Food for thought. Over the past few weeks in particular, something has been on my mind that I’d like to share, and I hope you don’t mind. It has been a steady part of my consciousness realizing that this is an important time in our nation’s history and I knew these days would come. This Fall, we will be faced with another Presidential election that will either see the re-election of our current President, Barrack Obama, or the emergence of a new president, potentially in the likes of Mitt Romney. Now, I certainly have respect for whomever you believe is the right person for the job and I am happy to sit down and discuss the matter with you if you like. However, the major focus of this month’s “What’s Going On” piece is to remind, encourage, shout out, and communicate by any means necessary, (so to speak) just how important it is that...

We Vote!

Family, there is entirely too much at stake here that we must pay attention to because whether you believe it or not, your vote will and does make a difference. I’m not calling any names here, or pointing fingers, but let’s just say there are movements and mindsets abound throughout the country that would love to make wholesale changes to policies, practices, procedures and protocols, that can dramatically impact our lives and the lives of people of color in general. Part of the mindset includes a perception about us that we must change. There is a story that has been circulating around the this country for years, that suggests if you want to keep Black folk down, put information in a book or write it down because the perception about us is we don’t read. We are not aware of the issues going on or the consequences of our actions, or as some would see it our non-action. From the recent Supreme Court decision which upheld most of the President’s health care reform legislation, to certain states enacting voter suppression initiatives, to laws like the one in Florida that is assignable to the Trayvon Martin slaying, we can no longer be passive and reactionary, but must be passionate and proactive in our approach to controlling and managing our affairs. This includes the election of representatives from local city council folk to our senators and congressional representatives, to the President. How long will we continue to wait until something traumatic or dramatic happens before we make a conscious effort to affect change? I don’t believe our forefathers, and ancestors sacrificed and fought for the progress we’ve seen and the rights we have, believing that what they did was enough to sustain us over time. Or that there wouldn’t be continual challenges to face. I believe their sacrifice was intended not just to provide us with what we have but to show us the way to get ahead and ensure our future. One of those ways is to be actively engaged in our own lives. That is to say, we as a “family”, need to collectively lift our voices so that we can be heard. It is one way to share information with our representatives and those who do not have our best interest at heart, that we too, are at the table and will hold them accountable for the decisions they presume to make on our behalf. I want them to make that decision being very clear about what I want, and about how to best represent me. The assumption, (poor though it may be), is that if we don’t say anything, then everything must be ok. I don’t know about you, but everything is not ok. I intend to make myself heard by continuing to write to my representative. I will read as much as I can and sift through the muck, to make myself an informed consumer, so when and what I write reflects the true me, and I WILL VOTE! Won’t you join me and make the investment in yourself? I promise you, it will and does make a difference. “Be the change you want to see in the world.”, (Ghandi 1989).

Hotep, (peace)
Spotlight: Janice L. Austin

In January 2011, Janice L. Austin started her appointment as the Assistant Dean of Admissions at UC Irvine School of Law. She completed her undergraduate degree in Bio-Psychology from Columbia University and a post graduate certificate in International Management from the University of Liverpool.

Though not a trained lawyer, Dean Austin has survived and thrived while immersed in a community of legal educators and practicing attorneys who have seldom looked like her. Before UCI, she served as the Dean of Admissions at UC Hastings School of Law, the University of Pennsylvania School of Law and Penn State University Dickinson School of Law. She was also an admissions officer at Columbia Business School and in the immediate two years prior to her arrival in Irvine, she was the first expatriate employed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Central Asian nation of Azerbaijan, where she was the inaugural Director of Admissions at the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy School of International Affairs in the capital city, Baku. She describes her time in this post-Soviet country and the surrounding region as simultaneously exciting and chaotic.

With nearly thirty years in higher education administration at several of the nation’s top law schools, she had planned to use her years abroad as a springboard to transition out of legal education. However, the opportunity to team with Dean Erwin Chemerinsky and others to build the ideal law school for the 21st century here at UCI was just too great to pass up. She envisioned the Assistant Dean of Admissions position as a unique chance to utilize the summation of all of her successful prior experiences, where she has confronted and managed some of the most pressing issues facing enrollment in legal education. Her credentials and background made her an extraordinary choice to continue the work of the previous chief admissions officer at UCI Law.

As a “throwback”, she values the history of U.S. legal education and the rapidity of change. Dean Austin likes to announce that in the mid ’70’s when she was a work-study student at Columbia Law School, there were only eighty-five law schools in the country; today, there are about two hundred accredited U.S. law schools. In spite of the recent media attention on the national decline of applications, continuing challenges to the use of affirmative action, and heated debate on the validity of employment and enrollment statistics, Dean Austin remains confident that UCI Law is uniquely placed to be amongst the small group of elite public law schools. In her short tenure of managing all aspects of the enrollment process at UCI Law, including the allocation of merit-based aid, the school has had an increase of 105% in applications, an acceptance rate that hovers near 20%, and a matriculation yield of slightly less than 35%. The fall 2012 entering class will continue to meet the target enrollment goals set by the Chancellor, Provost, and Dean Chemerinsky that mirror the statistical profile of a top-twenty law school. However, all signs suggest that the new first year class may achieve a marker reached by an even smaller cadre of law schools--50% of the new students self-report as students of color.

