



FEBRUARY 2007

## President Bush Marks the 81st Celebration of African American History Month



President George W. Bush, standing with members of the Jackson High School Black History Tour Group of Jackson, Michigan, gives remarks in the East Room of the White House, Monday Feb. 12, 2007, during the celebration of African American History Month.

*"The theme of this year's African American History Month is, "From Slavery to Freedom: Africans in the Americas." For hundreds of years, the people of Africa were bought and sold by colonial merchants and transported as cargo to this hemisphere. ...Yet despite these assaults on culture and humanity, the children of Africa persevered. They kept faith that the freedom that God intended for all would one day be theirs. And across this hemisphere in different places and at different times, that faith would be redeemed."*

— President George W. Bush

President George W. Bush welcomed and praised a crowd of over 200 leaders on February 12, 2007 for a celebration honoring African American History Month. This year's theme was "From Slavery to Freedom: Africans in the Americas."

The president personally acknowledged the good work and contributions of several individuals seated in the audience. Among them were Paralympics skier Bonnie St. John, Mississippi State University head football coach Sylvester Croom, astronauts Robert Curbeam and Joan Higginbotham, Higher M-Pact founder Tyrone Flowers, Jim "Mudcat" Grant of the Black Aces, Judge Janice Brown, New York Subway Hero Wesley Autrey, Chairman of the House Ways

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President George W. Bush, standing with members of the Jackson High School Black History Tour Group of Jackson, Michigan, welcomes guests to the East Room of the White House, Monday, Feb. 12, 2007, during the celebration of African American History Month.



President George W. Bush meets with Bonnie St. John in the Blue Room before an event commemorating African American History Month. Bonnie St. John is the 1st African American olympic ski medalist.

*"I want to tell you the story of Bonnie St. John. She grew up in California, which is -- most places in California are not very close to the snow. But she wanted to be a skier. The problem was at age five she lost one of her legs. But she never lost her dream. She said she fell down a lot while learning to ski, but she also learned the key to success was how fast she got up after the fall. And so she went to Harvard and she became a Rhodes scholar. And then she won medals in downhill skiing in the Paralympics. She owns her own small business. She's writing an inspirational book to encourage others. She is the kind of person that you really want to be around, and the kind of person that shows that individual courage matters in life."*

— President George W. Bush

*"Tyrone Flowers is an interesting story, one that speaks to a good heart, I suspect a gracious and glorious God, as well. He was a basketball star, and he was headed for college and perhaps a scholarship. He was living the dream of a lot of folks. And he got shot, and he's paralyzed."*

*The interesting thing about this good man is a lot of people would have either quit or sought revenge. But not him. He picked a different path and found a different calling. He went to a community college. He earned a bachelor's degree. And then he became a lawyer. Fourteen years ago, he and his wife founded a group called Higher M-pact. Higher M-pact has this goal: to help today's high risk urban youth become tomorrow's leaders. That is a noble goal. It is a necessary goal. And it's a goal that I suspect is more likely to be achieved because this good man has decided to turn a horrific act into an act of love."*

— President George W. Bush



President George W. Bush meets with Tyrone Flowers in the Blue Room before an event commemorating African American History Month. Tyrone, with the strength of Christ, pulled himself out of the ashes of high-risk youth tendencies and has committed his life to restoring hope, serving and developing high-risk youth to lead productive and positive lives.

To see all activities regarding African American History Month, please visit  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/africanamerican/>