

2006 AFRICAN-AMERICAN HEALTHY MARRIAGE SUMMIT

The Guilford County Marriage Resource Center hosted the **2006 African American Healthy Marriage Summit** (AAHMS) at Mount Zion Baptist Church of Greensboro on Friday and Saturday, April 7 and 8, 2006. The Summit was attended by over 200 community members, clergy, couples and volunteers. The participants enjoyed a celebration of African-American families and marriages on Friday evening with an inspirational and affirming message by Pastor and Mrs. Vince Hairston, Calvary Christian Center, a humorous presentation by Minister Darnell Gray and special music from the Family Life Council "Husband & Wife Choir" led by Elder Walter Johnson. The emcee for the evening was Minister Joseph Level, a family-oriented radio announcer with WEAL, 1510. Saturday's events included a continental breakfast; a keynote address delivered by Carlis Williams, Southeast Regional Administrator, from the Administration of Children and Families; over 20 different breakout sessions, and a networking lunch. The summit was topped off with "A Renewal and Dedication Ceremony"; couples renewed their vows and singles took a pledge of purity. The ceremony was led by Elders Phillip and Carrie Price, of Love and Faith Christian Fellowship Church.

The AAHMS Sub-committee was made up of community leaders, ministers and educators. The committee developed the summit to celebrate African American marriages and families, to examine the characteristics that are unique to these groups and to offer meaningful information that strengthens and empowers. The breakout sessions covered a variety of topics for couples and singles interested in healthy relationships. A panel discussion on domestic violence was also offered on Saturday.

One husband made the following comment:

I didn't want to attend the summit. I didn't want to hear more preaching and go to another workshop on marriage. My wife left numerous brochures around the house, as hints about the summit, but I did not budge, until a neighbor shared some concerns about his marriage. I invited him and his wife to go with my wife and me to the summit. It turned out that they did not go, but my wife and I went anyways. It was great – more than I could have imagined. The information was real – the presenters shared openly and willingly answered questions that came up in the sessions. From beginning to end, the summit was one of the best marriage events I've attended.

Various businesses, churches and individuals served as sponsors for this year's summit.

2006 AAHMS Sponsors –

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Judge Henry & Shirley Frye

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Oak Ridge First Baptist Church

Subway, Alamance Church Rd.

St. James Presbyterian Church

Coca-Cola Bottling Co.

Dr. Vivian Short

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Vendors provided wares and services. These organizations and businesses included –

Family Life Council

Premier Mortgage

Black Child Development Institute

Total Restoration Therapeutic Massage

Chiropractic Spine and Sports

A Weekend to Remember

Diane Milburn Jewelry

We would like to thank the members of the Sub-Committee, the workshop presenters, facilitators and volunteers for their time and effort in making this event a monumental success.