NATIONAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

LEADING WITH EXCELLECE ~
SERVING WITH GRACE:
THE PRICE OF LEADERSHIP ...
AND WHAT IT TAKES

OCTOBER 17 - 19, 2013
 NATIONAL HARBOR, MD
The Links, Incorporated
National Leadership Summit
“The Price of Leadership…And What It Takes”
Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center
National Harbor, Maryland 20745
October 17-19, 2013

OVERVIEW OF THURSDAY’S EVENTS

An Evening of Excellence in Leadership – A Salute & Dialogue with our Congressional Leaders

Our National President, Link Margot James Copeland, began the evening by extending a warm welcome and greetings to the 350 Links in attendance at the National Leadership Summit. Link Constance Fitzpatrick Smith, Western Area Director, led the Western Area contingent.

We were treated to a moving rendition of *The Wind Beneath My Wings* beautifully sung by the melodious voice of Link Gwendolyn E. Boyd, Capital City (DC) Chapter.

The following six US Representatives (also Link Sisters) were present to receive a video salute and a beautiful custom-designed crystal *Excellence in Leadership Award* that was proudly presented to each of the panelists who serve our country and our organization so very well. With the conference beginning one day after a budget agreement was signed, the backdrop for this conference could not have been more perfect.

- Link Corrine Brown, 5th Congressional District of Florida; Jacksonville (FL) Chapter
- Link Eddie Bernice Johnson, 30th Congressional District of Texas; Dallas (TX) Chapter
- Link Sheila Jackson Lee, 18th Congressional District of Texas; Houston (TX) Chapter
- Link Marcia Fudge, 11th Congressional District of Ohio; Cleveland (OH) Chapter
- Link Frederica Wilson, 24th Congressional District of Florida; Greater Miami (FL) Chapter
- Link Joyce Beatty, 3rd Congressional District of Ohio; Columbus (OH) Chapter

The highlight of the evening was the Dialogue with Congressional Leaders. This panel discussion, moderated by Link Margot, provided a forum for our Congressional leaders to share their thoughts and recommendations about our current government situation. They reminded attendees that Links can be political, not partisan.
• Call to action for chapters:
  - Increase our level of civic engagement at the local level. Be “civic-minded” about issues and attend local city council meetings, school board meeting and become involved and knowledgeable in those budgetary processes. Be their boots on the ground to help ensure that federal funding they are sending to state and local government is getting to those for whom it is intended.
  - Run for public office (local, state, federal levels)
  - Contribute dry food items to food pantries. Remain steadfast in terms of advocacy position regarding voting rights.
  - Get involved/participate; no “off year” of voting should exist.
  - Help minority students apply for grants and scholarships…it is important to leave no areas blank on the applications.

• Guidance forthcoming from National Office regarding the Student Plus Loans discrepancies.

OVERVIEW OF FRIDAY’S EVENTS

Requisites and Rewards of Leadership
Breakfast with Dr. Jane E. Smith, Executive Director
Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement, Spelman College

“The way you lead is impacted by where you are in your life.” The speaker kept us engaged as she wove into her delivery the life of a fictional character, a slave named Ayesha, whom she followed from her slave days to her presence and prominence in modern times.

• From historical experience, Dr. Smith explained that African American women’s authenticity is anchored in race and gender.
• Requisites of Leadership: Courage (to remain authentic), Civility (know who you are & what is right; act accordingly), Need for Change (recognition of something other than what you know), Tolerance for Difference (include in your circle others who may not think/look/act like you).
• Rewards of Leadership: Opportunities to Define and Frame; life as a guardian of Public Trust & Self-fulfillment.
• Spend time on yourself as a leader. Write down and clarify who you are.
• Credibility & Character – Start with character; it builds credibility.
• Links is a movement group. Tweak chapter websites so “our story” is told boldly & powerfully. **Review with chapter national website; great example**.
• Visionary leaders dream beyond the sky. There is no sky in terms of our dreams, goals, and visions.
• A leader:
  - is fit
  - has the ability to climb against odds
  - has the ability to motivate others
  - gives, knowing much more will be received—fulfillment and satisfaction in helping others, produces life-long learning, leadership development, civic engagement, and friendships along the way.
Leading with INTENTION
Dr. Patricia Larkins Hicks
Columbus (OH) Chapter

Your leadership intent should be purpose based as it relates to our organization’s mission, not purpose based as it relates to how much better we think we can do the job compared to others. “An intentional leader knows the mission of its organization”, said Dr. Hicks. She shared four attributes of great leaders. Great leaders are **Bright**, they strive for **Excellence**, they work to identify self as well as organizational **Satisfiers** and they are **Timely**. These attributes form the acronym B.E.S.T as a model for leading with intention.

