



# THE WOODSONIAN

The official newsletter of the Carter G. Woodson Scholarship & Community Service Foundation, Inc.

Vol. 17

Winter 2016

## Woodson Installs Its new President

**Shannon Blackamore** is the newly-elected president of the Woodson Foundation, Inc. He is a native of Chicago, IL, has worked for the City of Madison Police Department for fifteen years, and is currently Sergeant of Police. Shannon comes to the position with a wealth of experience as he is a former president, vice-president, treasurer, and member of the executive board. His administration will continue its commitment to expanding programming in each of the four standing programs of the foundation: Social Action, Cultural Enrichment, Scholarship, and Reading Is Fundamental Book Distribution. One of his immediate goals is to maintain the existing Scope of Partnership Agreement

with the Madison Metropolitan School District to operate the Boys Club Mentoring Program for African American Middle School Boys at Jefferson Middle School. Other goals include increasing the number of donors to the foundation, maintaining existing partnerships while creating new ones, and increasing the number of volunteers who make a tremendous difference in the important work we do. Shannon is grateful to the donors of the foundation, its Executive Board of Directors, foundation members and volunteers.



## The Woodson Foundation Executive Board of Directors 2016-17

- Shannon Blackamore, President  
City of Madison Police Department
- Charles H. Brown,  
Immediate Past President  
Madison College; retired
- Brian Russell, Vice-President  
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Program Director  
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- Sherman McNeil, Reading Is  
Fundamental Program Director  
Dane County
- Charles C. Peevy, Emeritus  
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retired

## Woodson Honors 2016-17 Scholarship Recipient

**Ari Davis** is the recipient of a \$1000.00 scholarship from the Woodson Foundation. He has a demonstrated record of academic accomplishments, service/volunteerism to his community, and athletic attainments. He graduated from Madison West High School with a cumulative 3.0 GPA. He now attends Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and is majoring in education. Ari's goal is to become a principal. Some of his community service work includes volunteering in the 100 Black Men Backpack Giveaway, tutoring in elementary schools, and reading to elementary school students at the "Read Your Heart Out" celebrations. In the past four years while serving as president and member at large of the West High School Black Student Union, Ari has volunteered over 400 community service hours. Some of his awards and/or recognitions include Madison

Rotary Youth Leadership Award, Urban League's Outstanding Young Person Award, Congressman Mark Pocan's Outstanding Young Person Award for Service to the Community, and Madison Links Outstanding Student Award, and others. Ari has also been an active participant in athletics for a number of years. He is a former member of the Madison Spartans Basketball Team and the South Side Raiders Football Team. He also played high school varsity basketball, volleyball, and ran track. Also noteworthy is that Ari was selected as the first high school intern by the superintendent of Madison Metropolitan School District's Personalized Pathways Internship Program. Congratulations, Ari.



## RIF at the Honors Breakfast, Expanding

**At the Honors Breakfast in May 2016**, the foundation's Madison Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) Book Distribution Program gave out 200 new, multicultural, high interest books to honor students and other students at the James C. Wright Middle School in South Madison.. The book distribution program has been approved by RIF for the last 22 consecutive years. With this special approval status, the program is able to purchase new books up to a 75% discount from approved vendors. RIF is the oldest non-profit literacy organization in the United States and distributes more than 5 million books annually to more than 17,000 sites across the country. According

to RIF, 47% of fourth graders from low-income families read below the basic level. Additionally, more than 80% of children from economically disadvantaged communities lose reading skills over the summer because they lack access to books, learning resources, and such enrichment opportunities as trips to the library, bookstore, or museum. It is the goal of the Madison RIF Book Distribution Program to provide reading material in the homes of underserved children and to foster reading as a life-long activity. In 2016-17, the program will add one elementary school and the Boys Club Mentoring Program to its current sites.



