Featuring Dorothy Cotton, Ph.D.
Esteemed Civil Rights activist, performer and longtime activist for youth empowerment

A Black History Month Celebration
RENEWING HOPE IN THE PROMISE OF MINNESOTA’S YOUTH

Featuring Sounds of Blackness
Recipient of a Grammy Award and the 2012 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding World Music Album. Sounds of Blackness will join local youth from the High School for Recording Arts for a performance to close the Community Forum, Thursday, February 23, 2012

February 21st-23rd, 2012
Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota

Hosted by Youthprise in partnership with Cultural Wellness Center
In collaboration with several Twin Cities-based young people, programs, initiatives and organizations.
EVENTS AT A GLANCE

Tuesday, February 21, 2012

❖ 7:00-8:00 a.m. – Dr. Dorothy Cotton on KMOJ's Morning Show

❖ 2:00-4:00 p.m. – Youth Voices Listening Circle*
  Northpoint Health & Wellness Center (Human Services Building)
  1315 Penn Avenue North, Room 108, Minneapolis, MN 55411

❖ 6:00-7:30 p.m. – Connecting Generations:
  Connecting the Dots of History Radio Panel*
  (Simulcast on KMOJ FM 89.9; live video stream at www.youthprise.org)
  University of Minnesota’s Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC)
  2001 Plymouth Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55411

Wednesday, February 22, 2012

❖ 7:30-9:00 a.m. – Philanthropy Breakfast*
  Amherst H. Wilder Foundation
  451 Lexington Parkway North, St. Paul, MN 55104

❖ Noon-4:30 p.m. – Understanding the Connection among Professional
  Achievement, Cultural Intelligence and Community Resource Development:
  A Culturally Based Development Workshop for Young Professionals*
  Network for the Development of Children of African Descent (NdCAD)
  655 Fairview Avenue North, St. Paul, MN 55104

Thursday, February 23, 2012

❖ 5:45-8:00 p.m. – Community Forum*
  (Refreshments from 5:00-5:30 p.m.)
  Sabathani Community Center
  310 East 38th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55409

*Must register to attend.
Contact: Cultural Wellness Center, 612.721.5745
Thank you to the following for their invaluable support.

SPONSORS
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   Loring Nicollet Alternative School, Project for Pride in Living
   Minnesota Council on Foundations
   MNIC High School, Pillsbury United Communities
   Network for the Development of Children of African Descent (NdCAD)
   NorthPoint Health & Wellness Center
   Paladin Academy
   Plymouth Youth Center
   Plymouth Youth Center’s Discovery Crew
   Sabathani Community Center
   “Still Kickin’” Dance Crew
   Grammy Award-Winning Sounds of Blackness
   St. James AME Church (South Minneapolis)
   University of Minnesota’s Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC)
   Walker West Music Academy
   We Win Institute
   Amherst H. Wilder Foundation

Special thanks to Edwin Irwin for his coordination and support.
Overview

On February 1st, 1960, four North Carolina youth went to their local F. W. Woolworth store to buy school supplies. After having made their purchases, they proceeded to the store’s lunch counter and requested to be served. Although they were denied service, the youth stayed, undaunted, until they were forced to leave as the store closed for the evening. In the days and weeks that followed, Black youth across the south began to organize sit-ins at local lunch counters near their respective college campuses. Moreover, students from northern colleges and universities joined the cause by organizing boycotts of local chain stores whose southern affiliates practiced segregation.

By the middle of the next year, some 70,000 participants had been involved in similar protests. One simple but courageous act of four youth gained the media’s attention, captivated the nation, and led to a shift in the Civil Rights Movement that ushered in lasting positive social change. This is just one of many examples of how young people, galvanized by a clear vision and a sense of purpose, have been at the forefront of social justice efforts across the nation and around the world.

Youthprise is a Minnesota-based intermediary founded by the McKnight Foundation to champion learning beyond the classroom. We believe that youth leadership is essential to transforming programs and systems. In keeping with that focus and in commemoration of Black History Month, Youthprise will sponsor a series of events, spanning three days, that will feature legendary Civil Rights activist, performing artist and storyteller, Dr. Dorothy Cotton, former Education Director for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, member of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s inner circle, and longtime advocate for youth empowerment.

This celebration is just one of many efforts in Youthprise’s ongoing endeavors to change Minnesota’s culture to adopt a vision that
embraces youth as viable, contributing members of society, fully able to realize their full capacity and potential. These events will leverage the story of Dr. Cotton, as well as the legacy of other heroes and sheroes during the Civil Rights Movement and beyond, to ignite action and culture change. We see this resulting in a new paradigm that promotes a view of Black youth as key assets in facilitating social and programmatic change. In addition, Youthprise will use this opportunity to raise awareness of what young people can bring to social change efforts.

