
Clay County African American Legacy, Inc.



Garrison School established 1877

Local home builder Dobbe Dobberstein is partnering with Garrison School to coordinate the first Capital Improvement Campaign to make Garrison available to all residents for meetings, cultural arts and educational programming. When asked about his interest in the project by CCAAL Inc. Chair AJ Byrd, Dobbe said, "I met and became friends with Ken Robinson when we attended William Jewell College. After graduation we went our separate career paths but eventually reconnected in Liberty. Ken & Cecelia were our next door neighbors and we enjoyed and shared our combined sense of humor."

"I was honored last week when

Dobberstine Custom Homes, Inc. to coordinate Garrison School Capital Improvement Campaign

Cecelia asked me to volunteer coordinating the revitalization of the exterior of Garrison School."

Jeff Price, J. Price Architecture located in downtown Liberty has since volunteered to provide concept drawings for the CCAAL, Inc. Board to approve and then further volunteered his firm to provide the complete construction drawings. Dobbe and Jeff's next step will be to submit the plans to the Historic Downtown Liberty, Inc. Review Committee for approval. Once approved, they will begin the process of raising funds to complete the work. Dobbe "Anticipates this project will succeed because the people of Liberty will see and fund the need to continue the revitalization of Garrison School."

Juneteenth, 2012

Members of the Garrison Clay County African American Legacy Inc. will host its 11th annual Juneteenth Celebration at the historic Garrison School located at 502 N. Water Street at 4:00 p.m. on June 16. This year's program, "The Ken Robinson Juneteenth Jazz Scholarship Fundraiser," will benefit minority youth who will be attending college in the fall. Tickets are \$10.00 in advance and \$12.00 at the door.

The program headliner will be a Jazz concert by the Liberty Jazz Ensemble beginning at 4:30 p.m. In addition, there will be performances by Les Washington of Kansas City, Don Thigpen & the Winnwood Praise Band, the First Baptist Instrumental Youth Ensemble among others.

Liberty High School Students will be competing for monetary prizes in the Juneteenth Essay contest on Freedom. Winners will read their essays during the event. There will be BBQ chicken wings, hamburgers, and hot dogs for sale from 4:00-7:00 p.m.

Honeywell and Rebuilding Together Clay County partner with Garrison School



Honeywell volunteers, ready to build Garrison Ramp.

Honeywell and Rebuilding Together Clay County recently partnered with the Clay County African American Legacy Inc. to build a new handicap ramp and porch at Garrison School. This was a much needed safety project for the 135 year-old historic landmark. Honeywell donated \$5,000 in materials, and more than a dozen employees spent the day completing the project.

"The Garrison Center is widely known for its historical significance in Liberty. Today, the Center serves as an important source of support for the Liberty community - from providing thousands of meals a month to homeless families to holding an after-school tutoring program for At-Risk students," said Myra Everette, Honeywell's

volunteer coordinator. "Our work will provide needed safety improvements to an important and valuable community resource." According to Clay McQuery, Executive Director of Rebuilding Together Clay County, "Our work at the Garrison Center is just the starting point in what we hope will be a long and lasting partnership with Honeywell. We recognize the impact and benefit our revitalization projects have on the local community; with the support and backing of a company like Honeywell, we can do even more good in the neighborhoods that need it the most." One of the goals of CCAAL Inc. is to build partnerships with corporations and other non-profit organizations.

Garrison Educational Programs

The Garrison After School Education Mentoring (ASEM) program, funded by Missouri Department of Economic Development, is a mentoring program for students in the Liberty district.



ASEM students tackle team building exercises on High Ropes on William Jewell Campus

During the past four years, ASEM has successfully changed the lives of 143 Liberty High School students, making it possible for them to take

ACT prep classes, participate in leadership training with

the Tucker Leadership lab at William Jewell College, complete drug education classes, and to attend enhanced culturally diverse programs and events throughout the Greater Kansas City Metroplex. Minority students in the 2011-2012 Program increased their ACT scores by two points and GPA averages by .2%. According to Liberty High School Principal April Adams, minority students scores improved overall through ASEM participation. ASEM awarded the first two Ken Robinson Minority Student Scholarships for \$500.00 to Simone Stewart and Jennifer Hickmon, graduating seniors who will be attending college in the fall. The Youth Opportunities Program, administered by the Missouri Department of Economic Development provided tax credits of \$37,500 for positive youth development in ASEM.

Lion and the Unicorn Reading program, funded by Target, is a free early childhood literacy program for 2nd grade students.

Lion and Unicorn Reading Program (LURP) has been funded by a Target community grant for the past eight years. More than 4,000 participants, including elementary students from the Liberty School District, Derrick Thomas Academy of Kansas City, Missouri, William Jewell College students and classroom teachers have helped to make this literacy program a success. The monthly programs are held at Garrison Center, selected Liberty elementary schools, and the William Jewell College Mabee Center. Each session focuses on a multi-cultural theme in children's literature, featuring exciting and diverse guest readers from the local community. William Jewell students lead small group discussion sessions over the books read. Afterwards, students complete a related craft project, followed by a snack time.

