**Cheyenne Doss**  
G.R. Youth Commission  
9th Grade  
Catholic Central High

Application deadline for GRPS Theme Schools and Centers of Innovation is February 1, 2010. To obtain an application, go to [www.grpublicschools.org](http://www.grpublicschools.org), email [choices@grps.k12.mi.us](mailto:choices@grps.k12.mi.us) or call 819-3276.

### **11th Annual Latino Youth Conference**

*El Poder de Soñar - The Power of Dreams*

Tuesday, March 2, 2010 • 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

GRCC's Ford Fieldhouse

All 8th-grade students

in Kent ISD

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Our Community's Children is a public/private partnership of the City of Grand Rapids, the Grand Rapids Public Schools, and the community.



300 Monroe Ave., NW; Suite 921 • Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
616.456.3558 (p) • 616.456.4565 (f) • [www.grcity.us/ourchildren](http://www.grcity.us/ourchildren)