Dr. Cotton will begin her time in MN on Tuesday, February 21st and will participate in the following events:

- **A Morning Radio Appearance and a Live Hour Long Evening Simulcast** on February 21st where Dr. Cotton will make a special guest radio appearance on 89.9 KMOJ’s morning show, and serve as a featured guest for an evening simulcast with an after studio question and answer session.

- **Educational, Listening and Networking Sessions for Youth and Young Professionals** that will feature Dr. Cotton conducting a specialized training focused on applying lessons from the past toward developing leaders of today. With an intentional focus on service and vocation, youth/youth activists and young professionals from diverse sectors will be engaged in separate sessions on how to use culture and history as a resource for personal growth, professional development and community building. The youth/youth activist session will take place on February 21st and the young professionals sessions will occur on February 22nd.

- **A Philanthropy Breakfast** on February 22nd focused on engaging African American youth as key assets and answering the call to leverage collective resources to improve learning beyond the classroom outcomes.

- **A Black History Month Community Forum** on February 23rd featuring a keynote address by Dr. Cotton focused on the importance of mobilizing youth to transform society and systems. In addition, the Forum will include artistic and multimedia performances by students in out-of-school settings; an intergenerational panel discussion focused on mobilizing the power of youth; and a session to honor living and deceased heroes and sheroes who have modeled leadership in advancing youth empowerment.

It is hoped that these events will raise awareness of the capacity of youth to lead in social change efforts and the value of engaging and mobilizing young people to strive for social justice. Further, through these events, Youthprise anticipates that these functions will catalyze cross-sector collaboration in addressing the gaps that exist in helping African American youth realize their full potential to have an impact on Minnesota’s social and economic framework.
Dr. Dorothy F. Cotton
Public Speaker – Lecturer – Activist – Workshop Facilitator

One of the most visible and powerful women in the Civil Rights Movement, Dorothy F. Cotton, Ph.D., is an impassioned activist for youth empowerment. Through wisdom, humor, and common sense, Dr. Cotton has challenged and inspired people of all ages to become engaged in making a difference.

From 1960 to 1968, Dr. Cotton was the Education Director for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). In that capacity, she worked closely with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights leaders, directing the Citizenship Education Program (CEP). Later, Dr. Cotton served as the Vice President for Field Operations for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta. Under the Carter Administration, Dr. Cotton served as the Southeastern Regional Director of ACTION, the Federal Government's agency for volunteer programs.

From 1982 to 1991, Dr. Cotton was the Director of Student Activities at Cornell University. While there, she co-wrote a white paper entitled "The New Citizenship", which presented the thesis that “government” cannot be reinvented without first refocusing and reinventing the concept of “citizenship.” This special paper received broad acclaim and resulted in two White House meetings to explore strategies for Government/Citizen partnership in the ongoing quest to reinvent government.

A powerful and motivating speaker, teacher and workshop facilitator, Dr. Cotton often uses the "Songs of the Movement" to help her tell the story of America’s struggle for civil rights. She accompanied Dr. King when he received the Nobel Prize for Peace in Norway. Since that time she has traveled extensively throughout the world, including visits to the former Soviet Union, The People's Republic of China, Switzerland, Africa, Vietnam, and Europe while participating in international workshops and discussions on a broad range of current social and humanitarian issues.

Dr. Cotton has received several honors for her public work. They include: Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degrees from the University of New England and Spelman College, as well as an Honorary Doctorate Degree from the University of New Rochelle.

Dr. Cotton is currently a freelance motivational speaker and trainer and is writing her first book, which focuses on the major lessons of the Citizenship Education Training Program of the 1960s and applying those lessons to guide thought and action in today’s world.
Youth Voices Circle (Listening Circle)
Tuesday, February 21, 2012, 2pm-4pm
The Youth Voices Circle is a facilitated dialogue where youth’s voices can be heard. The focus of the circle will be on the physical, emotional and behavioral health of African American youth as defined by the youth themselves. This youth-led dialogue will address:

❖ Violence that youth see and experience. Talking & listening as a form of caring will be emphasized.
❖ How youth define their health, build their own social support, and make the connection to resources in the community.
❖ Identifying the supports the youth indicate they need from young professional mentors.

Northpoint Health & Wellness Center (Human Services Building)
1315 Penn Avenue N., Room 108, Minneapolis, MN 55411

Understanding the Connection among Professional Achievement, Cultural Intelligence and Community Resource Development: A Culturally Based Development Workshop for Young Professionals
Wednesday, February 22, 2012, Noon-4:30pm
This event provides a learning opportunity for participants on how to make and use connections to their culture as a resource for increasing performance on the job. This event features networking opportunities, empowerment, and encouragement. Participants will learn to generate a circle of support, and participate in self-reflection and reconnecting with culture as a resource.

Young Professionals will connect with youth (from the Youth Voices Listening Circle) to develop potential mentorship relationships. Young professionals are asked to bring a book that has impacted their life to donate to the youth. This literary work will be the beginning of each youth's home library.