1. a. Intention is a powerful force
   b. Review National Mission
   c. Identify our vision for the future
   d. Build on what’s already in place
   e. Administered B.E.S.T. assessment (Bright, Excellence, Satisfaction, Timely)
   f. Growth comes from stretching (outside your comfort zone)
   g. Satisfaction needs energy
   h. Measure frequently for course corrections

2. Organizational success is achieved through intentional leadership. You don’t lead to simply lead. A leader knows what her mission is, knows her vision about the future, and builds on what is already in place.

3. **Traits of a Leader**

   a. A good leader is bright. She attracts.
   b. Image is important and your image is what allows you to attract whatever it is that you want and/or whatever it is that you want to have happen
   c. People notice your appearance. High self-esteem says to others that you are confident in yourself, which, in turn, makes others more apt to see you as their leader and more confident to have you as their leader.
   d. Your attitude says a lot—be POSITIVE
   e. Be alert—A leader is aware of other people and their conditions. A leader can get outside of herself and to about what the other people want—it’s not about you.
   f. A leader brings forth excellence, high standards, and she grows in strength and maturity.

   - She sets the bar
   - She is a trailblazer
   - She knows the importance of preparation. She attends to details and tasks are completed.
   - She recognizes the importance of continuous improvement.

Memorable quote on Intent:
"Intention is one of the most powerful forces there is. What you mean when you do a thing will always determine the outcome. ... ~ Brenna Yovanoff,

The Price of Leadership
Luncheon with Patricia Russell-McCloud, Esq.
11th National President
Dogwood City (GA) Chapter

- Dynamic motivational speaker, Link Patricia Russell-McCloud is our 11th National President.
- In her inimitable style, Link Pat’s voice rang throughout the room—P-A-G-I-N-G, P-A--G-I-N-G… She “paged” for Link Leaders and wants us to be a star in our own show, not an extra in others’ shows.
- Key Point – Jealousy does not come to you if your work is commonplace.
- Remember, it’s not what you are called; it’s what you answer to.

What Is The Price Of Leadership?
- Leadership is an action, not a position!
- Lead, follow, or get out of the way!
- Do the job that you are in. Be excellent, raise the standard, and raise the bar.
- Real leaders are accountable. Accept responsibility for what happens on your watch.
- Always thank your team—Don’t take credit for teamwork.
- Leadership can not be divorced from purpose.

- Link Pat illustrated the point with a recitation of the song, I Hope You Dance—

Promise me that you'll give faith a fighting chance
And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance

I hope you dance
I hope you dance

Link Pat called for leaders who understand that leadership comes with knowing that it is not where you stand in moments of comfort but how you stand in moments of controversy. Other resounding messages were: There are two kinds of people in organizations: those who do the work and those who let you do it. Most importantly, don’t make it personal. Real leaders deal with issues not personalities. Real leaders are accountable.

Link Margot then challenged everyone to “Dream Bigger” and to let this be so with our organization’s mission to fund our own endowment. Let us stand tall and say to the public that we, our organization, is committed to this. Link Margot called on all present to Pledge in one of three different ways:

1. Commit to a pledge of at least $1,000;
2. Refer one, two, or more members to the pledge drive. Motivate your chapter members to pledge by sharing with them what you experienced at the Leadership Summit—“I want our Chapter to be on record as being “all in”;

3. Refer any potential Outside Sponsorships that you may have or know about to National Leadership.

**Leading From the HEART**
Link Kathryn Towe Littleton
Oakland County (MI) Chapter

I. **Leading from the HEART**
   a. Servant Leadership is serving OTHERS through what we do.
   b. We need to be passionate about the service we do.
   c. Suggest compiling chapter’s “best practices”.
   d. To thyself be true…good leaders own up to their own weaknesses.
   e. How do you recognize a heartfelt leader? A heartfelt leader is someone who…

-You can trust - Is passionate about what they do - Inspires others to be their BEST - Works hard but enjoys the journey - Appreciates people when they complete tasks - Takes an interest in others beyond their role - Shows empathy, vulnerability, & support - Treats others with respect - Communicates & connects from their hearts - Is trustworthy - Is authentic - Isn’t afraid to be real - Is Compassionate/Actions speak louder than words - Do what you say you will do - Be positive - Encourage others - Support others - Is honest.

