




CANDIDATE'S FORUM



*Kankakee Public Library
4th Floor Auditorium*



Limited Capacity: 50 people

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

Kankakee County Circuit Clerk
5:30 - 6:30 PM | Dondi Mariele + Sandra Cianci + Nicole Scott

21st Judicial Circuit Judge
6:45 - 7:45 PM | Kenneth Wright + Bill Dickenson

Due to limited capacity due to Covid, these debates will be held via Zoom. Questions for the candidates will be accepted via email by noon the day of the debate at marcel2020@kankakee.il.us. For Zoom login information, please go online the Library or the NACJP's Facebook pages or call 815-928-4564 option 4. For the Candidates' Forum will be available for viewing on the Library's youtube page shortly after the event.

Kankakee Public Library
201 East Merchant Street
Kankakee, IL 60901

The Kankakee County Branch NAACP

Officers

President - Theodis Pace

1st Vice President - Steven J. Hunter

2nd Vice President – Jesse Gathing

Secretary - Paulette Crank

Asst. Secretary – Cathy Meltzer

Treasurer - Mary Lacy

Economic Development.....Theodis Pace
Education.....Charlene Eads
Finance.....Mary Lacy
Freedom Fund.....Paulette Crank
Health.....Mary Lacy
Housing.....Jan Gathing
Labor and Industry.....Theodis Pace
Legal Redress.....Cathy Meltzer
Membership.....Eloise Edwards
Political Action.....Heather Bryan, Charlene Eads
Publicity.....Theodis Pace
Youth.....Carole Franke, Angela Jones, Jan Gathing

Free Legal Clinic second Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

Call the office for an appointment.

Monthly meetings held the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

657 East Court St. , Kankakee, IL

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Kankakee County NAACP  
657 E. Court Street, Suite 205

Office: 815-932-0858

[naacp3035@aol.com](mailto:naacp3035@aol.com)

P.O. Box 1986  
Kankakee, IL 60901

[Kankakeecountybranchnaacp.org](http://Kankakeecountybranchnaacp.org)

December 10, 2020



TO: Officers and Members of the  
Kankakee County Branch NAACP

FROM: Theodis Pace, President

SUBJECT: Kankakee County NAACP 2020 Annual Report

As President of the Kankakee County Branch of the NAACP, it gives me the utmost gratification to report that we have entered into a new era of renewal. We are in solid financial shape, and we are full of energy! However, many of us have had a difficult year with illness, loss, uncertain employment, and isolation due to COVID-19.

However, there are several issues i.e., Criminal Justices Reform, Health, Education, Wealth Building, Economic Development, Political Action and Housing, that we must continue to address to advance equality in Kankakee County. It is my hope that this branch will meet the daily challenges of the civil rights journey to make the branch progressive.

Please find attached the 2020 Annual Report.

This report celebrates our progress and highlights increase in membership, youth leadership development, outstanding media coverage, free legal clinics, advocacy for civil, and human rights and the implementation of various programs and another year of the NAACP / HomeStar Bank Education Scholarship Fund. We truly have served the Kankakee Community well on matters of race equality and justice. But this is a county that still needs the NAACP. While much has been accomplished, even more needs to be done.

Over the next few months, it will be imperative that we don't stop pushing the newly elected officials on the issues that are essential to advancing the Black agenda and moving America closer to being fairer for all.

It is really an honor and a privilege for me to serve as your president and I look forward to our continued progress together. As we move to 2021, I am extremely encouraged and look forward to our future work toward the elimination of economic, educational, and social inequities that can rob our county of the ideal for equal opportunity to all its citizens. We stand and embrace all challenges in the true spirit of the NAACP. Remember, our mission is as relevant today as it was in 1909.



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER



I take this opportunity to thank YOU for all you have done to stay safe and to keep your families safe. Your hard work in keeping everyone healthy and safe has allowed us to serve our community. We are in a dangerous and uncertain time as COVID-19 pandemic spread across our county, state and country. However, last year's efforts produced many significant activities, while 2021 will certainly bring yet new and continued challenges to a future that indeed holds bright for the Kankakee County Branch NAACP. The branch's activities herein portray an organization still on the move and also depict a still vibrant base of members, volunteers and allies who walk the walk of an America as one society, open to all; a society that offers to all of its citizenry an equal opportunity in which to participate and that further will seek to understand and respect those differences we may see in others.