Featured Speaker
Tanchica L. Terry
Network for the Development of Children of African Descent (NdCAD)
655 Fairview Avenue North, St. Paul 55104
As a member of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s inner circle, Dr. Dorothy Cotton championed the power and promise of youth during a time when civil rights leaders worked proactively to build collaboration between young and old influencers alike. Dr. King and others promoted the vision of the “beloved community,” where all of our destinies are integrally interwoven with an unshakeable belief that investment in the potential of each individual would benefit each community and, ultimately, the entire nation.

The breakfast features songs from that era, along with Dr. Cotton sharing lessons learned from the historic Civil Rights Movement that can reignite our individual and collective hope for the future our youth deserve. The event introduces the work of the African American Leadership Forum/Education and Life-Long Learning Work Group (AALF/ELL), which has identified the five education gaps resulting in a state of emergency for Minnesota’s African American youth: the preparation gap, the belief gap, the time gap, the teaching gap, and the leadership gap.

The breakfast event focuses specifically on the belief gap, which addresses the perspectives of key stakeholders – students, parents, teachers, and the community – regarding the ability of youth to achieve. Within this context, participants will learn about Youthprise’s vision to change Minnesota’s culture around youth by transforming the common misperception of youth as a lost cause to a vision of this population as viable, contributing members of society, fully able to realize their full capacity and potential. As noted in A Crisis in Our Community: Closing the Five Education Gaps, a report from the AALF/ELL, “the beliefs and expectations of students, parents, teachers and the community contribute to the achievement gap” and “teachers’ expectations strongly influence students’ effort and performance.” It is our belief that we must expect more from our youth. We can facilitate this by constructing pathways that allow them to invest their skills and creativity as leaders in addressing and changing current and impending issues that affect their collective future.

The event is just one of many efforts in Youthprise’s ongoing endeavors to change misperceptions regarding Minnesota’s youth.

Supporting Partners: African American Leadership Forum; Blacks in Philanthropy, Minnesota Chapter; Headwaters Foundation for Justice; Minnesota Council on Foundations; and Amherst H. Wilder Foundation
History provides us with several illustrations of how young people, armed with vision, purpose and knowledge, have been pioneers in efforts for social justice and systemic change. As part of a larger strategy to improve systems that develop leadership capacity of African-American youth, the Community Forum will feature legendary Civil Rights activist Dr. Dorothy Cotton. As the former Education Director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and a member of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s inner circle, Dr. Cotton was one of the most highly respected women in the Civil Rights movement. A long-time advocate for youth empowerment, Dr. Cotton will use her signature blend of artistry, wit, candor and wisdom to communicate the importance of mobilizing youth to transform society and systems.

This youth-focused and youth-directed event includes an intergenerational panel with six advocates and thought leaders representing a cross-section of the Twin Cities’ African American community. The dialogue will center on emphasizing building community and exploring strategies to form, support and sustain cross-sector collaborations aimed at closing the opportunity gap for African American youth.

In addition, the Forum highlights artistic presentations by local youth, a performance by Sabathani’s own senior dance crew “Still Kickin,” as well as a segment to honor heroes and sheroes – both living and deceased – who have led the way in advancing youth empowerment. The program will close with a performance by an intergenerational choir, featuring High School for Recording Arts and the Grammy-Award Winning Sounds of Blackness.
Youthprise aims boldly for the vision that Minnesota will lead the nation in accelerating leadership and innovation beyond the classroom. Established by the McKnight Foundation, Youthprise is a new intermediary focused on increasing the quality, accessibility, sustainability, and innovation of learning beyond the classroom so that all Minnesota youth thrive. After a year of planning, Youthprise is ready to launch. Over the coming years, we will partner with committed stakeholders in the Twin Cities and throughout Minnesota—young people, families, youth workers and youth-serving organizations, researchers, funders and policy makers—to ensure that all Minnesota youth thrive, and that our state thrives as a result.

Youthprise believes that our state's greatest untapped resource is the energy and ingenuity of youth. The struggles and issues our communities face will be more effectively addressed when we invest in youth and have youth and adults working together side-by-side.

We can build an effective learning system for all Minnesota youth. To that end, Youthprise brings together resources and people to identify and scale great programs and strengthen systems and policy so that all Minnesota youth thrive.
The Cultural Wellness Center is a community-initiated organization that mines and synthesizes. The center is in the business of positioning community knowledge at the forefront of community health and economic development ideas. The work of the Cultural Wellness Center is about carrying out its mission “to unleash the power of citizens to heal themselves and to build community.” To accomplish this, we produce models to solve problems that have been created by individualism, loss of culture and loss of community.

The Cultural Wellness Center engages people in using culture as a resource for taking responsibility for their own health and well-being. To achieve our mission of unleashing the power of citizens to heal themselves, we work with individuals, communities, families, professionals and we partner with academic institutions, government agencies, philanthropists, and other non-profits.

The successful models we have developed have proven to be replicable, sustainable, and cost effective.