LURP students learning through fables



Garrison School ASEM Grad, MKL King Celebration Speaker

Patricia Okonta, the 2012 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day speaker for the CCAAL and William Jewell College was a 2011 Valedictorian of Liberty High School, and the first African-American Student Body President. She also served as vice president of the National Honor Society and section editor

of the school newspaper. Patricia was a three year member of the Garrison School ASEM Program who took advantage of the ACT prep classes and activities. She received a full-ride scholarship to attend Yale University where she has just completed her first year as an Honor Student



2011-2012, a timeline of annual events

June, 2011

10th annual Juneteenth

In keeping with the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War, and 148 years of freedom for African Americans, the program focused on black and white Abolitionist who fought to abolish slavery in

our country through a re-enactment of an American Anti-Slavery Society Meeting. Local residents portraying historical characters from the Civil War era were featured.



December, 2011

Freedom Tree Lighting ceremony



The Ceremony was held in remembrance of the ratification and passage of the first of the three Reconstruction Era Amendments that were added to the U. S. Constitution to protect the rights of newly freed African Americans: the 13th, 14th,

and 15th Amendment. It was on December 6, 1865 that the 13th amendment, abolishing slavery in the United States was ratified; the amendment was passed on January 31, of the same year. The ceremony commemorated another chapter marking the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

December, 2011

9th annual Kwanzaa Celebration

The focus of the program was family, community, and culture. Participants joined in a "Kumba "Spirit" train during the program. Dr. O.C. Ugbaja of Nigeria was the guest speaker for the evening.



January, 2012

28th annual Martin Luther King Celebration

The Garrison School CCAAL Inc. Co-hosted its 28th Annual King celebration with William Jewell College in Gano Chapel. The featured speaker for the event was Patricia Okonta, a Yale University First Year Student.

Patricia was a Garrison ASEM Student and the first African American Valedictorian of Liberty High School. The King Community Service Awards recipients were: Harold "Biggy" Houston (posthumously), Anna Marie Martin, and Lee

Minor of Liberty, and Milton Taylor of Excelsior Springs, Missouri. The Anointed Community Youth Dance Ministry of Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church of Kansas City was among the featured entertainment.



February, 2012

Garrison Hosts One-Man Show, "Mr. Gantt Modified"

Shelton Ponder, a local poet, playwright, and actor presented his one-man show, "Mr. Gantt Modified" in celebration of Black History Month at the Garrison School Cultural Center. The show depicted not only the struggles and challenges of a black teacher who taught at Garrison during the years of segregation, but also the joys and successes experienced by an African American educator and his students. Those who attended the production said, "The human condition is quite

evident in his performance, and everyone can identify with a teacher who made a difference in his or her life. Shelton captured the essence and spirit of Mr. Gantt." The opening night performance was a celebration of Mr. Gantt's birthday; he was born February 9th, 1903 in Liberty, Missouri. The play was a benefit for Garrison and was the sixth cultural community program completed by CCAAL Inc. for 2011-2012.



Poet and Playwright Shelton Ponder reads from his original poem "Jubilee"

March, 2012

Blacks, Republicans, and Race panel and documentary



"Fear of a Black Republican" explored the phenomenon of Black Republicans, their battles with Democrats and their own party, their struggle for power and acceptance within the African-American community and how this affects Black America and Urban America."

The documentary was directed by independent filmmaker Kevin Williams of Trenton, New Jersey. Panel guests included Blue Springs Mayor, Carson Wells; Film maker, Kevin Williams; Attorney, Tim Flook, and Attorney Bev Randles.

How you can help..

The officers and members of CCAAL Inc. are asking you to support Garrison School, our 501c3, with a donation. We are a non-profit with a nine member volunteer staff. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for citizens of Clay County, particularly the youth, by providing culturally enhanced educational programs, sponsoring social and community events, and building partnerships with other non-profit organizations. Your donation helps us in several ways. Most importantly, you

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 - Ashley Brown

will help us cover the increasing cost of sustaining programs for community youth. In addition, you will assist in paying the cost for utilities and maintenance of an historic building that is over ninety years old. We invite you to join us: your donation will make a difference.

Make donations payable to CCAAL Inc.
C/O A.J. Byrd, Chair
502 N. Water
Liberty, MO 64068

Sponsors:

Hallmark

Target

The Harvest Ball

Liberty School District

Missouri Department of

Economic Development

William Jewell College

- American Humanics Program
 - Jewell Football team
 - Jewell English Majors

CCAAL Accomplishments:

- Erected a Freedom Legacy Fountain on the Liberty Courthouse Square
- Created an African American Legacy Mural on the 3rd floor of the old Liberty courthouse
- Hosted an "Evening with Buck O' Neal" Fundraiser
- City of Liberty Preservation Award
- Annual Kwanzaa Celebrations
- Annual Walking tours of historic Black Liberty

Grants:

- Hallmark
- Target
- Missouri Department of Economic Development
- Harvest Ball
- Northland Arts Coalition
- Home Depot
- Kansas City Community Foundation
- Francis Family Foundation Arts Grant