II. There is a direct correlation between heartfelt leadership and involvement.
Heartfelt leadership impacts members’ satisfaction and teamwork.

What is Organizational Citizenship? —Example: I know I have to do my 48 hours, but I stop counting.

*Show gratitude to others and for yourself:*
- Invite them to do something they’ve always wanted to do;
- Compliment people on a skill or talent;
- Say to them, “You make things better!”

III. When leading from the heart becomes challenging…
   a. How to respond to challenging sisters?
      1. Thank them for introducing you to another way of doing things.
      2. Let them know you appreciate it when they challenge you in a loving, non-confrontational way.
      3. Resist the urge to tell them they are wrong.
      4. Use the lesson that you were taught.

IV. A good leader knows how to show herself some heart, too
   a. Take personal inventory of yourself
   b. Be good to yourself
   c. When someone gives you a complement, say thank you!

Memorable Quotes:

Death and life are in the power of the tongue. Proverbs 18:21
“Hateful to me as the gates of Hades is that man who hides one thing in his heart and speaks another.”
— Homer, The Iliad

Leadership FUNDAMENTALS
Jayne Baccus Khalifa
Minneapolis—St. Paul (MN) Chapter

I. Conflict is not always a bad thing.

II. A lack of consensus around chapter vision and goals creates a fairness conflict that leads to a values conflict that leads to a power conflict.

III. Miscommunication or Ineffective Communication leads to dysfunction.

IV. Qualities Required To Avoid Chapter Conflict:
   a. members must be totally committed to the work; and
   b. members must be committed to the task at hand.

VI. The President is responsible for the well-being of the Chapter and the members in it. Pay attention to “group dynamics” and other process issues.

VII. Meeting Management (from A to Z)
   a. Plan out the meeting agenda and seek input on your agenda in advance.
   b. Set-up the meeting (logistics, .i.e., name tags on seating, room set-up—U-shaped seating.
   c. Effectively facilitate the meeting
   d. Follow-up after the meeting
   e. Start and end the meeting on time
   f. Arrange for audio/visual equipment when you have a presentation or explanation of complex or lengthy information relevant to a discussion such as the budget, programming, strategic planning, fundraising, etc.
   g. At the end of the meeting, review the “would be parking lot meeting”. If there was some item that was discussed in the meeting, don’t leave it hanging. Rather, decide resolution or assign follow-up to a facet, committee chair, or other elected officer, if appropriate.
   h. The better prepared you are, the better results you can expect.
   i. Stay focused on the Agenda and not on the personal agendas of individual members.
   j. A decision is worthless if no plans are made to ensure its implementation. Delegate responsibility for follow-throughs and next steps.
   k. Document the meeting with minutes. Minutes are required for all Chapter meetings and the audit of chapter finances. Don’t include superfluous information that does not add to the clarification of matters discussed.
   l. Your Parliamentarian should know Roberts’ Rules of Order. The President should have a rudimentary knowledge of Robert’s Rules. These two things coupled together will allow a deliberative assembly, .i.e., the Chapter, to make its decisions, but with due regard for the rights of the minority.
   m. Don’t debate incorrect proposals or nonsense issues.
   n. 3R-SUN allows for a smooth meeting without wasting time and promotes efficiency:


Over view of saturday’s events

The Importance of sisterhood and grace: Breakfast with susan l. taylor

Susan Taylor, founder and ceo of national cares mentoring program, editor-in-chief emeritus, essence magazine, spoke on the importance of sisterhood and grace. her movement recruits models or mentors for black children in need of role models. there is a special need for black men. the “ask” is for one hour a week to save a child. providing laptops for college students is a program she encouraged. so many of our inner city youth go to college without a laptop, which is a tremendous hindrance in today’s college environment. she highlighted that life is your lesson…pain is information. focus on what the pain is telling you. she encouraged us to look within while “in the quiet”. and, to be fully present to self.

Notable quotes include: “God doesn’t want us to just read the Bible. He wants us to do the work.” “When we shrink back from our communities, things fall apart.”

Conversations with links leadership
Margot James Copeland  
National President  
Columbus (OH) Chapter

A Conversation with the National President: So You Want To Be A Leader?

Link Margot opened the session to attendees asking questions of her. They wanted to know what track she took to become President and what did she do to get there. For Link Margot, it wasn’t a track, per se, but rather she built relationships along the way as she learned more and more about the organization. It is important to attend National Assemblies, Area Conferences, and other meetings not only for the 1-in5, but also so that you continue to learn about the organization and build friendships. She encouraged use of the websites for information and for members interested in an office or a position, she encouraged talking with the person who has held that position previously.

