

THE EDUCATOR

http://www.umkc.edu/studo/the_educator

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THE VOICE FOR THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

"Focus on the mission and not the opposition...." Henry W. Wash

Student Organization



The Educator has chosen the Black Law Student Association to be the feature Student Group because of their great talent. Their commitment to higher education has enabled them to

be successful in the past, as they continue to give hope to others on their path of excellence.

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English Department

Professors

“A Word”

Co-Advisor **Dr. Donald H. Matthews**

Director of Black Studies Department

This issue marks the beginning of The Educator, the black student newspaper at UMKC. I am tremendously proud that the students took up the challenge I extended for the formation of a paper which would allow the voices of the black community of UMKC to be heard. The officers of the paper have shown a real spirit of cooperation. They are dedicated to getting the word out to the community in the form of poetry, prose, and other genres. As the co-faculty advisor (with Professor Moira Ferguson) of the organization, I invite your participation and constructive criticism; God is not finished with us yet.

The Black Studies Program is determined to provide opportunities for the students at UMKC to learn about the African American experience. The Black Studies Core Faculty offers course work in African American Literature, Art History, Economics, Anthropology, and Religious Studies. I am especially thankful for Drs. Moira Ferguson and Kimberly Banks of the English Department who have extended to us their editing expertise. We have an outstanding faculty who are in love with the idea of teaching others about the contributions and world views of African people throughout the Diaspora. We have much to learn from one another as we continue to explore the nature of the black experience in the modern world. Without knowing our past, our future is dimmed by our own ignorance. My greatest joy at UMKC has come from working with students in the classroom and with community members in the Greater Kansas City Region.

In order to support the work of The Educator, the Black Studies Program will be sponsoring an event that will allow community members to express their support for our efforts and be educated about an important community issue at the same time. Please watch for the announcement.



Kimberly Banks

Dr. Tidwell spoke on Wednesday, October 15th at 7pm at the African American History and Culture House about Frank Marshall Davis's life, poetry, and journalism career. Davis was born in Arkansas City, Kansas in 1905. He attended Kansas State University and studied journalism. Davis also started writing poetry while at the university. In his memoir Livin' the Blues, Davis explains his dedication to poetry, "the lack of communication between poets, and the realization there was nothing in Chicago even remotely resembling the Harlem Renaissance, firmed my ambition to do for the Windy City in verse what others had done for Harlem" and he hoped to be remembered for his "portraits of the South Side." He found brief work as a journalist on the short-lived Evening Bulletin and the more substantial Whip, which Davis describes as "the South Side's most militant journal." His first collection of poetry, Black Man's Verse, appeared in 1935.

Davis lived in Atlanta and again in Chicago before finally settling in Hawaii in December 1948. In his memoir he explains, "Hawaii is the only area in the United States which has successfully shown the possibility

of integration with integrity." Tidwell explains part of Davis's obscurity in terms of his move to Hawaii and the suspicion of the FBI about Davis's membership in the Communist Party. In Hawaii, Davis wrote a regular column "Frank-ly Speaking" for the Honolulu Record. Tidwell also explains that Davis was lionized by Black Arts movement writers, but they did not understand his fundamentally integrationist vision. Tidwell edited two collections by Davis: Black Moods: Collected Poems and Livin' the Blues: Memoirs of a Black Journalist and Poet. With the generous help of Davis's daughter, Tidwell is currently working on a collection of Davis's journalism.

Dr. Graham spoke on Wednesday, September 17th at 7pm at the African American History and Culture House about Margaret Walker's life and career. Graham first met Walker at the University of Chicago where Walker was a Visiting Professor and Graham was an undergraduate student. They developed a lifelong friendship. Graham started her presentation with a video interview with Walker in her home in the 1970s, produced by a local television station in Boston. She helped Walker finish the essays to be included in On Being Female, Black, and Free and How I Wrote Jubilee and Other Essays on Life and Literature. She also helped Walker compile the poetry for This Is My Century: New and Collected Poems, but has continued to find poems in Walker's possessions. "I Want to Write," was a poem first published as "Daydream." Graham explains the shift in the title as a movement from uncertainty to assurance in Walker's vocation as a writer.