An organization founded 111 years ago by black and white citizens, both sharing a mutual concern for how America ultimately would embrace the social concept of race. The NAACP organized and mobilized new civic leaders in neighborhoods across the country. We registered voters who stayed home in 2016 and 2018. We got voters to the polls in numbers many thought not possible, showing the extraordinary power of the Black voter i.e., phone banking robocalls, etc. Our branch Empowerment Programs members and volunteers know none of this would have been possible without supporters like you your generosity fueled every part of our efforts. We endured hours-long lines at polling places, braved voter suppression, voter intimidation, overcame all the unscrupulous and contemptible tactics designed to silence us, and with each click of the voting machine or mark of the pen, we proclaimed one united message: We will be heard. This branch will continue its mission to dismantle racial hierarchal thinking and forges Kankakee County communities toward a realization that colored people come in all colors.

We're proud of what we've accomplished during the pandemic such as our June 2, 2020 Rally drawing over 700 attendees, signing of the Ten shared Principles, and the Kankakee County Community Crisis Response Team. Through continued help from our members, supporters, and the re-enlistment of many allies to our cause who have perhaps fallen asleep, and being willing only to speak truth while claiming no easy victories, the Kankakee NAACP looks forward to pressing onward and upward in 2021.

I want to offer a special prayer for those who are in quarantine and can't take in the Holiday Season Celebration.

Yours,  
Theodis Pace, President  
Kankakee County Branch NAACP



# KANKAKEE COUNTY BRANCH NAACP

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Kankakee County, Illinois Branch  
657 East Court Street, Suite 205  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1986  
Kankakee, Illinois 60901

Office (815) 932-0858 E-Mail: [naacp3035@aol.com](mailto:naacp3035@aol.com)

Web site: [www.Kankakeecountybranchnaacp.org](http://www.Kankakeecountybranchnaacp.org)



### POLICY:

#### Officers, Executive Committee, Chairs/Co-Chairs

|                                     |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| President.....                      | Theodis Pace                     |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President..... | Steven J. Hunter                 |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President..... | Jess C. Gathing                  |
| Secretary.....                      | Paulette Crank                   |
| Asst. Secretary.....                | Cathy Meltzer                    |
| Treasurer.....                      | Mary Lacy                        |
| Elected Committee Members.....      | 15                               |
| Committee Chairs.....               | (14 consisting of Ex. Committee) |
| Co-Chairs.....                      | 3                                |

### NUMBER OF MEETING HELD IN 2020

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| General Membership  | 12 |
| Executive Committee | 12 |
| Special Meeting     | 1  |

### PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCES

|                  | Elected Delegates | Observers | Youth |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| Region III ..... | 4                 | 3         | 10    |
| National .....   | 4                 | 3         | 10    |



The Kankakee County Branch of the NAACP during the calendar year 2020 had many accomplishments in spite of the COVID 19 Pandemic. The entire world as we know it was adversely impacted by this monumental catastrophe.

All facets of commerce, business, education, civil rights, religion, science, travel and other human activities were negatively complicated. However, the will of the membership continued to pursue the NAACP core mission and values during this epic and turbulent period. Advocacy, investigations, civil engagement, educational enhancements, public, virtual political forums, public health initiatives, issuance of scholarships and philanthropic partnerships survived.

In light of civil unrest throughout the USA and across the world, the local branch launched a unique interface. On June 2nd of this year, the local branch in conjunction with a group of local law enforcement groups, public/elected officials, Hispanic Partnership, youth, religious leaders, community leaders, business leaders assembled together. The event was held at the Kankakee County Fairgrounds with an estimated diverse crowd in excess of 700 attendees. It was a collaboration of communities and law enforcement coming together to engage in the concepts of peace, proper law enforcement techniques, diversity and viable/constructive communication. This event was live streamed throughout the region.

The ten shared principles were adopted by police departments in the county. This action was featured at a signing ceremony at the Kankakee Community College. Requisite signatories of rank were present at the historic ceremony which was sponsored by the local NAACP Chapter.

Ongoing meetings with state, city, village and county law enforcement agencies have been held throughout the area. Through the cooperation with Kankakee County Sheriff, Mike Downey, these meetings have been aired electronically. The group has been designated for training in a Kankakee County Rapid Response Team. This assembly will be trained with a specific curriculum on aspects of law enforcements, laws rules, ordinances, civil rights, history and procedures germane to investigations. This training will commence when meeting restrictions are Page modified.



