



The Legacy

Onward

Welcome to the first edition of The Legacy, a monthly newsletter designed to inform the supporters of the 1969 Morrill Hall Takeover. This is a partnership between the University of Minnesota's African American & African Studies Department, the community, and the courageous souls that changed the University of Minnesota forever. It features items that we hope will be of special interest to you as well as up to date information on the Morrill Hall 40th Anniversary Organizing and Planning Committee. Please feel free to share The Legacy with friends.

We Still Have A Charge

January 14, 2009 will mark the 40th Anniversary of the Morrill Hall Takeover. To commemorate this historic event the Morrill Hall 40th Anniversary Organizing and Planning Committee will host a series of events. With help from students and community members the Planning and Organizing Committee will conduct a two-day Symposium and Gala dinner as well as events in the community through out the year. Watch for more information in the upcoming months.

April 2008



AA&AS Faculty and members of the Black Student

Help make a difference consider helping in the following areas:

- Fundraising
- Marketing & Advertising
- Suggesting a Keynote speaker
- Joining the Organizing and Planning Committee
- Contact Scott Redd at red0002@umn.edu

Where are they now?



Dr Horace Huntley, a native of Birmingham, Alabama and graduate of Wenonah High School, was one of the first recipients of the Baccalaureate Degree in African American Studies in America. It was conferred upon him at the University of Minnesota. He was then awarded a fellowship to study at Syracuse University and was granted the Master of Arts Degree in American History. His Doctorate of Philosophy in History was granted by the University of Pittsburgh in American History with emphasis on African Americans and the U.S. Labor Movement in the twentieth century. Dr. Huntley is presently a member of the History Department at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and serves as Director of the Oral History Project at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. He developed the minor in African American Studies at UAB, and for more than twenty-five years has offered a series of courses on the experiences of Africans of the diaspora. In addition, Huntley has served as an Alabama Humanities Foundation Scholar, on the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute Task Force, as well as on the first Board of Directors of the Insti-

tute; on and the Birmingham National Urban League Board, on the Birmingham Historical Commission, the Birmingham Historical Society and as an evaluator for the Fellowship Office of the National Research Council of the National Science Foundation.

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Huntley served as consultant to *Amaze Design* of Boston, who contracted with the National Park Service in the development of the Selma to Montgomery March Trail. Served as consultant to WGBH Radio on the development of a civil rights website for teachers and as lecturer for a history teacher training program at the University of Alabama.

Dr. Huntley is married to the former Barbara Young, the father of Marcus and Falona and grandfather of Lindsey Elnora, Lauryn Renae and Camilla Ananse'.

Short list of publications include:

Horace Huntley, Rose Freeman Massey and Marie Braddock Williams, *Nerve Juice And The Ivory Tower – Confrontation in Minnesota – The True Story of the Morrill Hall Takeover*, (Jonesboro: FOUR-G Publishers, Inc, 2006).

Horace Huntley, *A Master Option Trader's Journey From Pipe Shop To Wall Street The Life and Times of Terry Harris*, (Jonesboro: FOUR-G Publishers, Inc., 2005

Horace Huntley and David Montgomery, ed. *Black Workers' Struggle for Equality in Birmingham* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

"The Rise and Fall of Mine Mill in Alabama: The Status Quo Against Interracial Unionism, 1933-1949, in James L. Baggett, ed., *The Journal Of The Birmingham Historical Society: An Anthology Honoring Marvin Yeomans Whiting*.

"Mine Mill and Smelter Workers," in Charles Reagan Wilson and William Ferris, ed., *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*.

"Alabama," in Cornel West, David L. Smith and Jack Salzman, ed., *Encyclopedia of African American Culture and History*.

Contributor to Robert L. Jenkins and Mfanya Donald, *The Malcolm X Encyclopedia*, Greenwood Press, 2002

"The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, a Memorial to the Civil Rights Struggle," in *The Black Collegian*, April, 2001.

"Generations of Unpaid Labor Make a Case for Reparations," in *The Black Collegian*, February, 2002.

Foot Soldiers For Democracy – The Men Women and Children of the Birmingham Movement (Champaign: University of Illinois Press) upcoming this year.

Making the Legacy Anew in the Present

Yuichiro Onishi

Assistant Professor

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It is not an overstatement to claim that the history of the 1969 African American Action Committee's Morrill Hall takeover shaped me. I am a direct beneficiary of this historic racial struggle that changed the University. As a graduate student in history in the late 1990s, I was able to design a Ph.D. program in a way that was not possible in the late 1960s. In pursuit of self-knowledge and intellectual identity, I took seminars and courses across disciplines that made Critical Race Studies and Diaspora Studies central. More important, in myriad learning and social spaces I straddled, I found critical mass consisting of students, staff, faculty, and administrators committed to social justice and affirmative action. There were enabling communities of solidarities. Although such grounds for critical engagement are shifting in the institution of higher education lately in a political climate where antiracism is cast as "reverse racism," I would not have matured intellectually in a way I did if the Morrill Hall takeover never happened.

My intellectual indebtedness to the takeover was further made explicit when I attended a recent Black History Month event organized by two able undergraduate students and co-chairs of the Historical Restoration Project Committee, Jaleesa Joy and Frederick Otu Biney. Present at this gathering of little more than twenty people were several participants of the Morrill Hall takeover. Rose Mary Freeman called upon the takeover alumni to share the podium with her so that she could better convey the power of collective action that ushered in major institutional and curricular transformations at the University. Marie Braddock talked about her political awakening, describing how she was emboldened to dismantle white learning spaces that were not conducive to liberal arts education. Manuel Woods, meanwhile, helped instill hope among younger people by echoing an oft-quoted Margaret Mead's proposition that a small group of politically and socially conscious people can bring about major changes and

Making the Legacy Anew in the Present cont

Together, what these reflections by takeover alumni communicated to me was what it takes to make “integration” relevant in such “still white” universities and colleges as the University of Minnesota. As in the past, it is important to think about race in a dialectical way. What I mean by this is that race informs decisions made at administrative, state, and federal levels and structures the educational opportunities and life chances of students of color. But race also nurtures resistance to institutional racism and encourages collective action and coalition building. The struggle of the African American Action Committee in 1969 was a racial struggle over the control of decision-making processes and resources, aiming to reorder the priorities of the University so that a commitment to racial justice and equality could become the very basis to organize the space of urban higher learning. This struggle is far from won forty years later. We are still faced with many of the similar challenges that propelled the African American Action Committee to stage the takeover, albeit in the context of neoliberalism that uses “diversity” and “multiculturalism” to maintain the racial status quo.

Next Morrill Hall Planning & Organizing Meeting
April 25th, 2008
815 Social Science Tower
10:00—12:00