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“Civil rights activist as a mentor”

Staff Writer **Lawrence Edward Smith**



Rev. John Modest Miles

On Friday, October 31, 2003, I waited eagerly for the arrival of civil rights activist Rev. John Modest Miles; the community mentor for The Educator, at the University of Missouri –Kansas City’s library.

Questions raced through my mind...What am I going to ask him? How detailed should this be? When I peered out the doorway, there he was; as he saw me, my greeting was “God Bless you, Rev. Miles,” and his reply was the same, but with my name.

In 1963 at the age of 18, Rev. Miles was chosen to be a licensed minister at Paradise Baptist Church in Arkansas. As a high school graduate of the New Hope High School in Mt. Holly, Arkansas, Rev. Miles pressed onward, receiving a business certification from the Los Angeles Trade School in California, a Bachelors in Religion from Arkansas Baptist College, a Masters degree in Education from Central Mississippi College, and a Doctoral Degree in Theology at the Midwestern Baptist Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri.

Miles is historically known as a much-admired activist and a deep thinker. Along with his close friend, Reverend Samuel Billy Kyles, the last living man with

Dr. King in his final hour, Miles is appreciated by leading Baptist ministers. He is also affiliated with local, state, and national movements.

Among his many stellar accomplishments and honors are: an assignment in 1979 to serve on a special committee sent to Africa to meet with President Nelson Mandela; 1994 Speaker at the Inaugural of his close friend President Bill Clinton, 1993-1998; honors such as one of the One Hundred Most Influential African-Americans in Kansas City. He was also featured in the HBO documentary, “27th & Prospect, One Year in the Fight Against Drugs” and has served as General Chairman of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. held in Kansas City, MO in 1998 and 2003. Rev. Miles has also received many other prestigious honors and impressive appointments.

Today Rev. Miles is the pastor of Morning Star Missionary Baptist church in Kansas City, MO, and is married to Jennet Miles. Together they have three children, three grandsons, and six grand-daughters. When asked to be the community mentor for The Educator Rev. Miles said: “O Lord yes, the pleasure would be all mine!” Let us not hesitate to welcome a very fine man to The Educator. Cheers to Rev. John Modest Miles.

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Community

Diplomat from Westport High School?



“ A community leader taking time out for a picture with future leaders: Jamel Wooten to the left, Wesley Fields in the middle and Johnny Wooten on the right.”

Johnny S. Wooten III

Community student contributing writer

A diplomat is a person who uses skill and tact in dealing with others. Tact is the ability to describe others as they see themselves; a person that can smile and keep his or her head up through hard times. Diplomacy is a wise person with knowledge. Those who are wise are more powerful than a strong individual who is a body builder. I label myself as a diplomat because the meaning fits me. It takes wisdom and courage for this skill to be performed. Diplomats can handle any type of pressure. Knowing how to deal with citizens is a blessing from the creator, and talent can help you succeed in life.

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What does it take to be number one?



Michael Watson

I am #1

Contributing writer **Jennifer Venerable**

Midway through the semester, students are focusing on their studies. Many are starting to feel pressure from knowing that energy once lost must be found again. They want to be on time to complete final exams successfully. For student athlete Michael Watson, that energy is soon going to be exerted, not only in the classroom, but also on the basketball court.

Known for his signature fast plays and invisible passes, Michael Watson is back to lead the Roos to victory. After opening the season with victories against Athletes in Action (exhibition) and Quincy, the Roos are prepared for a season of domination. With this new season, many new fans find themselves repeatedly asking, "Who is #22".

Well, if you didn't know by now, his name is Michael Watson. Recently named the Mid Continent Conference Player of the Year, Watson enters the 2003-2004 season with 1,808 career points, scoring double figures in 82 of his 88 career games. Attributing this success to his teammates' effective play together and a successful offense, Watson looks forward to another victorious year in the game.