## **2020 Annual Report**

### **Kankakee County Branch NAACP YOUTH COUNCIL**

The Kankakee County Branch of the NAACP believes strongly that future leaders must be developed today, and such development must be ongoing in our effort to help our youth council succeed.

The Kankakee Branch NAACP Youth Council objectives are to inspire, motivate and create interest in civic activities; provide young people with an understanding of pertinent issues; develop organizational skills for implementation of community related activities; and encourage our youth to participate in these activities. Even with COVID-19, the NAACP Youth Council had another very productive and positive year in 2020. The Youth were very active in recruiting new youth membership, participating in local community events and raising youth interest in the NAACP.

#### **2020 NAACP Youth Council highlights include:**

The youth continue to collect Aluminum Soda tabs for **Ronald McDonald House**. Thank you to the Adult Branch for your assistance.

Youth are collecting plastic bottle caps to assist Kankakee School District III Green Team project.

NAACP Youth Council members assisted Kankakee County Branch of the NAACP with Community Shred Day on May 30, 2020.

Trent Wills, NAACP Youth Council President, gave the welcome at the Kankakee Community Rally held at the Kankakee County Fairgrounds on Tuesday, June 2, 2020.

NAACP Youth Council assisted Kankakee County NAACP with Voter Registration, Membership Drive and Free Face Masks Giveaway at the 2020 JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION on June 20, 2020 at Pioneer Park

President Trent Wills and Micah Thomas, 1st Vice-President participated in a virtual planning meeting held on June 9 to plan for “Let’s Talk Breaking the Silence – Marijuana, Alcohol and Prescription Drug Misuse, and the Effect on Mental Health Community Talk” event held virtually on Tuesday, June 23 from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. The event was co-sponsored by the NAACP Youth Council. President Trent Wills participated in the June 23 event.

#### **Congratulations to the 2020 recipients of the NAACP Kankakee County Branch scholarship:**

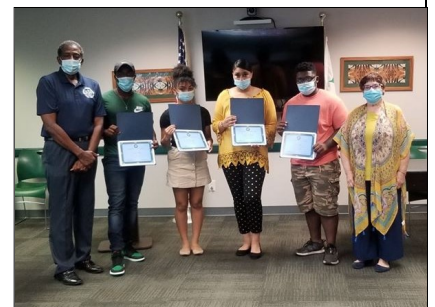
Angel Ervin, BBCHS

Jessica Gathing, Kankakee High School

KeMia Smith, Kankakee High School

Trent Wills, Momence High School

Presentation of Scholarships made by NAACP Branch President Theodis Pace on August 4 , at 1:30 p.m. in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor conference Room, Kankakee Public Library.



**2020/2021 Officer Election/Installation** held July 28, 2020 at 1:30 p.m., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference room, Kankakee Library.

President: Micah Thomas

1st Vice-President: Jazmine Watson

2nd Vice-President: Tahj Bradley-Bey

Secretary: Marlesia Walker

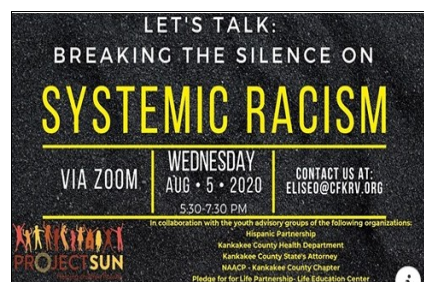
Assistant Secretary: Victoria Jones

Treasurer: Jalen Townsend

Assistant Treasurer: Jalen Maddox

LET'S TALK virtual event on Wednesday, August 5, from 5:30-7:30PM: Addressing Systemic Racism."

Co-sponsored by NAACP Youth Council. Thank you to Tahj Bradley-Bey and Jalen Townsend for assisting with the small group breakout sessions and to Angela Jones, Youth advisor, for serving as adult volunteer during the event.



Youth Council members and Youth Advisor participated virtually in the NAACP National Convention.

Trent Wills, Past President, was congratulated on being selected as the Vice President of his freshman class at the University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff.

Youth Council supported the annual Angel Tree Prison Ministry Christmas Gift program by purchasing 5 gifts.

The youth are planning a Youth Summit in collaboration with the Kankakee County State's Attorney Advisory Council for fall 2021.

