

**18th Annual Convention BWHAA-USA
General Meeting
Saturday July 3, 2010
Atlanta, Georgia**

The 18th Annual General Meeting of Spartans was called to order by Chairman Handel C. Kiazolue Diggs @ 12:45pm EST.

Invocation: National Chaplain Eudora Gardiner first and foremost gave thanks to God for gathering everyone again for another year of deliberations. Gardiner in a brief meditation from the Holy Gospel of St. Matthew 6:33, encouraged every Spartan present to seek God first in everything they do. She thanked God for his Grace and Mercy upon the lives of Spartans. She prayed for the Holy Spirit intervention in the deliberations, safety, guidance, travelling mercy, comfort for the bereaved and protection throughout the convention weekend.

Welcome of Delegates: Georgia Chapter President, Gail Farnhalo on behalf of her chapter welcomed each Spartan to the 18th annual convention and fifty years of excellence at BWH. She said it is a pleasure to be hosting at this momentous time in our history and hoped that deliberations will be in the spirit of peace and fraternity as they do their best to extend the southern hospitality to all.

Chairman Diggs quickly added his welcome and thanked the Georgia President and host chapter for hosting convention 2010. He asked each Spartan to match the passion with the Spartan pride. He had all Spartans sing the Happy Birthday song as the school turned 50 years on June 29, 2010.

Adoption of Agenda and Reading of Minutes: a motion to adopt the agenda was stated by Gail Farnhalo and seconded by John T Gabbidon. Chairman Diggs asked for a silent read of the 17th Annual Convention Minutes. After the reading of minutes, Mohamedu Jones made a motion to open the minutes for discussion and it was seconded by Elyne Padmore. **Corrections to minutes:** None was made during this meeting. **The 2009 General Meeting Minutes have been archived.**

Reports: A) Program- 1st Vice National Chair Eugenia Jelani and 2nd Vice National Chair Darren Wilkins via a Power Point slide show, briefed the body on the 2009-2010 projects of the association. The team was pleased to report on the project and gave a special thanks to Technical Engineer/consultant Milton Ricks, Architect/consultant Joseph Jones, Counselor Mohamedu, Counselor Cyril Jones and Darren Wilkins. Darren Wilkins stated back in 2008, the school was asked to present an assessment to the association. From the assessment, the school needed a face lift and a **21st century computer lab**. A new reservoir was installed for running water systems usage, thirteen restrooms renovated, fourteen classrooms & Auditorium painted. The following projects were highlighted: **Spartan Pride, March 2010 (project I) - Smartech Phase II, December 2009 (project II) & Boot Camp for Teachers, December 2009 (project III)**. Darren indicated that a Train-the Trainer program was completed to expedite the training for other teachers after the projects have been turned over to the school.

A full document on the projects completed in 2009 can be located on the website or send an email to Darren Wilkins for a copy.

Suggestions/Questions/comments: Darren Wilkins was thanked for the hard work & efforts. Several Spartans had questions on the security of the school with these new projects going into effect, smart board cost analysis. In response to inquiries, Wilkins stated security at school is reasonable, no serious concerns and each smart board will cost about nine hundred dollars. The intention was to pilot the smart board from the high school level and later to the lower classes.. Chairman Diggs in closing thanked Darren and the team for such tremendous job and informed all Spartans that a proposal on the smart board will be generated and presented to the body for review.

B) Financial: National Financial Secretary Yvonne Hansford stated the operating budget covers fiscal year July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010 with a beginning balance of Twenty three thousand, one hundred twenty six dollars. She covered the line items of the financial report highlighting capital campaign, convention 2009 revenue generated, scholarship and transfers into bank account. During the report highlights, several questions and suggestions were made in regards to the semantics. Below are some of the suggestions made:

1. Bad Check Recovery Fees- suggestion to national was to utilize the federal guidelines in recovering these fees if Spartans don't make good on their checks after convention. Yvonne Hansford indicated that members involved promised to fully recover the amounts by end of convention weekend 2010. She did not think it was a right move at this time to utilize federal guidelines.
2. Teachers Incentive Program- the name was changed to the Teacher Carolyn Cole Salary Project.
3. Assessment to Host Chapter- suggestion from the floor was to change the name of Assessment as it denotes differently. National should reconsider changing the name to one that best describes the purpose of the funding. After several suggestions were made, the name was changed to "Convention Allocation".
4. Expenses Categorization- suggestion was to have report categorized for BWHEs disbursement to enable Spartans to clearly see where the funds are going. Hansford concurred with the body and promised to have report structured accordingly.