"I want to see UMKC in the National Spotlight," he said. "You know this is Coach Z's third year and like the Chiefs this is also Vermeil's third year. I want to see our team and Coach Z have that same level of triumph."

That level can, and according to many fans will, be achieved this year. Junior Nick Scott asserts, "UMKC is bound to dominate this year. Mike is focused towards his last year and going to prove to us all that our school can exceed the greatness of even some of the Big 12 schools."

Looking at statistics, Watson has proven this fact to be true and admits that he was even unfamiliar with all he had accomplished. "When Coach gave me my stats, I was thinking, wow, I didn't know I had received that. That is good. Now I can shoot for higher things," laughs Watson.

From high school until this current season, he has not only been recognized as an All-American Candidate, but was also named to the United States Basketball Writers Association All-District VI team. He has led the team in scoring or tied 27 times, ranks fourth in the Mid-Continent Conference career three-pointers made, and the list continues to grow.

With so many accomplishments behind him and little time left in his college career, some fans are starting to question his future in basketball. His verdict is the following: "Basketball is a passion, a job to take care of myself and my family, as well as being fun." He adds that he has always dreamt of becoming a professional player and hopes that one day he will realize this dream.

Watson hopes that African American youth can look to him as a model. "Being from KC and the inner city, a lot of younger kids see me as a positive example of what they also can do."

He adds, "Many don't know that UMKC's campus is that close to where they're from or that we even have a basketball team. When they see me, they have something to shoot for. They know they can also do it."

This kind of dedication and determination is sure to take Mike Watson and the Roos far this season. For many seasons to come, people will continue to rave about the Roos and #22's superb contributions.

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A CATCHY NAME HEY?

"Her faith in God, and the support of family and friends keep her upbeat and strong."

Editor-in-chief **Henry W. Wash**

Once recall reading an old wise saying that goes: "The great pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do." I decided to test that saying in my own way. One great Sunday afternoon, a group of students met under basic anonymous leadership. The cause wasn't to solve a peace-y-function or to discuss philosophical topics and Hegelian tradition. The meeting happened for one purpose: to establish an African American newspaper. In the process of congregating, a majority of these students had a collective problem with the name: The Statistical Cause, so they brainstormed for another. While names were being tossed to-and-fro, out of no where a self-effacing young woman, Tennille Hadley, suggested the name, The Educator.

Instantly the group liked the name and adopted it. One would obviously feel intimidated by the name because it is prestigious; however, the given name is not as essential as the personality who thought it up. Tennille Hadley is not your average student. She is a devoted solid working single mother of two, who labors part-time while attending school fulltime and is the first Treasurer of The Educator.

Humankind's environment commonly wouldn't give much thought to the term single-mom. When talking to her, it seems as though her goals are set, no matter what anyone says. She plans to complete her Pre-Law requirements and become a District Attorney. This woman is unquenchable.

Tennille has a precious heart. She wants to encourage all students to remain positive and keep their eyes on the prize. The Educator with a warm spirit embraces such a wonderful individual. Tennille will continue to be a magnificent contributor to the periodical. "Who said a young single mother couldn't go to college and be productive?" Hum.... Next time you ponder this, think of Tennille Hadley.

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Featured Student Group

“BLSA”

Secretary **Na’Ima Perkins**

The Black Law Students Association (BLSA) is a nexus of students interested in and concerned with promoting the success of African American law students. Many assume that being African-American is a requirement for membership in BLSA, but that is not the case. The only requirement is an interest in promoting the interests of African American students as they interact, not only within the walls of the law school, but also within the community at large. We aim to graduate dedicated and competent attorneys committed to community service.

Having a visible and positive presence on campus and promoting

diversity are important to BLSA. Retention of law students in general and especially African American law students is a big issue. Law school is challenging enough without having to grapple with feelings of isolation and general misunderstandings by peers and professors.