Within such a remarkable career, Dean Austin has experienced many highs and lows. Though too numerous to incorporate here, she reports that her years in Azerbaijan, her recent rare precedent elected to a third term as a Trustee to the Law School Admissions Council (LSAC)-the organization that develops and administers the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) and supplies extensive services to law schools and law school applicants in the US, Puerto Rico, Canada, Australia, India and in the near future perhaps Japan and China- and the personally agonizing privilege to be in attendance for the oral arguments in 2003 at the U.S. Supreme Court Grutter v. University of Michigan case, are three of the capstone moments in her professional life. Through all of her traversing the legal and global educational community, she is humbled and honored by the support and wonderful life she lives with her partner, college-aged daughter, sophomore son at University High and their ménage of family pets.
Special Events:
For additional events/event information please visit the calendar page on our website at http://sites.uci.edu/bfsa/calendar/

July 14th– Neo-Nephilim featuring Russell Curry
July 18th– BFSA General Membership Meeting
July 21-22– Jazz Fest West; Bonelli Park in San Dimas http://omegaevents.com/jazzfestwest/
July 27th– Black In OC, 4th Friday’s
Campus and Community Resources

**Campus**
- Employee Assistance: [http://www.cascadecenters.com](http://www.cascadecenters.com)
- Teaching, Learning, Technology Center: [http://www.tltc.uci.edu/](http://www.tltc.uci.edu/)
- Black Faculty and Staff Association: [http://sites.uci.edu/bfsa](http://sites.uci.edu/bfsa)

**Community**
- NAACP: [http://naacp.org](http://naacp.org)
- OC Black Chamber: [http://ocblackchamber.com](http://ocblackchamber.com)
- 100 Black Men of Orange County: [http://www.100bmoc.com](http://www.100bmoc.com)
- THE Greenlining Institute: [www.greenlining.org/academy](http://www.greenlining.org/academy)
- National Coalition of 100 Black Women of Orange County: [http://www.nc100bwoc.org](http://www.nc100bwoc.org)
DID YOU KNOW...

The Statue of Liberty  (Story taken from Black in OC)

It is hard to believe that after my many years of schooling (secondary and post) the following facts about the Statue of Liberty were never taught: Hundreds of thousands (if not millions) of people including myself have visited the Statue of Liberty over the years but yet I'm unable to find one person who knows the true history behind the Statue ...amazing!

Yes, amazing that so much important Black history (such as this) is hidden from us (Black and White). What makes this even worse is the fact that the current twist on history perpetuates and promotes white supremacy at the expense of Black Pride!

During my visit to France I saw the original Statue of Liberty. However, there was a difference...the statue in France is BLACK!!!!!

"Ya learn something new everyday!"

The Statue of Liberty was originally a Black woman. But, as memory serves, it was because the model was Black. In a book called "The Journey of The Songhai People," as Dr. Jim Haskins (a member of the National Education Advisory Committee of the Liberty-Ellis Island Committee, professor of English at the University of Florida, and prolific Black author) points out that is what stimulated the original idea for that 151 foot statue in the harbor. He says that the idea for the creation of the statue initially was to acknowledge the part that Black soldiers played in the ending of Black African Bondage in the United States.

It was created in the mind of the French historian Edourd de Laboulaye, Chairman of the French Anti-Slavery Society, who, together with sculptor Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, proposed to the French government that the people of France present to the people of the United States through the American Abolitionist Society, the gift of a Statue of Liberty in recognition of the fact that Black soldiers won the Civil War in the United States. It was widely known then that it was Black Soldiers who played the pivotal role in winning the war, and this gift would be a tribute to their prowess.

Suzanne Nakasian, director of the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island Foundations’ National Ethnic Campaign said that the Black Americans' direct connection to Lady Liberty is unknown to the majority of Americans, BLACK or WHITE.

When the statue was presented to the US. Minister to France in 1884, it is said that he remonstrated that the dominant view of the broken shackles would be offensive to the U.S. South because the statue was a reminder of Blacks winning their freedom. It was a reminder to a beaten South of the ones who caused their defeat, their despised former captives.

Documents of Proof:

(1.) You may go and see the original model of the Statue of Liberty, with the broken chains at her feet and in her left hand. Go to the Museum of the City of NY, Fifth Avenue and 103rd Street (212) 534-1672 or call the same number and dial ext. 208 and speak to Peter Simmons and he can send you some documentation.

(2.) Check with the N.Y. Times magazine, part II May 18, 1986.

(3.) The dark original face of the Statue of Liberty can be seen in the N.Y. Post June 17, 1986, also the Post stated the reason for the broken chains at her feet.

(4.) Finally, you may check with the French Mission or the French Embassy at the U.N. or in Washington, D.C. and ask for some original French material on the Statue of Liberty, including the Bartholdi original model. You can call (202) 944-6060 or 6400.

Please pass this information along! Be sure to send it to people with children! Open a dialog and discuss it with your friends! Let this be the beginning of your quest for the Truth about American History past and present!

Empower Yourself, Your Family and Your Community! (Greg Brisco Greg.Brisco@rbslynk.com)

FYI: The quotes, facts and statements above have in many cases not been varifed and BNOC Inc. can not be held re- sponsible for its accuracy