## Thank You, Donors

The foundation could not have enjoyed its tremendous success over the years without the financial assistance from its donors and the hard work of the volunteers. The following are donors since March 1996 and up to the publication of this newsletter: Freddi Adelson, Dr. Sandra Adell, Peter Albert, Ronald and Anna Albrecht, Jane Albright, Alliant Energy Foundation, Fernando & Carla Alvarado, American Family Insurance, Michael Anderson, Associated Bank, Badger Office Supplies, H. John Ball, Vicki Bankston, Barnes & Noble Booksellers, Mary and Chuck Belin, Geraldine Bernard, Lamarr & Cheryl Billups, Borders Book Store, Peter and Debra Brey, Dr. Anthony Brown, Richard Brown, William Brown, Mattie Brown, Percy & Virginia Brown, Mary Burke, Benjamin & Rosalind Bryant,

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## 22nd Annual Thanksgiving Food Drive, Successful



On November 22, the Woodson Foundation held its 22<sup>nd</sup> Thanksgiving Food Drive at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in South Madison. The Social Action Program of the foundation gave out 275 baskets complete for a Thanksgiving dinner. Turkeys were also donated for a Thanksgiving meal for the homeless. Most requests for a basket were made through Mt. Zion and James C. Wright Middle School. Other requests, though smaller in number, came from other churches that are represented in the African American Council of

Churches. We are pleased to continue our working relationship with these 3 partners. As in previous years, families and individuals who came to the distribution center represented a culturally-diverse group that was in need of food for this special time of year. On hand to assist in this effort were volunteers from the church, foundation members, UW students, and members of the Madison Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Thank you, volunteers!! A big shout out goes to the major sponsors of this year's food drive: **Madison Rotary Foundation, South Madison Rotary, M. G. & E. and the Walmart Foundation.**



*Thank you continued...*

Rotary Foundation, Dennis McClain, Dwight McDonald, Candace McDowell, Althea A. McLeod, Milton McPike, Meicher CPA, Roberta Meyer, Madison Gas & Electric, Tim Miller, Akira and Charlotte Miura, Peggy Howard Moore, Jim and Mary Moser, Ruth Murphy, Nick's Restaurant, Robert and Martha Nolan, Lionel & Bernadette Norton, Harry & Edjuana Ogden, Omega Life Membership Foundation, Inc., Ovens of Brittany, Jonathan Overby, Aretha Pearson, Charles Calvin Peevy, Mary Pennel, Patricia

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## Boys Club Going Strong at Jefferson

**The Woodson Boys Club Mentoring Program for African American Middle School Boys** is continuing its Scope of Partnership Agreement with Madison Metropolitan School District to operate a boys club at Jefferson Middle School in West Madison. The purpose of the mentoring program is to help close the academic achievement gap between the boys and their counterparts and to establish lasting relationships with the boys. The program also focuses on equipping the boys with leadership skills, providing various cultural enrichment activities that the boys would otherwise go without, engaging them in community service activities, and assisting them in their progression as young men. A cultural enrichment field trip to a major museum in Chicago is planned for spring 2017. Under a group mentoring model, the boys attend monthly sessions with mentors of the foundation. Sessions are modeled around the principles of

Learning, Accountability, Maturity, and Preparedness. In an effort to further build enduring relationships, the boys engage in some one-on-one time with mentors. Some of the topics for this year's monthly sessions include Goal Setting, Study Skills, Black History Presentation/Activity, Perception of the Black Boy, Image/Grooming and Appearance, Time Management, Financial Literacy, and Interacting with Law Enforcement Officers. Other components of the mentoring program include a Parent/Boys Orientation and End-of-Year Recognition/Awards dinner. The Reading Is Fundamental Book Distribution Program Director is working with the Cultural Enrichment Program Director to infuse books into the mentoring program to encourage the importance of reading as a life-



long activity. Measures of program effectiveness include grade improvement, fewer behavioral incidences, and improved attendance. In order to remain participating in the mentoring program, boys must adhere to a code of conduct and show continuous improvement in accordance with the overall objectives of the program. The foundation has targeted 25 boys over the 2016-17 academic year.




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The Woodson Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 1494, Madison, WI 53701-1494.

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Thank you.