

MESSAGE IN THE MEANTIME



Fall Edition
October 2006
4th Quarter

THE POWER PROJECT

STEP INTO YOUR POWER
Black men ages 18-29.



One-on-One Session: Earn \$50
Power Group Session: Earn \$50

323-733-4868

www.inthementimemen.org
inthementimemen@aol.com

The POWER Project is designed to educate and empower young African American men between the ages 18-29 in making healthier life style choices.

Funded by the Department of Disability, City of Los Angeles, AIDS Coordinator's Office

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Contributors

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Tony R. Wafford
Jasmyne Cannick
Ronald Jackson
Greg Wilson

Photography by
Egypt Thompson



Jeffrey King, Founder, ED
(Umoja Retreat)

The NIA Project

This home grown prevention program takes its name from the Kiswahili word which means purpose. The slogan of the NIA Prevention Project is “My Purpose is to CARE” comprising an acronym of the words: **Care, Appreciate, Respect and Empower.** We are purposed to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in the African American Community. The goals of the NIA Prevention Empowerment Series are to engage black men who have sex with men in a safe and ethnically-specific space utilizing language and concepts that are accessible to them in order to provide self-growth and educational opportunities that can lead to a reduction of the HIV infection rate among Black gay men in Los Angeles County. The session work is designed to address ‘low self-esteem and stigma, sexual control, loneliness and isolation, internalized homophobia and gender ideology caused by homophobia, racism, community involvement/ societal norms and a 30 day follow-up session’.

MyLife MyStyle

In The Meantime’s MY LIFE MY STYLE project is a joint collaboration between ITMT and APLA. It is designed for young black men between the ages of 18-29. We strive to give back to our community by educating, empowering, and encouraging younger brothers to make healthier choices, mentally, physically and spiritually.

This years activities: In The Meantime was one of the key sponsors for The Love is The Message Ball that catered to several hundred young Black gay men who participate and enjoy the Los Angeles ball scene. MYLIFE also hosted the White Party social event for several hundred young black gay men. In The Meantime sponsored a trip to Magic Mountain’s Odyssey Gay Night on September 29th for 35 young black gay men who completed both of the September closed group sessions. MYLIFE will host its big blowout end of the year event called the Black Party set for October 12th. These are a few of the social/ educational activities that have been facilitated to capture the attention of younger men. We support and sponsor social activities to encourage younger men to celebrate their lives..

MY LIFE’s new **Project Coordinator Greg Wilson** has scheduled the next two group training sessions for October 17th and October 24th. Groups are held each month at the In The Meantime Office located at 4067 W. Pico Blvd. (secured parking at the Catch One.) **You must R.S.V.P. for future sessions by calling (323) 733-4868. Live your life, and do it with style...It’s time to be smart about it.**

The Power Project

The POWER Project consist of four components: The POWER Project is the culmination of outreach, an individual one on one session, a four module support group counseling session and a 30/60 day follow up session. The POWER group session content was developed as a direct result of the input from focus groups conducted with local African American gay men between the ages 18-29. Included in the session work is an HIV/AIDS 101 educational training.
INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING

SESSION: This closed individual one on one session format is structured to include specific topics. The purpose of this counseling session is to build a trusting relationship between young men and In The Meantime Men. It plays a significant role in creating the safe place from which young Black men can begin to think about their risk behavior and HIV counseling and testing. Like outreach, the individual counseling session serves as an opportunity for recruitment and individual needs assessment. This focused session will serve as a point of entry into HIV counseling and testing as well as a POWER group session.

POWER EMPOWERMENT GROUP: The POWER Group Sessions are grounded in empowerment behavioral theory. Each POWER Group session includes four modules covering an in-depth discussion of key topics. The topics have been carefully selected to help young black men delve further into the influences, which impact their behavior regarding sexual decision-making. The final session provides an opportunity for men to debrief collectively and share their growth experiences together.

FOLLOW-UP: Upon completion ITMT invites participants to continue in weekly support group counseling sessions. These sessions provide an opportunity to deepen the bonding and friendships engendered through The POWER Project. Additionally, ITMT has a number of health / wellness options and community activities, which it offers all program participants. The Project Coordinator Taz Ultra Omni is currently working with an evaluation specialists to implement a 30 and 60 day follow-up that build upon the simplicity of the program design and maximizes participation in follow-up sessions.