A large part of what BLSA does is provide a vehicle through which upper level students can encourage and counsel newer students. Being able to talk to someone like yourself who has successfully faced the same challenges is invaluable. Through our relationships with one other, we have made ourselves accountable for one another’s success, which goes a long way toward retaining students.

BLSA engages in a host of activities from bringing in speakers, to discussing social and legal issues, to speaking to school children on the value of higher education. All of our activities are aimed at serving the school community and the Kansas City community to the best of our abilities.

The sheer existence of a newspaper like The Educator can help BLSA by giving us a voice. The Educator will allow us to be heard in settings not otherwise possible. Perhaps one of the most valuable services The Educator can provide will be to let African American students who are considering law school know that we are here and that we are available to discuss our experiences with them.



The BLSA Officers Na’Ima Perkins (left) the president, Katherine Ray the vice president, NaKesia Smith treasurer and Sharon Stewart the secretary (not pictured).

“Being able to talk to someone like yourself that has successfully faced the same challenges is invaluable.”

“A LITTLE LOOK BACK IN HERSTORY”

Contributing writer **Patrice R. Parker**

Kansas City's lost jewel is once again thought of for her magnificent courage.

One may wonder: What is THE CALL? The Call is the African American newspaper for Kansas City. Miss Lucile H. Bluford was a pioneer who was devoted to that venture for a number of years, and helped to pave the way for African Americans in Kansas City.

One could argue that she had an enormous call on her life and accepted the answer to THE CALL at an early age.

Lucile Harris Bluford was born on July 1, 1911, in Salisbury, N.C., to John Henry Bluford Sr., an educator, and Viola Harris Bluford.

Miss Bluford moved with her family to Kansas City in 1921, and attended Wendell Phillips Elementary school.

In 1924, Ms. Bluford attended Lincoln High school and became an active writer for the school newspaper, a member of the student chapter NAACP, and a major in ROTC. She graduated from Lincoln High School with top honors as valedictorian.

Miss Bluford set out on a journey to enter college during an era when African Americans faced heavy resistance in attending school. She attended K.U. for her journalism degree, the only black journalism student during her four years there. At K.U. she worked as the night editor, telegraph editor, and in other capacities. She worked at THE CALL during summers while attending K.U. and joined the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

She graduated from K.U. in 1932 with a Bachelor's degree in journalism. The summer after graduation, Bluford worked at The Atlanta Daily World, a black-owned newspaper in Atlanta, GA.

Bluford became home-sick and returned to Kansas City where she began working for Dr. Thompkins, who was the publisher of another black-owned periodical, The American. There she covered numerous stories on wide-ranging topics.

Deciding she wanted to return to school, Bluford applied to enter the school of journalism at MU. She went to Columbia to register for classes, but was told to step out of line when



the university realized they had accepted an African American, even though her credentials displayed she was a well-qualified student. Miss Bluford tried repeatedly in 1939 to enter the University of Missouri before filing suit on October 13 of

that same year. In 1942, Bluford v. Missouri stood before the State Supreme Court.

The court ruled that the state had to provide “SEPARATE BUT EQUAL” facilities of higher education for black students.

Fifty years after she filed her suit in May of 1989 against the University of Missouri, she received an honorary Doctorate of Humanities degree during a commencement ceremony.

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“Self –Envy”

By, Vladimir Saint

Sometimes I ponder what makes fear
Why must people die, what makes the soul tear
Will the same pain follow me every year
It will never leave my mind
It seeks into my eyes
And burns straight down my spine
Looking 4 my demise
Then goes back up, with more flames than ever
Looks for my heart
Rips it apart
And leaves its' mark 4ever
Shortly after, I start 2 quiver
Can't feel love 4 others and I get bitter
The pain has taken control
Can't do nothing, it has consumed my very soul
It moves my legs, it moves my hands
It even speaks 4 me
Hurts people I know
Looks in the mirror and teases me
I try 2 fight back with every
Strength God has given me
But the pain is 2 strong and
Becomes my envy

Ironic

By Michelle Burton

Tears and laughter echo the same sound,
but to the soul a similarity is not found.