**A Bit of History** is part of the Agenda of every Youth Council meeting.

The Kankakee County Branch NAACP Youth Council meets on the fourth Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at the Kankakee Public Library (or virtually per COVID-19 mitigation).

The Executive Committee meets on the second Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. (or virtually per COVID-19 mitigation) at the Kankakee Public Library.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Carole Franke, Jan Gathing and Angela Jones, Youth Advisors*





*The Membership Committee of this branch continues to encourage joining through all branch and many community events. Membership is encouraged at all Candidate Forums, advertisements in community organization program booklets and when attending local government and community meetings.*

*The committee's success continues to set the fiscal foundation for the executive committee, the branches ten (10) committees and to fund all programs and projects for the past calendar year. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, our membership efforts were limited but we took advantage of every opportunity to increase our membership. In June we participated in an outdoor Juneteenth Celebration in Pioneer Park, in May at our first ever NAACP Shred Day in our office parking lot and in September in Momence, IL at the Back to School event, we provided voter registration and membership information. Our most popular membership drive for October, which is our annual Freedom Fund Banquet, was cancelled however we launched the membership contact initiative "Reach Out" to those yearly banquet renewals. We are encouraged by the number of positive responses we are receiving. Our goal is to continue the "Reach Out" program and bring all our members back.*

*United, we will stand strong in the fight against injustice. We need you with us to succeed.*

*Eloise Edwards, Chair*

## Health Committee

The Health of a human is the general condition of a person's mind and body usually meaning to be free of illness injury or pain. Health is an essential, just like the air you breathe; you need it in order to live.

Achieving and maintaining good health is an ongoing process, shaped by both the evolution of health care knowledge and practices as well as personal strategies and organized interventions for staying healthy known as lifestyle.

Since February the world has faced an unforeseen challenge which is Coronavirus Disease 2019(Covid-19). The NAACP Health Committee, although limited by not being able to have in person events, has continued to provide services, information and education to our community.

This year we have worked with the State Conference NAACP and other local groups to make facemask and hand sanitizer available to seniors and other Kankakee County residents. We have focused attention on this virus by distributing over 3,500 facemask and 75 gallons of hand sanitizer. We have stayed active via Zoom and other social media platforms. Every opportunity has been taken to encourage residents to take the necessary steps to slow the spread, wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet apart, avoid crowds and wash your hands often.



## **BUDGET/FINANCE** Mary Lacy, Chair/Treasurer



The 2020 budget was formulated, presented and approved by the Executive Committee and membership, and used as an operating tool. This approach provides fiscal (Quick Book) responsibility and keeps in balance the competing commitments of 14 operating committees of the branch. The annual financial report was submitted on time to National NAACP and as always this branch remains compliant with national guidelines.

### **Legal Redress/Criminal Justice Committee**

#### **Annual Report 2020**

Submitted by: Chairperson Cathy Meltzer

The Legal Redress/Criminal Justice Committee of the Kankakee County Branch of the NAACP is made up of seven members of our unit in addition to a local attorney who volunteers his time. The committee meets the first Wednesday of each month to review and discuss all complaints received and determine a resolution.

All complaints must be submitted in writing. Our complaint form is available and can be downloaded from our website. The process for filing a complaint is also available on our website.

The Kankakee County branch also offers a free Legal Clinic. The legal clinic provides free, limited legal advice and referrals to area residents who might otherwise have no access to the legal system. The clinic is available to all residents on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month from 5:00 - 7:00pm. Individuals are seen on a first come, first served basis. We were pleased to have local attorneys volunteer their services.

### **DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS**

Complaints involving discrimination were addressed and investigated as received. The committee received and investigated several complaints alleging discrimination in various areas, such as employment, education and retail. In most cases, the complaints were resolved after contacting the complained of entity and inquiry by the Branch. No discrimination complaint warranted a litigation request to the national office. Most complaints were resolved with minimal investigation.

### **LEGAL CLINIC**

We are pleased to have local attorneys volunteer their services to assist several individuals with complaints regarding, primarily, housing, education, employment, and expungement of criminal records.

## **Public Safety and Criminal Justice (21st Century Game Changer)**

The Kankakee NAACP provide a free legal clinic with pro bono Lawyer assistance. Our Legal Redress/Criminal Justice Committee Chairperson Cathy Meltzer and her committee have teamed-up to investigate 32 cases i. e., employment, inadequate medical, harassment, prison issues, housing and miscellaneous as of December, 2020.

