



**The Empowerment Center
Dedication**

Thursday, August 14, 2008

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GREETINGS FROM THE CEO

Welcome to the dedication of The KISRA Empowerment Center! The KISRA board of directors, staff and volunteers appreciate you for taking time out of your busy schedule to join us in this dedication ceremony.

The completion of the final phase of this renovation/expansion project would not be possible without the assistance of our Honorable Senator Robert C. Byrd. We are also thankful to the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation, Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito, our State Senators and the US Department of Health and Human Services for contributions made to Phase I of the project. A special thank you also to the members of Ferguson Memorial Baptist Church for their faithfulness.

The Empowerment Center will house most of KISRA's Kanawha County initiatives including the Harambee Child Development Center, Harambee Learning Center, Harambee Teen Achievers, KISRA Homeownership, KISRWorks! and the KISRA Business Enterprise Center. It will be a one-stop shop for comprehensive education, employment and economic empowerment services.

As we celebrate our 10th year of engagement in community economic development, I believe that the best is still yet to come! With the help of God and our many supporters, we will continue to provide unparalleled service to community residents in the Kanawha Valley and beyond for many years to come.

Michelle Mickle Foster, MS
Chief Executive Officer

BRIEF HISTORY

The Kanawha Institute for Social Research & Action, Inc. (KISRA) is the community-serving and faith-based initiative of Ferguson Memorial Baptist Church, which is located at 124 Marshall Avenue in West Dunbar, West Virginia. In 1993, KISRA was established as a 501(c)(3) organization and incorporated in the State of West Virginia by Cynthia Bush, a former member of Ferguson Memorial Baptist Church. Ms. Bush left the state of West Virginia in 1993 before any KISRA programs were developed. It was also in 1993 that Michelle Foster, the current chief executive officer of KISRA, moved to West Virginia for a career as a chemical engineer at Union Carbide. Michelle became a member of Ferguson Memorial Baptist Church on August 15, 1993.

After becoming actively involved in the youth ministries at the church, Michelle and her colleagues realized the need for additional funding for literacy enrichment and after-school programming. It was around this time that Pastor Emanuel Heyliger mentioned that a non-profit had been developed and upon reviewing the files, Michelle realized that the 501(c)(3) designation for the Kanawha Institute for Social Research & Action, Inc. (KISRA) was already in place. A board of directors was convened and the group set about defining the mission and vision for the organization. In 1998, Michelle answered her call to ministry and was hired by Ferguson Memorial Baptist Church to develop KISRA. Executive assistant, Angela Dobson, became the first official KISRA employee in February 2000. While the church paid Ms. Foster's salary, Ms. Dobson's salary was paid by donations from Pastor Heyliger and grant funding obtained for the Harambee Learning Center.

The Harambee Learning Center was KISRA's first initiative and it had its genesis in 1998 with a band of highly motivated volunteers, including current KISRA board member Dr. Donald Anderson. The homeownership program came next, followed by KISRAWorks! and the fatherhood initiative.

The organization has been operating out of Ferguson Memorial Baptist Church since

1998. The church purchased the former Chew Chat Inn in 1997 and Ms. Foster and the KISRA board started framing the vision for the Empowerment Center at that time. This popular nightclub was a “watering hole” in the center of the community; a place where gun fire and other violence was common and where lives were lost. The first phase of the Empowerment Center was completed in 2004, when the Harambee Child Development Center was established.

KISRA has also been extending beyond the Greater Kanawha Valley. In January 2007, KISRA’s Huntington office was established at the Douglass Center on Tenth Avenue. Services offered from the Huntington office include the fatherhood initiative, workforce development, credit and housing counseling and homebuyer education. Additionally, KISRA developed a partnership with the WV Division of Corrections in 2008. Through this partnership, the organization now offers a parenting curriculum and financial fitness to inmates at the Mount Olive Slayton Work Camp in Fayette County.

MISSION

The mission of KISRA is to assess, develop and implement educational and socio-economic initiatives that serve and empower the citizens of our community.

VISION

The vision of KISRA is a self-sustaining and economically-viable community.

OUR CORE VALUES

KISRA has seven core values that guide staff and volunteers as they provide service to the community. These core values are:

- Spirituality
- Respect for all people
- Integrity
- Faith
- Commitment to excellence
- Continuous improvement
- Collaboration

WHO DO WE SERVE?

We serve children, youth, adults and families from Kanawha County, Putnam County, Cabell County and Fayette County.

THE HEART OF KISRA

The heart of KISRA is comprised of our board of directors and staff.

