



“BLACKS, BELIEVERS & THE MONTESSORI WAY”[©] Community Awareness & Empowerment Campaign 2019-2020

Why “Blacks, Believers & the Montessori Way”?

There has always been an historic relationship between the church and education in the Black community. From the Jim Crow era through the modern civil rights movement of the 50's and 60's, the archetype of leadership, the professional class, and overall foundation of the Black community was primarily composed of preachers and teachers. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and so many others (past and present) are pillars of spiritual and intellectual leadership. For many, like Marian Wright Edelman, President Emerita of the Children's Defense Fund, “There was never a separation between the church and the calling to care for and seek justice for children.”

Education is the civil rights issue of our time. Today, the Black church has the power to be a beacon of hope and driving force for an educational social justice movement. It's time for the faith community, once again, to step up to the plate. It's time to put our faith into action. In order to ensure that our children receive the high-quality education opportunities they deserve, the Black community must be empowered with the necessary tools to demand and also create change.

Faith leaders can serve as intermediaries between local government and other educational stakeholders to mobilize collective resources to their fullest potential to ensure that all children have equality of opportunity. Wright Edelman says it best, “We cannot claim to be followers of Jesus, the most famous poor child in history, if we do not see Christ in the face of every poor child today and respond with faithful acts of compassion and justice.”

Purpose of the Campaign:

- To re-establish the Black faith community as a key stakeholder and problem-solving leader in response to the educational opportunity gaps facing Black children in Minnesota through quarterly awareness and empowerment workshops
- To create a space for parents to learn about the Montessori pedagogy as an educational option for their children and IMPACT LIVING Christian Center's (ILCC) vision for an all-boys, Christian Montessori school
- To recruit parents, volunteers, educational equity partners, and educators from the Black, Christian and/or broader community to get involved in ILCC's emerging school and the current Montessori movement



Quarterly Workshop Topics:

- ***“Montessori Roots Historical Truth”*** – Koren Clark, Educational Partner, Researcher and School Developer, Wildflower Foundation, San Francisco
Saturday, September 14 at 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- ***“Trauma Informed Education (ACEs 101) & the Role of Resiliency”*** – Former Pastor/Ph.D. Candidate Tom Gonzalez, Bridges of Hope
Saturday, December 14, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- ***“The Brilliance of Black Boys: Cultivating School Success in the Early Grades”*** – Dr. Brian L. Wright and Dr. Shelly L. Counsell, Authors and Professors of Early Childhood Education at the University of Memphis
Date: TBD – Spring 2020
- ***“Hope for the Future: Answering God’s Call to Justice for our Children”*** – Shannon Daley-Harris, Author and Religious Affairs Advisor and Proctor Institute Director for the Children’s Defense Fund (CDF)
Date: TBD – Summer 2020

Location & Registration Information:

The “Blacks, Believers & the Montessori Way” workshops will take place at IMPACT LIVING Christian Center, 3620 E. 26th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55406. Space is limited for each event and registration is required via Eventbrite.

For more information, contact Pastor Jessica Jackson, pastorjess@impactors.org 612-724-2329.