Our process is as follows: Intake all Complaints Reported to the Branch; Thoroughly Investigate Case; Assess the Validity of the Complaint; Meet with Respondent to Review Entire Case; and Offer Proposed Solutions Based on a Thorough and Complete Investigation. Some cases may result in direct action or withdrawal of economic support if deemed necessary. We will continue to pursue freedom and justice for all Americans on a daily basis.

The Kankakee County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) hosted Law Enforcement Meetings throughout the year with County's law enforcement agencies to address the Ten Shared Principles, the Kankakee County Community Crisis Response Team Initiative and to build a positive bridge between law enforcement and communities of color. The meetings are held at various police departments and the Kankakee County Sheriff Complex.

The purpose of the **Kankakee County Community Crisis Response Team** (KCCCRT) is to respond to incident of civil unrest and events affecting individuals, groups and communities in Kankakee County. The Crisis Response Team (CRT) is committed to reducing crime, strengthening relationships between with law enforcement and the community and building on improving of policing practices. The CRT's goal is to defuse the tensions with individuals and those communities involved in the crisis and to understand the crisis better and implement solutions. Incidents can include a publicized arrest, a shooting, or use of force that provokes tension, violence crime, sudden death or suicide within our community. Many times these goals can be accomplished by disputing specific accounts of the incident after conducting an investigation.

The crisis team should engage in extensive community outreach efforts, with a particular emphasis on community associations.

While we all agree that safety is a huge concern and must be dealt with very swiftly to keep our seniors, our neighbors and our children out of harm's way, let it not be at the expense of taxing poor communities throughout Kankakee County, Illinois ,” said Pace. “We should all work together to develop a strategy to place more law enforcement officers on the streets to protect and serve the entire community.. “The Kankakee County NAACP supports law enforcement agencies and will do what we can to assist in the hiring process to keep our community safe,” said Pace.

## **TEN SHARED PRINCIPLES**



The Illinois National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's (NAACP) State Conference and the [Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police](#) have created the Ten Shared Principles for Building Trust to be adopted by Illinois Police Departments to signify their commitment to the public they serve.

The adoption agreement between Law Enforcement Agencies in Kankakee County and the NAACP of Kankakee County was signed February 20, 2020.

The Police Departments also affirms the following principles regarding the relationship between law enforcement and the communities and people they serve in Illinois:

1. We value the life of every person and consider life to be the highest value.
2. All persons should be treated with dignity and respect. This is another foundational value.
3. We reject discrimination toward any person that is based on race, ethnicity, religion, color, nationality, immigrant status, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or familial status.
4. We endorse the six pillars in the report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. The first pillar is to build and rebuild trust through procedural justice, transparency, accountability, and honest recognition of past and present obstacles.
5. We endorse the four pillars of procedural justice, which are fairness, voice (i.e., an opportunity for citizens and police to believe they are heard), transparency, and impartiality.
6. We endorse the values inherent in community policing, which includes community partnerships involving law enforcement, engagement of police officers with residents outside of interaction specific to enforcement of laws, and problem-solving that is collaborative, not one-sided.
7. We believe that developing strong ongoing relationships between law enforcement and communities of color at the leadership level and street level will be the keys to diminishing and eliminating racial tension.
8. We believe that law enforcement and community leaders have a mutual responsibility to encourage all citizens to gain a better understanding and knowledge of the law to assist them in their interactions with law enforcement officers.
9. We support diversity in police departments and in the law enforcement profession. Law enforcement and communities have a mutual responsibility and should work together to make a concerted effort to recruit diverse police departments.
10. We believe de-escalation training should be required to ensure the safety of community members and officers. We endorse using de-escalation tactics to reduce the potential for confrontations that endanger law enforcement officers and community members; and the principle that human life should be taken only as a last resort



## **Training & Development**

Various members of the leadership team of the Kankakee NAACP participated in the following training sessions.

1. NAACP Annual Meeting
2. NAACP National Board Meeting
3. Illinois Conference NAACP Quarterly Training Meetings
4. NAACP 111th Annual Convention
5. Illinois Conference NAACP 87th Annual State Convention
6. Kankakee NAACP Annual Meeting



## **2020 Political Action Report**

The Political Action Committee shall seek to increase voter registration and voting, inform unit of all proposed legislation which affects minority groups. The Committee shall be nonpartisan and shall not endorse candidates for public office.