The river runs changing, yet staying the same,
making itself anew from where it came.

To the choices made in life one is bound,
yet little can be done to turn fate around.

The joy of love makes it worth the pain,
tell that to one whose heart has been drained.

STUDENT POETRY



Diversity in Action Initiative

contributing writer
Michelle Hopkins

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – The University of Missouri-Kansas City has named Joe Seabrooks and Darlene Scott-Scurry to lead implementation of its Diversity in Action Plan over the next 12 months. Seabrooks, currently UMKC's director of Minority Student Affairs and chairman of the team that created the Plan, will lead the outreach, education, and empowerment dimensions of the implementation. Scott-Scurry, currently chief-of-staff to UMKC Provost Steve Ballard, will lead the Affirmative Action compliance component.

The intent of the Diversity in Action Plan (www.umkc.edu/diversityinaction/) is to bring to life the University's core values of diversity, inclusiveness, and respect and to produce a campus culture where diversity, access, and equity are welcomed, supported, and promoted. The plan states: "We create a helpful environment by recognizing and acknowledging personal biases and being responsible individually for positive change."

"I am proud to be associated with the creativity and power of UMKC's Diversity in Action Plan," said Chancellor Martha W. Gilliland. "Moreover, Joe Seabrooks and Darlene Scott-Scurry are highly committed and competent individuals who will bring passion, creativity and energy to the implementation of the plan. I could not be more pleased that they accepted the offer to launch this important effort.



Joe Seabrooks

"As always, we will be seeking input from the Kansas City community," Gilliland said. Seabrooks has a decade of experience in education. He earned an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in urban leadership, policy studies, and education at UMKC. Seabrooks earlier served UMKC as assistant director of Alumni and Program Services, coordinator of Alumni and Constituent Relations, Athletic Foundation intern and instructor and tutor for Upward Bound and Project First programs. He has worked diligently to increase the number of first-generation minority students enrolled at UMKC.

Scott-Scurry has a law degree (J.D.) from American University in Washington D.C. and a certificate in court management from the National Center for State Courts-Institution for Court Management in Williamsburg, Va. Previously, she served as deputy executive officer of Intergovernmental and Legal Affairs for the District of Columbia's Trail and Appellate Courts; acting general counsel and personal advisor to the President and Board of Trustees at the University of the District of Columbia; and tax counselor to the Ways and Means Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives.



Darlene Scott-Scurry

"We are happy to have these committed professors on board"

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New Track & Field Coach, Yea!!

Typographer **Trina Blake**

Can we get a drum roll! UMKC — we present to you, Theo Hamilton, UMKC's new Track and Field coach. Coach Hamilton brings over 25 years of College coaching experience, to UMKC. He joins the Kangaroos staff after serving the past two years as head men's and women's track and field coach at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. Hamilton has also coached several NCAA and NAIA qualifiers in track and field.

After twenty five years of coaching experience, certainly this Coach had to have a plan for this team before taking on this task. Hamilton knows this task is not one to take lightly.

"My plan for the team this year is to be as competitive as possible. My staff and I are working very hard to accomplish that goal."

Many athletes in the past have been discouraged by not winning. What they failed to realize is that a winner isn't created overnight, but with hard work and dedication, one can be more than a winner. Coach Hamilton appears to be convinced that his team without a doubt will come out on top.

"We can and will be winners."

Before gaining the title, Coach Hamilton strove to be a winner himself and he prevailed. Hamilton's college career began at Jefferson State (Ala) Junior college where he was a national junior college long jump champion, both indoors and outdoors in 1973. After transferring to the University of Kansas, Hamilton quickly established himself as one of the best long and triple jumpers in Jayhawk history. Coach Hamilton also earned a place in the University of Kansas Athletics Hall of Fame in 1975 by becoming indoor long jump champion with a mark of 26'7 1/4".

Coach Hamilton seems aware that numbers can be a factor in the success of a team, yet this appears to be a positive for him. With the small numbers, there is a chance to start fresh and build a solid foundation.