The Board of Directors

Rt. Rev. Emanuel A. Heyliger (Chairperson)	Kitty Dooley, Esq.
Melvin Jones, MBA, CPA (Treasurer/Secretary)	Mike Kelly, Esq.
Philip Heyliger	Barbara Edmonds
David Sayre	Don Anderson, PhD
Raymond Harris	Armelia Pannell

The Staff

Michelle Foster, Chief Executive Officer

Angela Dobson, Executive Assistant

Harambee Child Development Center

Verbie Ann Helyger, Director

Maria Terrell, Assistant Director

Ruth Byers, Teacher

Jehada Ali-Fakhir, Teacher

Denise Johnson, Teacher

Season Lewis, Teacher

Stephanie Simmons, Teacher

Joyce Haynes, Assistant Teacher

Jessie Johnson, Assistant Teacher

Sara Mosley, Assistant Teacher

Ture' Johnson, Assistant Teacher

Gloria Carter, Assistant Teacher

Tommarra Lewis, Assistant Teacher

Danny Dyess, Assistant Teacher

Sharon Gordon, Assistant Teacher

Richard Dailey, Cook

Brooke Dailey, Receptionist

Thomas Woods, Caretaker

Homeownership

Patricia Scott, Program Specialist/Instructor

Kenneth Mosley, Construction Manager

Angela Dobson, Counselor/Instructor

April Harris, Program Assistant/Instructor

Harambee Learning Center & Teen

Achievers

Angela Dobson, Coordinator

Donnetta Dailey, Tutor

Jerricka Davis, Tutor

Tara Hall, Mentor

April Harris, Tutor

Debra Lipscomb, Tutor

Ametrea Robison, Mentor

Janee Robison, Tutor

Trae Robison, Mentor

Jonathon Spurlin, Mentor

Fatherhood & Re-Entry

Carl Chadband, Program Specialist

Michael Jones, Program Specialist

Verbie Ann Helyger, Instructor

Jonathon Spurlin, Program Assistant

Business Enterprise Center

Traci Mosley, Coordinator

Patricia Scott, Instructor

THE EMPOWERMENT CENTER DEDICATION PROGRAM

- The Master of Ceremonies..... Judge Mike Kelly
Board of Directors
- The Opening PrayerMelvin Jones
Treasurer/Secretary of the Board of Directors
- The WelcomeDavid Sayre
Board of Directors
- The OccasionMichelle Foster
Chief Executive Officer
- The Musical Selection.....Inspiration
- The Greetings..... Congresswoman Capito
Special Guests
- The Remarks from the Board Chair Rt. Rev. Emanuel Heyliger
Chairperson of the Board of Directors
- The Musical Selection.....Inspiration

The Litany of Dedication

Reader #1

The Spirit thrusts God’s people into community ministry. He impels young and old, men and women, to go into the community with the good news of God’s grace. The Spirit goes before us and with us convincing us of a better way to serve Christ in all areas of life.

Reader #2

God has given the West Dunbar community and the Kanawha Valley The Empowerment Center. We give thanks for this remarkable facility where we can live out what God called us to be.

Reader #3

We give thanks for architects and builders, for electricians and plumbers, for carpenters and painters whose labor and discipline created this structure. For steel and wood, concrete, tile and carpet, for tools and machines, we are grateful. We are thankful for creativity and cooperation that produced an attractive, useful building. For jobs and the safety for our workers, we express our gratitude. We give thanks for donors and volunteers who generously supported our vision.

LEADER: As a place where the community will access education, employment and economic empowerment services:

ALL: We dedicate this Center, O God.

LEADER: Because this Center was made possible through the generosity of so many people - the members of Ferguson Memorial Baptist Church, the congressional delegation, state senators, various donors and volunteers:

ALL: We dedicate this Center, O God.

LEADER: In thanks to you, Lord, for guidance and wisdom in this project, and for all our projects:

ALL: We dedicate this Center, O God.

On this day, August 14, 2008, we celebrate this harvest from the Father's hand. We want to make our services to the community "Holy unto the Lord." We want our witness to be true, that students, parents, men, women, families, friends and visitors, may come to know the Triune God and all His goodness. Toward this end, we dedicate the

KISRA Empowerment Center to the honor and glory of God the Father, Christ his Son and our Savior, and the ever present Holy Spirit.

The Closing Prayer Rt. Rev. Emanuel Heyliger

OUR INITIATIVES

Education	Employment	Economic Empowerment
<p>Harambee Child Development Center</p> <p>Early Childhood Development The Creative Curriculum Kanawha County Pre-School Video & Internet Monitoring</p> <p>Harambee Learning Center</p> <p>After-school Enrichment Computer Literacy Homework Assistance Literacy Enrichment Math Enrichment Mentoring Prevention Recreation Tutoring</p> <p>Harambee Teen Achievers</p> <p>College Preparation College Tours Community Service Entrepreneurship Training Financial Literacy Education Leadership Development Mentoring Prevention Instruction Self-Management Skills Tutoring</p>	<p>Fatherhood & Re-Entry</p> <p>24/7 Dad Computer Proficiency Job Readiness Training Job Placement Life Management Money Management Support Services</p> <p>KISRAGWorks!</p> <p>Computer Proficiency Job Creation Job Placement</p>	<p>Homeownership</p> <p>Credit Counseling Debt Management Down-Payment Assistance Financial Fitness Housing Counseling Housing Development Homebuyer Education Individual Development Accounts Mortgage Loan Origination Mortgage Loan Pre-Qualification</p> <p>Small Business Development</p> <p>Banking Bookkeeping Budgeting Business Grants Business Loans Business Operations Training Business Plan Development Computer and Internet Access Computer Training Conference Center Incubation Space Internet Training Legal Assistance Mail Boxes Market Research Support Marketing Support Office Support One-on-One Counseling Staff Training Voice Mail Box</p>

Harambee Child Development Center

The Harambee Child Development Center (HCDC), which opened its doors in October 2004, addresses the need for quality childcare and jobs in our community. HCDC was developed on the premise that academic success begins in pre-school and serves children from six weeks old.