This year it has been a challenge for the Political Action Committee. Despite a worldwide pandemic the committee was very active. We registered voters who stayed home in 2016 and 2018. We got voters to the polls in numbers many thought not possible, showing the extraordinary power of the Black voter using phone banking, 7700 robo calls, and a variety of other activities.

The right to vote is one of the most valuable constitutional rights granted to most Americans. That is why the NAACP was pleased and proud to see H.R. 4, the Voting Rights Advancement Act pass the U.S. House of Representatives on December 6, 2019, by a decisive margin of 228 – 187, renamed the “John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of 2020” on 7/27/2020; one week after Congressman Lewis’ death.

Our activities began with a collaborative effort of several local organizations to do voter registration throughout Kankakee County. Committee members registered voters at a variety of places.

The Political Action Committee held several Candidate Forum –we feel an informed citizenry is necessary for our democracy to thrive, and the forums are an excellent way for voters to see the candidates in person and hear their views. Due to Covid 19 social media was utilized more than ever. Branch members posted the forums live via Face Book Live, Zoom and the library podcast.

With hard work and dedication of Political Action Committee members and branch volunteers was able to be involved in 786 voters getting registered countywide. Networking with community organizations was effective in registration and GOTV activities.

Our Political Action Committee geared up for the 2020 Census and November 3, 2020 elections as we planned to engage, educate and ultimately count an increasingly diverse and growing population, planned and conducted candidates forums in a hard 2020 politically pandemic climate.

The November Election saw the election of a new President of the United States.

So, on behalf of the entire NAACP team, I thank you for supporting and standing with us through one of the most important election cycles in America's history.

But as we celebrate, we must be mindful that our work together does not end with a new Congress and a new president, because being civically engaged is a 365-day-a-year effort.

It's critical that we stay ready at all times to hold newly elected officials accountable for the promises they made and do the necessary work to defend our wins together.

Over the next few months, it will be imperative that we don't stop pushing newly elected officials on the issues that are essential to advancing the Black agenda and moving America closer to being fairer for all.

That means not allowing them to ignore the challenging economic realities facing our communities, including poverty, lack of jobs, disproportionate high unemployment, lack of affordable housing, and foreclosures.



## Voting Rights and Political Representation 21st Century Game Changer

### Kankakee County NAACP Host “Meet the Candidates” Forum

The Kankakee County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) hosted a “Meet The Candidates” forum. Candidates Forums scheduled for Monday, February 24 Democratic Primary 40th District Illinois Senate, on Tuesday, March 3, 2020, Democratic Primary 79th State Representative Candidates and Republicans Kankakee County Auditor Candidates on Tuesday, October 6 and October 13, 2020 at 6:30 pm at the Kankakee Public Library located at 201 East Merchant St. The distinguished guests were several candidates with opposition for the offices of 40th District Illinois State Senate, 79th Illinois State Representative; 21st Judicial Circuit, Kankakee County Circuit Clerk. The moderator was President Theodis Pace and Heather Bryant Chair of the Kankakee NAACP Political Action Committee. “This will be an excellent opportunity to hear first-hand from the candidates that are running for office, said Bryant. Every election is critically important. The candidates elected this November will make decisions at the Local level that will affect our lives on a daily basis, said Bryant.”

The Kankakee County NAACP is a nonpartisan organization and does not make decisions based upon political preference. “We “Do Not Endorse” candidates however, we are an issues driven organization and reserve the right to publicize if a candidate does not support our issues, said Theodis Pace, President of the Kankakee County NAACP. We look forward to hearing about how the candidates plan to address the needs of the people and deliver upon the promises they make to the Citizens for the office they are seeking. When African Americans “VOTE,” we make a powerful difference in the outcome of elections. The candidates we support collectively as a people, “WIN” elections. Candidates know this to be true, that’s why they court our “VOTE,” at the church house, at liquid beverage establishments and in private meetings, said Pace.” Let’s make every election a difference maker by the sovereignty of our “VOTE.” When Middle-Class Caucasians and College Students as well as Hispanics and Latinos join the African American community in the “VOTING PROCESS,” it creates an environment of change. We will continue to work with our brothers and sisters to ensure that all voices are heard, said Pace.”