South Los Angeles Crystal Meth Taskforce

The South Los Angeles Crystal Meth Taskforce will meet again Wednesday, November 8, 2006 at 7:30p.m. at the office of In The Meantime Men's Group, 4067 W. Pico Blvd., to establish a work plan and timeline for the balance of 2006 and the first quarter of the 2007 calendar year.

The following is a list of items that will be addressed:

- **The organizational structure of the Taskforce**
- **The development of a website**
- **The creation of an educational brochure**
- **A billboard for Crenshaw Blvd. during National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Month**
- **The Development of a community educational training program**
- **The development of a data collection Survey**



Brothers in the flow of Umoja (Malibu, Ca.)



The lives of Black gay men matter to God.



In The Meantime Men's Group, Inc.
323-733-4868 ■ inthemeantimemen.org

Billboard appeared on Crenshaw Blvd. September 2006

What Do We Have To Say About It?

By Tony R. Wafford

In 2000 then Assemblyman Roderick Wright introduced A.B. 2905 to start mandatory HIV/AIDS testing for men and women going into and coming out of state prisons in California. When Wright first introduced the bill in 2002, it was met with heavy opposition from the gay White community, the ACLU, and every other liberal do-gooder organization in the state. Wright was even abandoned by some African American HIV/AIDS experts who in spite of their understanding of the issues around HIV/AIDS in the prison system from both the medical perspective and the social perspective of those suffering from HIV/AIDS, caved into the Gay White lobby when it came time to present the issue in Sacramento. With all of that, the bill still made it through the process only to be vetoed by then Governor Gray Davis in 2002.

Well, here we are four years later and as a number of African American legislators reintroduce similar legislation in both the United States Congress and the California State Assembly, they still don't get it. Who are they? There are those who love to speak for the Black community around the issue of HIV/AIDS. They are those folks who would argue, "Why are we (the Black community) stigmatizing our brothers and sisters in prison? What type of signal are we sending Black women about Black men who are in jail?" Not to mention, "Why aren't we concerned about what seems to be a clear violation of the civil rights of Black men in prison?"

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Umoja Retreat

In The Meantime celebrated its 5th annual Umoja Empowerment Retreat with amazing style and grace. Surveys showed that 100% of this year's participants would participate again in next years retreat experience.

The ages ranged from 20-60. More than 30% of this year's participants were under the age of 30. This year's Umoja theme 'In The Spirit of Oneness' is exactly what was cultivated over this three day empowerment weekend.

In the mix were brothers from DC/ Maryland area, San Diego, Oakland and New York. This very diverse group of Black SGL, gay and bisexual men created what will go down in In The Meantime's History as a weekend to remember.

Early morning walks to the beach, with yoga and meditation as well as the empowerment sessions that were facilitated by some of Los Angeles most acclaimed presenters. We are clear that the best was provided for the best.

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4th Annual West Coast Awards Ball 2006

The 4th Annual West Coast Awards Ball 2006 was a success. Over the years, participants within the ball community competed for trophies and grand prizes, but the relevance of the Awards Ball was to build status. The Awards Ball is the big event, the Oscars or Grammy's of the ball community and there's always a lot of excitement in the community leading up to this event. The 4th Annual West Coast Awards Ball that took place this year was well worth the wait. Over 300 people were in attendance. The excitement couldn't be measured and anxiousness ran through the blood streams of all that attended. The place was packed with houses and spectators from all over. It was amazing to see the sparkle in the eyes of those that were experiencing this ball scene, this hidden world for the first time.

Some of the houses in attendance included The Innovative House of Prodigy, The House of Mizrahi, The House of Allure, the House of Cavalli, the Icon House of Ebony and the Legendary Icon House of Ultra Omni. There were also social service agencies present such as In the Meantime, LA Children's Hospital, Reach L A, and Health Research Associates.