Finally, Hansford stated the ending balance for the reporting period of July 1, 2009- June 30, 2010 was Fifteen thousand five hundred, nineteen dollars and twenty one cents. She was applauded for the report.

State of the Association: Chairman Handel C. Kiazolue Diggs highlighted in his report the income generated through the capital campaign initiatives. Funding of the BWH renovation project was also highlighted. From all indicators, we can say BWH is strong Chairman Diggs quoted. He thanked everyone for the support and sacrifices in helping

BWH become a powerhouse.. Due to change in leadership of the Minnesota chapter, Comfort Rennie was thanked for her leadership role in the chapter. Class of 83 and the Tri-State was recognized for winning the chapter and class challenge. A scholarship will be named in their honor. Also highlighted was the Gold Club level of eight hundred dollars or more; members achieving the status will be inducted in the Gold club at the 18th Chairman's Renaissance Ball. Committees applauded for the hard work were the Public Relations, Capital Campaign, Benevolence & Convention. Chairman Diggs indicated that the audit report has been a difficult task because of chapters not responding timely. He stated immediately following 18th annual convention; Georgia chapter will have thirty days after convention to submit receipts of all fund raisers to national. If deadline is not met, an emergency board meeting will be called to obtain a resolution. Once received within the deadline, national will have sixty days to make report or similarly an emergency meeting will be called to obtain a resolution. After deadlines are met, the Audit committee will have ninety days to produce a report to the association. The National Chairman report listed the number of projects completed by the association and the 2010-2011 initiatives. He asked all Spartans to think about a covenant with BWHES starting with annual commitment to registration. Standard Operating Procedures will be devised as to how we do business. The Chairman was applauded for the report.

Adoption of Resolution: Chairman Handel Diggs stated an email was sent out to all chapters requesting a submission of the chapter's resolution to Mohamedu Jones by June 28, 2010. Jones in reading out of the resolutions stated he did not receive an email from any chapter; however he accepted the excuse of the Tri State chapter. A computer glitch handicapped the sending of the resolution.

Resolution: During the convention year, if the host chapter does not meet the assessment fee of one thousand five hundred dollars, National must allocate convention payment of five thousand dollars less the fifteen hundred dollars or whatever the amount is that the chapter pays. Example: if the chapter pays one thousand dollars the year before it hosts convention, National must allocate four thousand dollars and it will become the chapter responsibility to make up the difference. There were several questions and suggestions to the resolution. After the clarifications, the resolution was passed with 43 votes.

Chapter Fundraising Best Practice: Gudrun Harris, President of the Tri-State Chapter encouraged all chapters to emulate the fund raising practice of Tri-State. Speaking from a power point presentation of her chapter's biggest fund raising event-George D. Browne Awards,, she highlighted the best practices are to Plan in advance & Execute relentlessly.. According to Harris, other best practices are: an affordable price for guests, spend minimally on planning and solicit sponsorships. A proven rule of success is to **get tickets out 3 months before the event.** Chairman Diggs thanked Harris for sharing her Fundraising Best practices.

Spartan Pride:

Spartan Georgiana Briggs of North Carolina thanked Chairman Diggs for the opportunity to express her Spartan Pride. She attended BWH for 2 years but has so immersed with

Spartans that it gives her a great pleasure to be a part of the Spartan world. She attended convention 2009, reviewed the report of the 2nd Vice National Chairman on Programs which invoked a sense of commitment to become a member of the association's acclaimed Hall of Fame. She decided to elevate her Spartan Pride and became a Hall of Famer in 2010. She takes pride in being a Spartan and encouraged all to help raise the needed funds to support the kids and children back home; it is not all about the fun. Whatever it takes, let's make the commitment and help guide our children in becoming the greatness of Africa Briggs pleaded. She was applauded for her statement of Spartan Pride.

