



# THE WOODSONIAN

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## Message from the Woodson President

Shannon Blackamore



The Carter G. Woodson Scholarship and Community Service Foundation, Inc. was incorporated by the Wisconsin Secretary of State on May 13, 1994. Its incorporators were Charles Brown; Anthony Wade, who served as the first president; and Solomon Ashby. Four months later, the foundation received its 5.01(c)(3) status as a public charity from the Internal Revenue Service.

*"Education + Community Uplift = An Improved Quality of Life"* became the motto of the foundation in its first year. The mission of the foundation is twofold: to provide community service to the underserved and to extend scholarships to graduating high school seniors who enroll full time in accredited post-secondary educational institutions including vocational/technical colleges. The ultimate goal of the foundation is to help improve the quality of life for the underserved in the Madison area.

To inform the Madison community of the Foundation's service to the community, The *Woodsonian*, the official newsletter of the foundation, was first published in the fall of 1996. It is published annually. The Woodson Foundation operates four programs that directly benefit primarily Madison-area underserved youth and families: Cultural Enrichment/Mentoring, Reading Is Fundamental Book Distribution, Scholarship, and Social Action. The foundation aggressively seeks contributions for its programming from individuals, businesses, corporations, and foundations. All contributions are income tax deductible in accordance with its 5.01(c)(3) status with the Internal Revenue Service. The Endowment Giving Program was initiated in 1997. The Endowment Program gives an opportunity for donors to help develop the financial resources that are needed to ensure the future of the foundation. The full endowment donor makes one minimum contribution of \$3,000 whereas the sustaining donor pays a minimum of five equal installments of \$600.00 for five years. For more information on the Endowment Program, please contact Shannon Blackamore, President, at [SBlackamore@gmail.com](mailto:SBlackamore@gmail.com).

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## A Message from Woodson Board Member Emeritus

**Charles H Brown** has been the face of the Carter G. Woodson Foundation since its inception in 1996. As he has completed his transition of the remaining foundation work over to Shannon Blackamore, Charles wanted to offer one final message to the volunteers, partners and donors who have supported the Carter G. Woodson Foundation for 21 years. Charles will continue to remain involved in the important work of the foundation, and he is grateful for the honor.



## RIF Expands ITS EFFORTS

The Reading Is Fundamental Book Distribution Program distributes new, high interest, multicultural books to elementary and middle school children. Its goal is to promote reading as a life-long activity. Since 1996, the program has maintained its approval status from Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. of Washington, DC. RIF is the oldest and largest literacy organization in the country. With some more than 17,000 volunteers, RIF has distributed over 412 million books to more than 40 million children in all 50 states.

This year, Program Director **Sherman McNeil** led the foundation's four book distributions. In **February**, the Woodson Boy Club at Jefferson Middle School received books. In **August**, books were distributed at the 100 Black Men Backpack Give-away. In **September**, books were distributed at the annual Carter G. Woodson cookout. In November, 100 multicultural, high-interest books were distributed to students again at the Jefferson Middle School. This is the 23rd consecutive year that the foundation has supported the literacy needs of low-income, under-served children with free books.



## Foundation Social Action Director Key Note Speaker

On **April 27th**, Foundation Social Action Program Director, the Honorable Judge Everett Mitchell was the keynote speaker for the Madison Area Urban Ministries 44th Annual Partners for Change Celebration. Judge Mitchell spoke about his first –year as a Juvenile Court Judge and what he has learned during his visits to juvenile facilities across the state. Judge Mitchell called for sweeping changes in how the facilities program for improving academic proficiency and for simple things such as getting young men haircuts by a professional barber, instead of an animal groomer.



## Social Action

On **November 20**, the Woodson Foundation held its 23rd Annual **Thanksgiving Food Drive** at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in South Madison. The Social Action program, led by the Honorable **Judge Everett Mitchell** distributed **275** turkey baskets with the ingredients for three side dishes. The foundation also continued its tradition of providing Thanksgiving meals for the homeless. While the beneficiaries of the Thanksgiving Food Drive come from the neighborhood surrounding Mt. Zion and the James C. Wright Middle School, each year, we receive more request for Thanksgiving support from organizations that support and house homeless families and other churches. We recognize the great need and strive to support those needs. The foundation continues to enjoy its relationship with Mt. Zion Baptist Church and the organizations and individuals that support the Thanksgiving Food Drive. We would like to also recognize the volunteers from the Madison Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., students from UW and Mount Zion. Finally, we would like to thank our major sponsors. Without the help of the **Madison Rotary Foundation, South Madison Rotary, M.G.& E., EPIC, American Family Dream Foundation, CUNA Mutual and the Walmart Foundation**, the Foundation would not be able to meet the need of families in need for Thanksgiving.







