

NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE CONFERENCE 2003

Conference should be embraced by all

James E. Rohr and Murry S. Gerber
For New Pittsburgh Courier

By now most of Pittsburgh knows that the National Urban League has selected our city as the site for its 2003 National Conference from July 26-30. What most of Pittsburgh doesn't know is that the entire community can benefit from embracing and participating in this important conference. From an economic and marketing perspective, Pittsburgh's selection is significant. More than 3,500 registrants from across the country will be spending their money in our hotels, our restaurants and our shops. During their stay, these 3,500 registrants will learn

what we already know and want to share with the world—Pittsburgh is a modern, dynamic city, and a leader in business, technology and more.

This could be said about any conference held in Pittsburgh. So why is this one so different? Because it offers us a unique opportunity to understand both the accomplishments of the African-American community and the challenges facing African-Americans in Pittsburgh. It also provides an opportunity for the whole community to work together on solutions.

For corporations, it's an opportunity to take a hard look at diversity training and development programs. Today, African-Americans compose 12.9 percent of our population; yet, African-Americans have an



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unemployment rate of 9.8 percent compared with a 5.6 percent rate for the nation. The opportunities for advancement in our corporations are seriously lagging. Making strides in this area is the right thing to do and it makes great business sense. After all, a smart company wants its workforce to be representative of its customer base and the communi-

ties it serves.

For health care providers and insurers, it's an opportunity to take a hard look at the health care disparity that is growing—not shrinking—despite enormous advances in medical treatments and technology.

For Pittsburgh educators, it's an opportunity to take a hard look at why, according to a study of test results, 78 percent of African-American fifth-grade students are below proficiency in math and reading compared with 48 percent of white students. Proficiency levels are comparable in other grade levels. This is also reflected for the African-American population in Pittsburgh in both lower graduation rates and lower rates of entry into post-high school education.

For the African-American community, it's an opportunity to learn and grow. The conference includes a wide range of exhibits and events that are free and open to the public. This includes a health pavilion that will offer free screenings and health care information. A career fair that provides a unique face-to-face setting to learn about employment situations here in Pittsburgh and across the country.

National consumer products companies will be showcasing their wares because they recognize the economic and social impact the African-American community holds. National and local artists will demonstrate through their works the cultural contributions being made by African-Americans. It's an opportunity we must all embrace.

The National Urban League Conference has something for everyone. It's a time for sharing, understanding, recognition and action. That's why PNC Financial Services is serving as a national chair and Equitable Resources is serving as the local chair for this important and unique opportunity.

If you, your company or your organization hasn't already figured out a way to get involved, we urge you to do so now. There's too much at stake to let this important opportunity pass us by.

(James E. Rohr, chairman and CEO of PNC Financial Services Group, is general co-chairperson; Murry S. Gerber, chairman, president and CEO of Equitable Resources, Inc., is host committee chairman of the 2003 National Urban League Conference.)

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Who is Marc Morial?

The National Urban League selected **Marc H. Morial** as its new president and CEO effective May 15, 2003. Morial succeeds **Hugh B. Price** as the League's eighth chief executive. Morial served two distinguished four-year terms as mayor of New Orleans from 1994-2002. During that time, he also served as president of the United States Conference of Mayors in 2001 and 2002.

As New Orleans' chief executive, he was one of the most popular and effective mayors in the city's history, leaving office with a 70 percent approval rating. After being elected as one of the youngest mayors in the city's history, crime plummeted by 60 percent, a corrupt police department was reformed, new programs for youths were started and a stagnant economy was re-energized.

Under his watch, 7,000 new hotel rooms were added, and 15,000 new homeowners resulted from his progressive and innovative programs. In his final months in office, he orchestrated the return of the NBA to the city, with the relocation of the Hornets from Charlotte to New Orleans.

In addition, the Morial Convention Center was expanded to one of the largest in America, a downtown sports arena was built, and more than 200 miles of streets were reconstructed or resurfaced through Morial's far reaching "Rebuild New Orleans Now!" bond issues that provided funding for nearly \$400 million in city, school board and criminal justice system infrastructure improvements.

Many of these improvements will be completed well after the end of his term, a tes-

tament to his long-range planning and management abilities.

He also served two years in the Louisiana State Senate where he was recognized as Conservationist Senator of the Year and Legislative Rookie of the Year.