Recommendation: BWHUSA has the resources to move the school to another level, let's have Spartans utilize those resources and take BWH to another level. In response, Chairman Diggs stated recommendation will be looked at in the future.

Appointment of Committee Chairs: Chairman Diggs appointed Comfort Kenneh and Mohamedu Jones as Chairmen of the Scholarship and the Capital Campaign Committees respectively. Each chairman was asked to appoint the members of their committee ensuring regional balance.

Convention 2011 Update, Rhode Island Chapter: John T Gabbidon, President of Rhode Island Chapter thanked Wilkins and Jelani for their report earlier which overwhelmed him. In preparation for convention 2011, the chapter has implemented multiple fundraisers using that as their Motto. Gabbidon indicated each member has been asked to make a donation of one hundred dollars by December 31, 2010. The donation does not include the registration fee. Bus trip, Sips and food sales are all planned fundraisers. They have identified three venues and are working aggressively to conclude agreements. They are also in the process of merging with nearby Connecticut, Boston and Maine. The details when complete will be released. He assured Spartans that convention 2011 will be very nice and successful. Spartan Charles Johnson said tentatively October 9 or 23 are the dates out for the fall board meeting. In view to convention 2011, Mohamedu Jones pointed out that the law firm he works for is based out of Providence Rhode Island and his Boss was very excited to hear about his school reunion in Providence. His boss asked him to do two things when meeting with the administrative assistant: use of the Conference Room for Board Meeting and a Reception later. He will work on the details and get in touch with the Rhode Island officials. He committed to work on securing some financial support from the law firm.

Giving Back to B. W. Harris School Campaign: Cyril Jones gave a perspective of the reality at B. W. Harris School. The students pay one hundred and fifty dollars per semester twice a year. The money collected in tuition and the funding from the association are the top two supporting machines of the school. The church does not help the school financially. The funding by the association is little compared to what is needed to run the school. He quickly said to Spartans; don't be discouraged by reports keep doing what you are doing. He mentioned that sanitation and electricity are major concerns. He urged Spartans to keep giving back as we are doing so very well single-handedly as an association. He stated contributions from us make up about seventy

percent of the school budget to keep it running, if the association stops, there will be no BWH. He encouraged Spartans that as we educate one child, we help educate the nation. He ended, let's help BWH School, your money is not going to waste and it is helping the kids, don't be discouraged let's continue to give back to the school. Chairman Diggs read an excerpt from former principal, Mr.J.Wah Doe Bedell, Sr. His message urged all Spartans to get involved, don't criticize from the outside, attend meetings and be a part. Chairman Diggs encouraged Spartans to make a covenant to BWH by being a part of the **Giving Back to the B.W. Harris School Campaign**. He suggested a year-round convention registration. The goal is to have two hundred registrants in 2011 and introduced the **One by Four** method. He challenged each board member and chapter president to lead by example. Registration period will be from August 1 to July weekend of convention. However, if you registered between August 1 and December 15, your name will appear in the souvenir program.

Other Business: Mohammedu Jones asked the following Spartans to serve on the Capital Campaign Committee: David Moore, Elyne Padmore, Georgina Briggs, Judith Karpeh, Joseph Walker, Mai Anderson & Gethan Ward and committed that the committee will take Giving back to new levels. Brochures of the CCC were handed out and a new website will be created to enhance the CCC work. He indicated that Life Time Membership will be proposed; the lifetime member would have to first be a Gold Club member, will be presented with a lifetime membership card and would not pay any entrance fees for lifetime. Details will be rolled out to the membership.

Announcement & Vote of Thanks: Michael Sawyer of the Class of 1985, asked Spartans to please come out and support the class in efforts to give back to BWH. Sawyer committed to a five hundred dollars contribution yearly. The program is scheduled for August 21, 2010. Gudrun Harris also sought support for the class of 1980 30th anniversary event in Virginia on October 9, 2010.

Meeting was adjourned @ exactly 4:21pm by National Chair Diggs and National Chaplain Eudora Gardiner led the closing prayers