Responding to questioning, Link Margot--

--talked about the importance of being chapter president first, because that is the foundation for other offices and other opportunities.

--talked about how to pick the right person for the right job, and stressed the need to be honest with yourself, if and when you need to make changes.

--emphasized that it is important not to make any decisions personal, but make them for the good of the organization.

--spoke about having a succession plan. Make sure that the organization is better when you leave the office and don’t take anything from your predecessor, but continue to build.

--stressed the importance of being an active member—one who learns and participates. She encouraged members to be prepared to lead and to learn and understand the culture of the organization.

--recounted that she did not necessarily seek out the roles that she has had. She basically learned and participated throughout. Her Area Director saw that in her and asked her participate at the Area level. People will notice you by how you handle the role that you have.


Glenda Newell-Harris  
National Vice President  
Alameda-Contra Costa (CA) Chapter

A Conversation with the National Vice President: Are You A Millennial Link Sister Who’s Fired Up and Ready to Lead?

We should be developing members who are prepared to lead within the organization and to ensure consistency, continuity and management of intergenerational opportunities.
The national survey revealed that we are bringing in members between the ages of 51 and 69. The data also indicates that our organization is made up of members who are mostly between the ages of 51 and 69. Supporting data for these numbers are on the national website in the Vice President’s report. If we don’t bring in other age groups, the organization will die. How do we attract and retain younger members?

We need to change the mindset of Links. We’ve got to bring young people into the fold and let them start working. Let them Co-Chair a facet. One model could be that an older member chairs the facet and a younger member serves as co-chair.

Link Glenda shared that she has had mentors and coaches all of her life. It was her mother, who is 96 years old, who encouraged her to join The Links, Incorporated. Her mother is her mentor. Link Glenda was the youngest member of her chapter as a charter member. She was gently nudged into leadership by the then Western Area Director who was also her mentor. Some Past National Presidents were her mentors. Link Glenda related how she had a chance encounter with Barbara Dixon Simpkins, when she was the National Vice President, who happened to be in the Bay Area during holidays. Link Glenda invited Link Barbara to her home for a Christmas Party. After she was elected National President, she asked Link Glenda to chair Health and Wellness. Get involved where you are comfortable. It is important to attend events and activities outside of your chapter, i.e. the 1-in-5, Leadership Summits, etc. You will leave with energy and enthusiasm to take back to your chapter, make and meet new and lasting friends, and it will open you up to finding your passion in something that the organization is doing.

Link Glenda’s advice is to:

- Run for office in The Links, Incorporated
- Recognize when you need time for yourself
- Get involved in the organization in any way that you can
- Increase efforts to get our DOLs interested in becoming members of the organization.
- Make ourselves, and our organization, of value to the young people because they ask, “What’s in it for me?” There’s plenty in our organization for them. We have members in the public and private sectors who are powerful and well respected in their fields who are ready and willing to mentor young members. Consider how your chapter manages assessments for younger members (maybe no assessment the first year, or 25 to 50% of the assessment the first years, or maybe give them credit for tickets. Be creative so that you are obtain and retain younger members.)

Mary F. Currie, Chair, Alumna and Platinum Affairs
Atlanta (GA) Chapter

A Conversation with the Chair, Alumna and Platinum Affairs:
Embracing Chapter Friendship

- Alumna status does not mean the end of Link participation.
- Platinum and Alumna members are often forgotten and their wealth of knowledge and chapter history is not always embraced.
- Alumna and Platinum members should be asked to participate in the orientation of new members.
• Encourage Alumna and Platinum members to participate as standing committee and facet members. While they cannot vote, chair a facet, committee or hold and office they can contribute in others ways.
• Alumna and Platinum reports should be included on the agenda of chapter meetings.
• Alumna and Platinum members should be notified of all chapter meetings. If a cost for food is involved, they should expect to pay for their own if not attending as the guest of the hostess. Some chapters have added the Alumna and Platinum members to the hostess rotation list.
• Alumna members are younger and still very active. They want to be included.
• Read the Membership Manual for more information about Alumna and Platinum status.

