



Casting Pearls®

Gaining Empowerment through Morals & Support

Volume 1, Issue 3

June 2011

Our Mission

To unite women and promote exchanges of wisdom that will contribute to the quality of life in our homes, communities, and society.

I Dare You...

To make a commitment to yourself to set/ accomplish one goal this quarter that will help you to denounce your past and stake your claim on your fabulous future.

Email us at

contact_gems@ymail.com

and let us know how you answered this challenge. We may feature it in the next newsletter.



Her Song

A look at women's influences in music

by Founding Visionary, Felicia R. Roach

About 2 weeks ago it seemed like everywhere I turned (VHI Soul, Facebook, and even Oprah's farewell show) there was Beyonce and her new "hit" *Run the World (Girls)*. After viewing a partial performance on Oprah, as much of the video as I could stand on VHI Soul, and a very strongly worded rebuttal to the song by *NineteenPercent* on Youtube many a discussion was provoked. Some believe that this song is the theme song to a new women's lib revolution. Others believe it minimizes the struggles women face and gives a false sense of empowerment to those forging their way to womanhood with very few moral examples. Like it or not, Beyonce's song has even had an influence on me. Fortunately, my foundation has afforded me the privilege of knowing that girls can rule the world... After they become healthy, competent, morally-balanced **WOMEN** who are effectively running their lives while fully contributing to their households and communities! Many girls and women alike will see nothing wrong with Beyonce wearing fishnets and tails to "run the world" and reciting lyrics like "This goes out to all my girls that's in the club rocking the latest. Who will buy it for themselves and get more money later." with no concept of what it means in *their world*.

June is Black Music Month and music is one of our most universal mediums. Women have always had a significant although underrated influence in music. I refuse to believe that gone are the days where songs like Aretha Franklin's *Do Right Woman, Do Right Man* gave us clear instructions on how to have a balanced, healthy relationship and Patti Labelle's *New Attitude* inspired us to not only get a new dress but to change our perspective. Maybe Aretha and Patti are too far back for some but how about Angie Stone's *Brotha* reminding us to pay homage to those who've lived beyond the stereotypes or Alicia Keys *Superwoman* encouraging us to remain strong even when things seem bad. Perhaps it's songs like Jennifer Hudson's *I Remember Me* that will influence us to take an accurate look at and an active role in our lives with lyrics like "Memories they're fading, but I'm the one who makes them. So I keep the love close enough to say. What if this life is all that we are given? We just can't stop living, scared of what we'll see..." There are numerous influences beyond what I've listed. Find one that speaks to you and let *Her Song* (positively) influence you.

Dynamic Diamond

By Carolyn P. Cousar

At whatever task I face, I strive for success. In my talks with my children those born to me or those who have come into my heart, I encourage them to always do their best at whatever they are doing. Be it schoolwork, chores at home, or in their work experiences. I have witnessed many successes in their lives but none have touched me as much as the success of one young lady who is about to become a high school senior.



A young lady who has persevered past obstacles to make significant strides and accomplishments.

Her name is Maurissa Stokes and she is a Dynamic Diamond. No, she doesn't carry a 4.0 average nor has she become the student of the year to her class. She has for the first time brought her grades up to a point that her average is not a disgrace to averages; she has for the first time done every home assignment; taken every test; and carried herself as a young woman going places in life. Yesterday she could not say that; yesterday my questions to her about her future were met with a shrug of the shoulders or a shake of her head. She didn't know what she wanted to do because she didn't see the possibilities that lie within her. Today, she has made a 180 degree turn around. When you ask her about her plans not only does she answer with positive responses but she can tell you each step that she plans to take to make those plans achievable. Congratulations to Maurissa for being willing to do all that it takes to be who she has *always* been destined to be.

A Reflection on the Big Hat, Pearls, & White Glove Brunch

By Catherine Harmon

The "Big Hat, Pearls, & White Gloves" brunch sponsored by GEMS and Black Pride Productions was absolutely wonderful! The brunch was filled with good food, fun fellowship, and an opportunity to meet and hear from some incredible women. Each speaker shared from her heart, as well as her own personal experience. I found each presenter to be engaging, enlightening, and encouraging. It was such an inspiration to be among a diverse group of women, all willing to share their knowledge and wisdom for the purpose of pushing other women to step out and walk in their purpose.

I consider GEMS to be a necessary tool that will cause women to recognize their abilities, achieve their highest potential, and value their own self worth. I am blessed and privileged to be a part of such an awesome vision.