**The Cultural Enrichment/Mentorship Program** Through presentations, interactive sessions and various experiences the Woodson Boys Club, the mentoring initiative of the Carter G. Woodson Foundation continues to perform projects that expose participants to planning, execution, reporting ideas, and simulating leadership characteristics designed to heighten their aspirations. This year's activities and programs were modeled under and kept with the principles of Learning, Accountability, Maturity, and Preparedness. The format for each session consisted of a specific presentation and/or activity that related to one of the four established principles. Each Saturday's group session was approximately 1 hour 30 mins with various in-school lunch follow-up sessions with the boys throughout the month. Program Director Rafeeq Asad believes that "Exposure and experience are key to developing well rounded individuals that are able to dream bigger than the confines of one's current environment." With this belief, the program set out to provide the participants with various experiences throughout the year. Some of those experiences planned and/or attended were a Holiday Gift Shopping Spree, Recognition and club seating to a professional basketball game (Milwaukee Bucks), Book Giveaways, Growing Power Urban Farm, Discovery Museum, and Kids in the Rotunda at the Overture Center. Along with the planned experiences there were formal group sessions that focused on topics relevant to the participants needs and interests. City of Madison Police Sergeant Shannon Blackamore presented to the Woodson Boys Club Mentoring Group. The topic of the presentation was "Know your Rights" and spoke to the issue of how to safely interact with police. The students were provided examples and scenarios which helped to illustrate some of the common police contacts that citizens and juveniles experience. This presentation provided a forum for the students to ask questions and learn more about the law and how to interact professionally and respectfully with law enforcement. Retired Professor Charles Brown presented several on-going sessions about Goal Setting and how to measure your progress in achieving your stated goals. Attorney Richard Jones led a very effective session on study skills with examples and tips to take away and immediately implement in their current academic programs. There were also presentations on Black History, image and respect, Understanding the Juvenile Justice System, and more. In the upcoming year as the mentoring program reorganizes and poises itself to continue to be able to effectively and efficiently make noticeable impacts in the lives of its participants, the program is looking to expand its breadth and depth of what it can offer to keep up with the ever changing landscape, trends, and interests of tomorrow.





**The Scholarship Program** provides scholarships and/or book awards to underserved, college-bound, graduating high school seniors who attend accredited post-secondary educational institutions including vocational/technical colleges. Both scholarships and book awards have been presented to recipients since the inception of the foundation in 1994. This year, the Scholarship Committee, led by **Richard Jones, Sr.** (Chair), Arlington Davis, Dennis McClain, Dr. Alton Strange and Jacques Wesley was tasked to develop a process that would attract wonderful young people to apply for and be awarded scholarships. The awarding of the scholarships allows the Foundation to recognize the struggles students overcame to graduate, earn their diploma, and pursue their dreams at a college/university. The committee also wanted to develop ongoing relationships with counselors, minority student coordinators, principals and other school-based staff at various high schools in Dane County. Scholarship information and application materials were e-mailed to high schools in Dane County (East, West, Memorial, LaFollette, Middleton, Sun Prairie, Verona, and Shabazz). and follow up phone calls were made to each school multicultural counselor and assistant principal. **On May 7, 2017**, at the Links African-American Student Recognition Ceremony at the MATC-Truex campus gymnasium, Woodson Foundation President, Shannon Blackamore and members of the committee awarded the following recipients with \$750 scholarships: **Mr. Quantez Williams** is the first in his family to graduate from high school and attend college. One of his teachers stated, “this young man is uniquely independent, intelligent, and witty.” **Ms. Naima Ahmed-Dukow** came to our country from Somalia where the lack of access to education and extreme poverty troubled her heart, motivating her towards a career as a human right lawyer. **Ms. Ca’Lasia Nickole Davis** has alternated between homelessness and living with others for the past three years. She pushed herself to attend school and earned nothing less than A’s and B’s all four-years while working several jobs to support herself. During her senior, she was paying rent, a car payment, car insurance and for her necessities. Her struggles have taught her independence and responsibility. She too was the first in her family to graduate from high school. The ultimate mission of the Carter G. Woodson Scholarship and Community Service Foundation is to help improve the quality of life for the less fortunate in the Madison community. The stories of this year’s recipients provide evidence the foundation is improving the quality of life for those we are intended to reach.

# 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:

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For more information about the **Carter G. Woodson  
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Inc., please contact:**

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