# ADVANCING THE BLACK AGENDA IN 2021

Going into 2021, we hope you will support the NAACP Contract for Black America.

Below are four key areas of our work for this next year — which resonates most with you?

Contract for Black America:

- Education: Ensure every student of color receives a quality public education that prepares him or her to be a contributing member of a democracy.
- Criminal Justice: Create sweeping police reform—federal legislation mandating a zero-tolerance approach in penalizing and/or prosecuting police officers who kill unarmed, non-violent, and non-resisting individuals in an arrest.
- Healthcare: Ensure quality affordable health care for all people.
- Economic Development: Address the challenging economic realities facing our communities including poverty, lack of jobs and disproportionate high unemployment, lack of affordable housing, foreclosures, etc.





## WHAT DOES NAACP STAND FOR?

The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination.

### Vision Statement

The vision of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure a society in which all individuals have equal rights without discrimination based on race.

### Objectives

The following statement of objectives is found on the first page of the NAACP Constitution – the principal objectives of the Association shall be:

- To ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all citizens
- To achieve equality of rights and eliminate race prejudice among the citizens of the United States
- To remove all barriers of racial discrimination through democratic processes
- To seek enactment and enforcement of federal, state, and local laws securing civil rights
- To inform the public of the adverse effects of racial discrimination and to seek its elimination
- To educate persons as to their constitutional rights and to take all lawful action to secure the exercise thereof, and to take any other lawful action in furtherance of these objectives, consistent with the NAACP's Articles of Incorporation and this Constitution.



## **CITIZEN SPOTLIGHT: Crank believes in community service, giving back**

**Saturday November 14, 2020**



“Our strength is in our numbers and membership is our life blood,” Crank said. “I want this branch to live long after I’m gone. For that to happen, we need young adults who want to be committed to the fight.”

Most people learn about the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in history class. Others learn about it through experience. Paulette Crank, secretary of the NAACP’s Kankakee chapter and state treasurer, is one of those people.

“My involvement with the NAACP has really been life changing and character building,” Crank said. “I have attended many national conventions all over the U.S., and have been in the presence of many black historians such as President Barack Obama, Myrlie Lee Evers, Congressman John Lewis, Julian Bond, Jesse Jackson and Benjamin Hooks.”

In 2010 when the state treasurer retired, Crank was asked to take on that position, which she still holds today.

These are not the only highlights that Crank reflects on. She shared the story of taking a bus to Jena, La., in 2006 to participate in a march after nooses were hung from a tree at a local high school. “I was so amazed at the number of marchers. People by the thousands came from all over the United States,” remembered Crank. “At one point, I walked upon a crowd that had stopped and, as I approached, I noticed that Tyler Perry was in the middle greeting the marchers. It was one more example of the amazing appeal that the NAACP and their efforts has to people in all walks of life. “I returned after two days without seeing a bed, exhausted and with swollen legs and feet from extensive walking and sitting on the bus. It was an amazing experience.”

**2020 Kankakee NAACP Daily Journal Articles**

February 20, 2020 NAACP to host first of candidate forums

February 28, 2020 Second candidate forum set for Tuesday

March 4, 2020 Local NAACP, police agencies work together to better relations in the community

June 2, 2020 NAACP Team with community leaders in rally against racism

June 3, 2020 Drive-In Car Rally to be held by Kankakee NAACP

July 9, 2020 Work of local NAACP never more valuable than now

July 22, 2020 NAACP to meet with local police agencies on Thursday

July 23, 2020 Kankakee County Law Enforcement NAACP meeting

**July 29, 2020 NAACP Meet with Law Enforcement; Rowe Recommends Citizen Review Board**

October 5, 2020 Kankakee Branch of the NAACP to Host Candidate Forum

October 15, 2020 NAACP Candidate Forum Circuit Clerk and Judge

October 16, 2020 Judge Candidates discuss cash bond system

November 25, 2020 NAACP, Kankakee County Branch -Kan-I-Help

December 10, 2020 NAACP Annual Meeting







# **Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing**

**James Weldon Johnson, Words | John Rosamond Johnson, Music**

*Lift ev'ry voice and sing, til earth and Heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise, high as the listening skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on 'til victory is won.*

*Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet,  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered;  
Out from the gloomy past, 'til now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.*

*God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,  
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;  
Thou who hast by Thy might, led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee.  
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee.  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand,  
True to our God, true to our native land.*

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