

# **INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CHILD (ISAAC)**

## *Progress Report and Plans*

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### **Visions for Children Preschool Network**

The Skillman Foundation has awarded a grant to Janice E. Hale to revise the Visions for Children Preschool Curriculum in preparation for the launch of an international network of programs that will teach the curriculum to preschool African American children. This is a huge step forward toward the implementation of a key component of the Mission of ISAAC to impact the quality of education for African American children. A team of student assistants are at work transferring the curriculum to an updated template that will have enhanced appeal for teachers. The original curriculum provided one exemplary activity for each objective. The revised curriculum will feature multiple activities to teach each objective.

Visions for Children is a preschool program (written by Janice E. Hale) which emphasizes the special characteristics of African American children, offering a teaching method and curriculum which encourages children to learn the information and skills necessary for upward mobility, career achievement, and financial independence in the American mainstream. At the same time, they feel pride in their own ethnic culture and are able to identify with and contribute to the development of our people.

This program is based on the model described in *Black Children: Their Roots, Culture and Learning Styles* (Hale 1986) and was piloted for seven years in Cleveland, Ohio. A distinctive feature is the emphasis on teaching young children cognitive skills while strengthening their self-esteem and identity as African Americans.

The teaching method emphasizes the culture of the African Diaspora and integrates it in all of its diversity throughout the curriculum. The children learn about Africa and their rich cultural heritage; they learn about Afrocentric arts and crafts; they listen to folktales

and stories written by African American writers; they listen to music and learn about musicians and music that has emerged from Black culture; they learn about heroes and sheroes in Black history such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In sum, the children in this program are surrounded by messages that get them started on the right track in realizing that there is pride in being beautiful Black children who can hold their own in a competitive society.

The goal is to complete the revision of the curriculum by June 2015 so that training of staff can be conducted during the summer. The target date for implementation is the Fall of 2015. Attached to the email transmitting this report is a description of the design of the curriculum and the network. The readers are invited to provide feedback on the design of the program to the author whose contact information is listed on the last page. Those who are interested in joining the network are invited to notify us.

### **Conference on Research Directions (CORD)**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Bi-annual Conference on Research Directions will be held at the Omni Oceanfront Resort on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina from May 3 – May 6, 2015. The keynote speakers are: Dr. Dalton Conley, University Professor of Sociology at New York University and Rev. Dr. Charles G. Adams, William and Lucille Nickerson Professor of the Practice of Ethics and Ministry, Harvard Divinity School and Pastor of Hartford Memorial Baptist Church, Detroit.

The deadline for submission of proposals to make presentations has been extended to January 11, 2015. The deadline for Early Bird reduced registration is February 26, 2015. The Save the Date Flier is attached to the email transmitting this report and is available with the proposal and registration forms on the ISAAC web site at: [www.isaac.wayne.edu](http://www.isaac.wayne.edu).

### **CORD Conference Proceedings**

The proceedings from the 2013 CORD conference were released in the summer of 2014. The *Conference Proceedings* are available on the ISAAC web site. Thanks is extended to the co-editors, Dr. Marisha Humphries, Associate Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago and Dr. Erika D. Taylor, Senior Research Associate at the Center for Great Public Schools, NEA, for their diligent work on this publication. They also created the guidelines for submission of manuscripts that is available on the ISAAC web site. Presenters should review those guidelines prior to submitting their proposals in order to plan publication of their papers. ISAAC provides the opportunity for authors to

submit their manuscripts to the *Conference Proceedings* and/or for peer reviewed publication in *African American Learners*, journal of ISAAC.

### **Special Issue of *African American Learners***

A Special Issue of *African American Learners* (AAL) will be released this month. This will be a combined spring/fall 2014 issue. The theme of the issue is Hip Hop Music. The special issue emanates from a panel that presented at the 2013 CORD conference led by Dr. Jomo Mutegi, Associate Professor of Science Education, School of Education Indiana University, IUPUI. Thanks is extended to the co-editors of the special issue, Dr. Jomo Mutegi and Dr. Vanessa R. Pitts Bannister, Assistant Professor of Mathematics Education at Florida A&M University for accepting this challenge and for their fine work. Thanks is also extended to the Co-Editors-in-Chief of AAL, Dr. Gloria Swindler Boutte, Professor, University of South Carolina and Dr. Hakim M. Rashid, Professor, Howard University for their work in providing support for this special issue. Words cannot express the nurturance and support Dr. Boutte and Dr. Rashid have provided to the careers of other scholars through their work as co-editors of AAL.

### **Call for Papers for Special Issue on Reparations for *African American Learners*, October 2016**

*African American Learners* is joining with *The Journal of African American History* (JAAH), *The Black Scholar*, *The Journal of Black Psychology*, and other scholarly publications in issuing a "Call for Papers" for upcoming Special Issues and Symposia devoted to the discussion and analysis of what might be included in a "Ten Point Program" for reparations payments to African Americans in the United States. *African American Learners*, *The Journal of African American History*, *The Black Scholar*, and other scholarly journals are soliciting manuscripts that identify and explain how reparations payments should be used to advance the economic and educational conditions collectively for African Americans in the United States, especially the children and youth. The Ten Point Program for the United States follows the issuing of the "CARICOM Ten Point Program" formulated by the Caribbean nations and issued in March 2014.

*African American Learners*, *The JAAH* and other scholarly journals are seeking manuscripts offering a scholarly analysis of an issue or problem that should be included in the Ten Point Program. Using the CARICOM Ten Point Program as the model, what specific issue and problem should be included in reparations demands for people of African descent in the United States? For example, African Americans do not have to seek a "full apology" for slavery and slave trading since one has already been issued by the U. S. Congress. However, like people in the Caribbean, African Americans face a

severe health crisis and could use reparations funds to obtain increased access to medical services to combat childhood obesity, type II diabetes, HIV infections, breast cancer, and high infant mortality rates. We invite health professionals to submit proposals for the use of reparations payments for much needed medical programs aimed at African American neighborhoods and communities.

The deadline for the Call for Papers is October 15, 2015. We are also soliciting Guest Editors or Co-Editors for this issue.

### **Round Table on African American Education presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI)**

Dr. Hakim Rashid, Senior ISAAC Fellow and Janice Hale held a Round Table on African American Education at the Annual Meeting of the NBCDI on October 12, 2014 in Detroit, Michigan. The Visions for Children Preschool Network was announced as well as various other initiatives of ISAAC to the 100 plus attendees. Thanks is extended to Sandra Sumner and Earline Thomas, an ISAAC volunteer, for their assistance.