Prior to his elected service, he was a lawyer in private practice, involved in many high profile and noteworthy cases, for which the Louisiana Bar Association honored him in 1988 with its Pro Bono Publico Award. Among those cases was the U.S. Supreme Court case of *Chisom vs. Roemer* that established that the Voting Rights Act applied to the election of judges. This case led to the election of the first African-American judge in Louisiana history.

He earned a law degree from the Georgetown University Law Center in 1983 and also earned a bachelor's degree in economics and African-American studies from the University of Pennsylvania in 1980. He graduated from Jesuit High School in 1976.

In 2002, Xavier University awarded him an honorary Doctor of Laws degree. He is the son of the late Ernest N. "Dutch" Morial, New Orleans' first Black Mayor, and Sybil Morial, a teacher and university administrator.

He is the father of a 20-year-old daughter, Kemah, a junior at Tufts University. He is married to news anchor Michelle Miller and together they have a son, Mason who was born in April 2002.

In 2002, he joined the law firm of Adams and Reese, one of the Gulf South's leading law firms.



MARC H. MORIAL

MISSION—To empower African-Americans

The Urban League is the nation's oldest and largest community-based movement devoted to empowering African-Americans to enter the economic and social mainstream.

Our Movement

The Urban League movement was founded in 1910. The National Urban League, headquartered in New York City, spearheads our non-

profit, nonpartisan, community-based movement. The heart of the Urban League movement is our professionally staffed Urban League affiliates in more than 100 cities in 34 states and the District of Columbia.

Our Mission

The mission of the Urban League movement is to enable African-Americans to secure

economic self-reliance, parity and power and civil rights.

Our Strategy

Our three-pronged strategy for pursuing the mission is:

- Ensuring that our children are well-educated and equipped for economic self-reliance in the 21st century;

- Helping adults attain economic self-sufficiency through good jobs, homeownership,

entrepreneurship and wealth accumulation; and

- Ensuring our civil rights by eradicating all barriers to equal participation in the economic and social mainstream of America.

Urban League affiliates employ these three strategies, plus others tailored to local needs, in order to implement the mission of our movement.

Office of the executive vice president

Milton J. Little Jr. currently serves as the executive vice president and chief operating officer of the National Urban League. Appointed to that position in 1997, Little is responsible for the day-to-day management of the agency's internal affairs to advance the National Urban League's mission and to achieve its strategic goals.

His four broad areas of responsibility are: development and implementation of the National Urban League's strategic and programmatic plans and board-approved policies; financial management and oversight; operations and administration; and staff management and development. Reporting directly to Little are

the following programmatic, administrative and support units: Affiliate Development, Programs and Policies, Communications, Development, Publications, BEEP, Finance and Administration, Operations, Economic Self-Sufficiency and Technology Initiatives and Education and Youth Development Programs and Policy.

Little joined the League after serving as the vice president for Foundation Programs at Lucent Technologies in Murray Hill, N.J. There, he was responsible for originating all aspects of the worldwide philanthropic program for the company that was created after the break-up of AT&T into three separate companies in 1995.

Before his appointment to Lucent Technologies, Little was vice president for Health and Human Services Programs at the AT&T Foundation where he managed a \$12 million annual giving program. He left the Manpower Demonstration Research Corp., one of the nation's leading public policy and research organizations after rising to the position of vice president for Operations during his eight-year career, to join the AT&T Foundation in 1993.

Little received a BA in sociology and political science from Morehouse College in Atlanta, Ga. He also holds an MA in urban sociology and social policy from Columbia University



MILTON J. LITTLE JR.

in New York and has completed post-graduate studies in public administration at New York University.

NUL web site launches new look

The National Urban League's Web site—www.nul.org—is sporting a fresh new look, thanks to an overhaul engineered by Myriad Media, a Virginia-based multimedia design studio.

Visitors to the League's new site will find a colorful, flash-enabled entry screen that features an easy-to-navigate menu bar, which takes visitors through an historical and informative journey of the League.

Some of the valuable information on the site includes:

- The Career Center**, where users can register to conduct job searches, post resumes, post job openings and set up job search agents that return tailored job search results to a user's e-mail inbox.

- Scholarship Information**, where interested parties will find scholarship information, along with a link to the League's free scholarship guidebook.

- Information on how to make donations to support the work of the Urban League.



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