"Right now we are small in numbers but we are still going to be very competitive. The team is working very hard in their pre-season workouts. I have been very pleased with the work ethic of the athletes and the assistant coaches."

Coach Hamilton is prepared to take on any task that comes his way. I wonder if he gets discouraged, knowing that the coaches before him did not stay long.

"I don't know about the last two coaches that were here, but I want to be here. A lot of people weren't aware of this, but I applied and interviewed for this position a couple of years ago and was not hired for the job. I am here now, and I am going to work as hard as I can to make this track team the best conference and national team possible. I've only been here for three months and I am still finding my way around. In the short-time that I have been here, I have found UMKC to be a great academic and athletic institution."

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Locally Speaking

Continued from page 2

Walker wrote her first collection, *For My People*, as part of her master's thesis at the University of Iowa. The collection won the Yale Younger Poets award. Almost twenty years later, she wrote the novel, *Jubilee*, as part of her doctoral dissertation at the University of Iowa. Graham discussed the two major public controversies around Walker's work. The first controversy was her lawsuit against Alex Haley and his alleged use of Walker's material in *Roots*. The second controversy was Ellen Wright's lawsuit against Walker for her publication of material from private letters between Richard Wright and

Walker in her work *Richard Wright, Daemonic Genius: A Portrait of the Man, A Critical Look at His Work*. In addition to the two collections of essays mentioned above, Graham has also edited a collection of interviews: *Conversations with Margaret Walker* and a collection of critical essays: *Fields Watered With Blood: Critical Essays on Margaret Walker*. She is currently working on a biography of *Margaret Walker*.

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New Coach

Continued from page 7

In many ways, The Educator's goals can be compared with that of the new head coach. Most importantly we are both aware that we must work together.

"The way that this newspaper can help the African American Community is by doing well what you are doing now. Ask questions. There are several African Americans working in the UMKC Cathletic department. One is an Associate Athletic Director. I would love to sit down with you sometime and discuss it." When it comes to a personal life consumed with achieving, and trying to achieve a goal in athletics, I, Trina Blake am no stranger to that scenario. After

ten years of competing on track teams, it was my life and it helped to create who I am today. If a man is willing to give 25 years to something he believes in, it has to have had a strong impact on what he is going to do here at UMKC.

I am proud to have the chance to experience his positive attitude. Coach Hamilton prides himself in the fact that he is married to the former Cheryl G. Riley. They have one daughter, Jaunelle, who is the compliance coordinator at LSU. Cheers to Coach Hamilton!

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HERSTORY

Continued from page 6

Continuing her engagement in civil rights, she was very active in the NAACP and was a long time member of the organization's National Board.

Miss Bluford was a member and secretary of the Missouri Commission on Human Rights from 1957 to 1969. Her fight for equal rights ended at the age of 91 on Friday, June 13, 2003, at the Baptist Lutheran hospital where

she died, as a result of a brief illness.

Miss Bluford served on many boards and commissions during her life span. She was a winner of several awards. She will always be a woman remembered in Kansas City, and respected for her accomplishments & determination. We, The Educator, salute you on this first official publication of our newspaper, and we dedicate this first issue to you, and thank you from the bottom of our hearts, and thank you for paving the way Miss Lucile Bluford.

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Announcements For Students Only

APC Events

www.apcactivities.com

Free Ice Skating

Date: Thursday, Dec 4th time 9:30- 11pm

Place: Crown Center Ice Terrace Pick Up Free

Tickets in G-6, UC

Midnight Breakfast

Date Monday, Dec. 15th time:

Place: Twin Oaks Midnight – 2 am

Community Announcements

2nd Annual Black Studies Conference:" The Economic Development of Black Kansas City," March 26 and 27th, 2004.

Thank you to all who pushed us to produce our first official edition. We welcome all contributions from anyone anywhere. You may email us at The_educatorumkc@hotmail.com or for "Breaking News" call us at 816.235.5628