The founder of the West Coast Awards Balls, the Legendary Father Taz Ultra Omni, once again produced an event of class and excellence; providing a theme of elegance and creating the setting for a magical night. Decorations were extravagant, well thought out and extremely creative from the table settings and center pieces; to the awards that set this event above all other ballroom events this year. Sources say that this Awards Ball will be Father Taz's last Awards

Ball; after years of having such an impact and influence in the Los Angeles Ball Community, many are saddened by this news. The Legendary Father Taz Ultra Omni is the only nationally recognized Legend on the West Coast, having set the bar of "Ovahness" for the West. By his example, now kids know what it takes to bring it nationally both in and out of the ballscene. The departure of father Taz as the West Coast Awards Ball chair is really a celebration of the evolution the ball scene has experienced in Los Angeles. To keep the ball scene in Los Angeles elevating, Father Taz found it appropriate to give control over this annual awards event to his son, Father Nicco Cavalli. There were over 70 awards given away to young people who had participated in the ball scene throughout the year. Some of the winners were as follows:

House of the Year: **The House of Cavalli**
Mother of the Year: **Mother Devine Cavalli**
Performance Soft of the Year: **Toi Ultra Omni**
Performance Dramatics of the Year: **Enyce Ultra Omni**
Father of the Year: **Father Nicco Cavalli**
LA's Finest: **Father Nicco Cavalli**
Drags Face: **Michelle Allure**
Fem Queen Realness: **Mother Shai Ebony**
Oakland's Finest: **Envy Mizrahi**
Runway of the Year: **Dai Cavalli**
Star of the Year: **Corey Rodeo**
Statement of the Year: **Mother Ariel Prodigy**
BQ Face of the Year: **Tori Ultra Omni**

The list continued with a host of winners who graced the runway outfits and ensembles fitting for an awards show. Community Service Awards were given to Jasmine Cannick, Jeffrey King, Ivan Daniels, and Chela Demuir Cavalli.

All the categories were Open-to-All which made the ball exciting. It allowed

everyone the opportunity to participate and be a part of this event. One of the hottest categories of the night was Face. Looking as dazzling as ever, Michelle Allure hit the runway with a dramatic look from one of her previous wins this year. The 4 time face of the year Tori Ultra Omni brought his natural and striking beauty to the floor as well, dressed in a classic look fitting for the VMA's. But it was Antonio Free-Agent who brought the shock as he began eliminating all the contestants one at a time. Finally, Tori Ultra Omni eliminated Antonio which left the stage for a hot battle between Tori Ultra Omni and Michelle Allure. After selling their faces to the judges the votes came down in favor of Michelle Allure who won overall on this night.

Other categories that were hot was Runway Open to All and Realness Open to All. **The voguing categories were also hot, but it was clear that the judges had too much to drink by how they voted.** The Overall Grand Prize was won by the House of Allure who once again brought their simple elegance to the floor. The House of Allure won Face Overall, Foot and Eye, Runway Open to All, and Best Dressed and Of the Year Performance Open to All which made them the house with the most trophies, thus winning the \$500 grand prize. The house of Mizrahi came in right behind the house of Allure winning Realness Open to All, BQ Body, and Performance Open to All.

Overall, the ball was exciting and a success. Everyone competed in the spirit of love and unity, ending the night with a moment of silence in remembrance of the West Coast Big Boi Face Ruler Mike Mizrahi who passed away at the beginning of this year, and the Icon Willie Ninja who passed away a month ago.

Signed....A Spectator

What Do We have To Say About it?

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Isn't that a joke? Now let me see if I got this right: White gay men are concerned about the civil rights of Black men in prison? Black men are invisible when they're on the streets but now that they're in prison you see them? Please!!

Recently, Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally introduced A.B. 2383 to require mandatory testing of inmates going into and coming out of prison. Congresswoman Maxine Waters has introduced H.R. 6038, "Stop AIDS in Prison Act"; and Congresswoman Barbara Lee from Oakland just introduced H.R.6083, "Condom Distribution in Federal and State Prisons". Congresswoman Lee's bill is formally titled "JUSTICE Act 2006" which stands for Justice for the Unprotected Against Sexually Transmitted Infections among the Confined and Exposed.

It seems that everyone sees that HIV/AIDS in prisons is an issue to be addressed except gay White men and liberal do-gooders. The only difference now is that the White gay community and the ACLU haven't come out and hammered those bills like they did Assemblyman Wright's bill in 2002. Instead, what they are doing is to love the bills to death. By that I mean they hung more s*** on the Dymally bill than the Whitehouse Christmas tree, knowing that as they added more and more things to the bill, the cost to implement it would go through the roof and the bill would never see the light of day.