This state licensed facility uses the Creative Curriculum and offers a free pre-k education through partnership with Kanawha County Schools. In addition to using the state-approved Creative Curriculum, HCDC features Internet monitoring for parents and video surveillance of the building and the playground. Children also receive wholesome, balanced meals that meet nutrition standards.

Harambee Learning Center

The Harambee Learning Center (HLC) is an after-school, safe and drug-free haven that is focused on preventing the onset of adolescent problem behaviors in children that attend Kanawha County schools by reducing their risk of academic failure. HLC serves children in kindergarten through 6th grade from the following schools:

- Dunbar Primary
- Dunbar Intermediate
- Dunbar Middle
- Bridgeview Elementary

Even though most of the children served by the Center attend these schools, all children are welcomed, regardless of which school they attend.

HLC was developed on a foundation of risk-focused prevention. Risk-focused prevention is based on the premise that to prevent a problem from happening, the factors that increase the risk of that problem developing must be identified and ways to reduce the risks so as to enhance protective or resiliency factors must be found.

Harambee Teen Achievers

The goal of the Harambee Teen Achievers program is to equip high school students with the tools necessary for academic success. All high school students are welcome to attend meetings and activities which are held twice per month on Saturdays.

Fatherhood and Re-Entry

In 2006 the KISRA Fatherhood Program, originally launched in 2003, was revived. The program serves families from Kanawha, Putnam, Cabell and Fayette Counties, West Virginia through education, training and assistance in two activity areas: responsible parenting and economic stability. Non-custodial fathers are the primary participants in program activities, through which their families receive the added support and benefits of fathers equipped to help stabilize their families economically and emotionally. This program is helping to eliminate many of the barriers that prevent these fathers from contributing to their families in meaningful and positive ways.

Fatherhood staff members discovered that 60% of program participants had criminal records. This fact led to the development of the KISRA Re-Entry Initiative that serves inmates and persons returning to the community after leaving prison.

KISRAWorks!

KISRAWorks! was established in 2000 to assist the unemployed and underemployed in gaining economic self-sufficiency. This initiative serves Temporary Assistance for Needy Families clients from the WV Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) and WIA-eligible adults and is currently funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services. KISRAWorks! primarily serves Kanawha and Cabell County residents.

Homeownership

KISRA's homeownership initiative was established in 1998 to ensure that the people in our community obtain the necessary skills and resources to achieve the "American Dream" of homeownership. KISRA is a HUD-certified housing counseling agency,

community housing development organization and correspondent lender with the WV Housing Development Fund. Homeownership services are provided in Kanawha and Cabell Counties.

Small Business Development

The goal of the Business Enterprise Center is to provide technical assistance and support services to micro-enterprises in the state of West Virginia. Through the Center, jobs will be created and entrepreneurial opportunities will be available to community residents. The Center provides assistance and support for business owners and their commercial operations. Businesses will be better positioned to achieve sustained growth and success and ultimately, there will be increased economic development in West Virginia as a result of our efforts.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

- BB&T Bank
- BB&T Foundation
- Senator Byrd
- Congresswoman Capito
- CED Group
- JP Morgan Chase
- Charleston-Kanawha Housing Authority
- Crandall Pyles Haviland Foundation
- Dickenson Properties
- Dooley Law Firm
- Dow Foundation
- Ferguson Memorial Baptist Church
- Fifth Third Bank
- Governor Caperton
- Grace Heyliger
- Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation
- Infinity Enterprise
- Integrated Construction Services
- Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Program
- Reverend Kay Lowther
- Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development
- Mildred Snyder
- Safe and Drug Free Communities Program (US Department of Education)
- SunTrust Bank
- Tyson Graphics
- United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Family Assistance
- United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Verizon Foundation
- WesBanco Bank
- West Virginia Commission for National & Community Service
- West Virginia Division of Corrections
- West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources
- West Virginia Housing Development Fund
- West Virginia State Senators
- West Virginia State University (Land Grants)
- West Virginia State Community and Technical College
- West Virginia University Extension
- Workforce West Virginia

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Dunbar, WV 25064
304.768.8924

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The Douglass Center
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Huntington, WV 25570
304.529.0337

Web Site: www.kisra.org

E-Mail: kisrainfo@kisra.org



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