The Links Foundation, Incorporated, Annual Meeting

• Shared photos of the induction of Honorary Member Condoleezza Rice; 230 in attendance.
• $1M Legacy Grant to the Memphis Civil Museum has been fulfilled (awarded under Link Gladys Gary Vaughn, 13th National President)
• 2013 Legacy Grant is awarded to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture (selected out of 14 applications); Dr. Lonnie Bunch has been notified. We are the first organization to make a $1M level donation! The Links Foundation will be listed on the Founding Donors Wall.
• Interest rate on National Headquarters building has been reduced from 7% to 4%; mortgage reduced from $15K/month to $9K/month.
• Assurance given that Endowment Fund will not lose principal. Endowment fund goal is $1M+/yr; current contributions/pledges >$700K. Pledges taken during the Leadership Summit and >$100,000 raised over the course of the Leadership Summit
• Great stewardship of monies; 4 unqualified audits have been completed; accounting is satisfactory.
• There will be a Foundation concert at the National Assembly in 2014. It will be a fundraiser and the public can attend with access through The Links (guests will have to been invited by a Link in order to attend.
• After depreciation, our building is valued at $6.5M
• Philanthropy-members will receive a mailing in mid-November. This giving effort will allow for matching donors and will promote a second wall at National HQ.
• National Assembly, July 2-6, 2014, Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center, National Harbor, Maryland.
• Initiatives must be funded
• National Headquarters Team stands ready to assist members.


Reflections from Attendees at the National Leadership Summit

“The National Leadership Summit was a most rewarding and enlightening experience and I am grateful to my chapter for the opportunity to have attended. All speakers were excellent as they
shared essential steps to overall success in leadership. By attending, I have been enriched beyond measure.”

--Sharyn Holley, President
Trinity (TX) Chapter

“The Leadership Summit was the most enriching and motivational experience I have had in The Links, Incorporated, and I have been a member for 28 years.

Link Margot, her Organizational Effectiveness Team, and Headquarters Staff, assembled a group of Professional Black Female Leaders that trained directed, motivated, enriched, and inspired those that attended, and demonstrated the meaning of Leadership.

We learned how to identify a leader, the necessary skills to be effective, the commitment leaders must exhibit, and the impact being a leader has on the individual.

I was extremely proud to see all 6 Black Congresswomen, who are our sister Links, share with us the behind the scenes struggle over adopting a Budget, the disrespect shown the President, and the general lack of concern for people of color-most importantly, African Americans. Our sister Link Congresswomen delivered a cry for action now. Our fight is not over-all we have accomplished is at stake. We must awaken our communities to help fight for our rights. I look forward to taking this message back to my Chapter and my community to enlist assistance to fight this evil that is on the rise in Congress to harm our communities- and I hope every Link that attended the Leadership Summit will do the same-together we can make a difference, together we can demonstrate Leadership and retain our rights for generations to come.”

--Deborah Beavers-Watford, Los Angeles (CA) Chapter
National Co-Chair, Strategic Planning and Western Area Chair, Strategic Planning

“We must be willing to select Leaders...Who know the Rewards of Leadership who are Fit to Lead...Leaders with great Intentions to Lead from the Heart and have the Fundamentals to Lead and are willing to pay The Price of Leadership, ...and we must support the legislative arm ... paging, paging!”

--Wendy Williams Phynes, Plano North Metroplex (TX) Chapter
Western Area Chair, Protocol

“Without question, the 2013 Leadership Summit was EXCEPTIONAL. Three days of leadership coaching that could be applied immediately; amazing dialogue, networking, great dining, and friendship summarize the outcomes of this conference.

All speakers introduced themselves as Friends of Margo. What a powerful statement on the power and the potential of Friendships.”
“When I think of the National Leadership Summit, *The Price of Leadership....And What it Takes*, one word comes to mind, “phenomenal”! Phenomenal speakers, phenomenal networking, phenomenal sisterhood, phenomenal location, and phenomenal leadership! As a leader, I will always remember and reflect on Dr. Jane Smith’s quotes, “lead with intention and purpose” and “learn when to stand and learn when to be still”. I’m in my office now revisiting and reading…..Good to GREAT by Jim Collins…..to see where I can improve in my quest to be the “phenomenal leader” like my Link sister before me!”

--Jacqueline D. Smith, Vice President, Membership
Texas Spring Cypress (TX) Chapter

“The inaugural National Leadership Summit crystallized for me that visionary leadership is innate and is really about the basics—preparedness, vision, mission, respect, honesty, trust, relationships, and a knowledge and love for yourself, as well as others.”

--Shari K. Lamb, Plano North Metroplex (TX) Chapter
Western Area Chair, National Trends and Services