Everyone seems to understand the issues and impact of HIV/AIDS in prison except the ACLU and gay Whites. The Red Cross gets it and that's why if you've been in custody for two weeks you can't donate blood for two years because prisons are such a high risk environment for HIV infection. Black people get the importance of HIV testing of inmates, because of the 2,186,230 persons in prisons all over America, 64% of them are people of color according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. If most of the people in jails are people of color and most of the people coming out of jails are returning to communities of color, how in the hell can the ACLU, the White gay community, and a handful of confused Negroes position themselves to speak for the Black community?

Do you really want to help? Support Black AIDS Service Organizations (ASO's) in their efforts to get their fair share of the resources. Support Congresswoman Barbara Lee's bill to distribute condoms in prisons. Support Congresswoman Maxine Waters' bill to test men and women going into and coming out of prison. And lastly, encourage Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally to reintroduce AB2383.

To those do-gooders who want to help — know that we can speak for ourselves — you just need to listen!

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Earl Wooten
ITMT Board President

The talent show was nothing short of Idol worthy. Umoja Idol that is as brothers sang jazz, to gospel to classical and the spoken word was nothing short of spirit moving. The Bananarama Girls turned the place upside down as they paraded their stuff topped with fresh bananas to boot. Could Egypt have done more? He's truly one creative brother.

The view of the ocean and the surrounding canyon could not have been more perfect if some one had placed an order with God. The temperature was mild, the sun was healing and the nights were perfect for walks around the manicured rose gardens and sage filled grounds.

As we prepared to leave our weekend home It was clear that friendships had been developed and long and lasting relationships had been cultivated through this skillfully guided weekend of brotherhood and empowerment. We hope that you will join us next year.

California Black Justice Political Action Committee (P.A.C.)



Pictured are Alfred Edwards, Jasmyne Cannick, Marquita Thomas, 55th AD nominee Laura Richardson, 51st AD nominee Curren Price, 36th AD nominee Robert "Bo" Bynum, and host Alan-Michael Graves. —————Jasmyne A. Cannick

On Sunday, August 13, 2006, the California Black Justice Political Action Committee (P.A.C.) held a successful fundraiser for the 2006 Black Caucus Nominees. Guests included Black Caucus Chair Assemblymember Mervyn Dymally, 36th Assembly District nominee Robert "Bo" Bynum, 51st Assembly District Nominee Curren Price, and 55th Assembly District Nominee Laura Richardson. Host committee organizers included Jasmyne Cannick, Alan-Michael Graves President of Gentlemen's Gentlemen, and Marquita Thomas, executive director of the Black lesbian social group Out and About. Attendees had the opportunity to discuss the state of Blacks in California as well as support from Black elected officials for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender civil rights. The California Black Justice P.A.C. helps to elect Black candidates who support LGBT civil rights and Black civil rights.

Hopefully with events like this, Black elected officials will begin to develop a stronger relationship with their gay constituents rather than the gay lobbyist in Sacramento who aren't a part of their district and don't vote to elect them.

To support this campaign please
 contact the office of In The
 Meantime Men's Group, Inc.
 (323)733-4868



Billboard appeared on
 Crenshaw Blvd. - August 2006

Homophobia.
 HIV.
 Racism.
 Don't Define Me.

In The Meantime Men's Group, Inc.
 323-733-4868
 inthetimeantimemen.org



Billboard appeared on
 Crenshaw Blvd. - August 2006

STOP
 The Hate
 The Killing
 Stop Homophobia
 Stop the Spread of HIV
 Spread Love



In The Meantime Men's Group, Inc.
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IN THE MEANTIME MEN'S GROUP, INC.
 4067 W. Pico Blvd.
 Los Angeles, Calif. 90019



In The Meantime Men's Group, Inc.
 "Creating Unity and Affirming Our Common Bond"

The NIA Project

NIA: Kiswahili for PURPOSE



Still Guessing



Our Purpose is to
 Prevent the spread of
 HIV/AIDS



Let's be honest

"Our Purpose is to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS"

A time and space where brothers can come together.

Social / Discussion

with Black gay, SGL and Bi-sexual men

Refreshments served!!!

\$50.00 gift certificate

In The Meantime's office:

4067 W. Pico Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90019

(Secured Parking at the Catch One)

For more information call:

(323)733-4868

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