

## Evanston/North Shore NAACP Updates

The Evanston/North Shore NAACP would like to share updates on activities and events that have transpired during the first two months of 2023. We remain committed to being the oldest, boldest and strongest and longest serving civil rights organization in Evanston and part of the oldest civil rights organization in the world! Begun in 1909, the NAACP has long focused on fighting for the civil rights of those out of the African Diaspora. Our own Evanston branch began in 1918 and was re-established a few years later.

In January we began to partner with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. One of twelve cohorts, our branch president attends monthly meetings to offer perspectives and input on regional transportation issues. Also in January, the branch participated in the Annual Walk for Warmth, the Annual Interfaith Martin Luther King Jr., Worship Service held at Faith Temple Church of God in Christ, the Annual Alpha Phi Alpha Martin Luther King, Jr. Program at Alice Millar Chapel, and Northwestern's Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Program. The guest speaker for Northwestern's program was former President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Sherrilyn Ifill.

The branch also sponsored a community forum with Chief Schneita Stewart in the aftermath of the video release showing the brutal murder of Tyre Nichols in Memphis. Chief Stewart shared her vision for the EPD and initiatives she has employed to increase and strengthen the relationship between the department and the Black community in Evanston. The forum was well attended with local clergy and Evanston residents. In addition, EPD police officers also attended the gathering.

Branch president Dr. Nabors also met with Mr. Patrick Phillips, President and CEO of R.I.S.E. Opportunity Foundation. The foundation is located in Chicago and has historically worked with Chicago youth and HBCU Fisk University. At a second meeting, Dr. Nabors introduced members of Unity Scholarships here in Evanston to Mr. Phillips. We are hopeful that a collaboration can be developed between Unity and the foundation.

In February the branch hosted a candidates forum for persons running for alderperson positions in Evanston. The zoom gathering was very well attended and all candidates had the opportunity to share their platform and vision for the Evanston community.

Our branch's Education Committee also did an outstanding job in planning, preparing and implementing the Read-a-Thon Black History Event with Oakton Elementary School. Chairperson Terri Shepherd organized over a dozen readers from the branch to read to every single classroom at Oakton School. The feedback from students, teachers and administration has been outstanding. Stories selected highlighted African American history in the United States as well as stories and tales from Africa.

Dr. Reginald Blount, professor at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary was installed as the school's Director of the Center on Black Church Excellence. The Center has a fifty year history of participating and working with Black houses of worship in Evanston. Dr. Blount is also a pastor in the African Methodist Episcopal denomination and serves Arnette AME Church in Chicago. Our NAACP branch was present during the installation service.

President Nabors has also been traveling throughout the United States, speaking in various communities about race relations and reparations. Tampa, FL, St. Paul, MN and Palm Springs, FL have all invited President Nabors to talk about the activity of our Evanston/North Shore Branch and to also discuss the role of interfaith organizations working to eliminate racism and build stronger relationships between black and white congregations.

If any organization, business or school is interested in working with our branch in our continued fight for civil rights and our goal of dismantling racism in Evanston and the North Shore, please contact us at our email, website address or phone number.