

# Community Happenings

## March

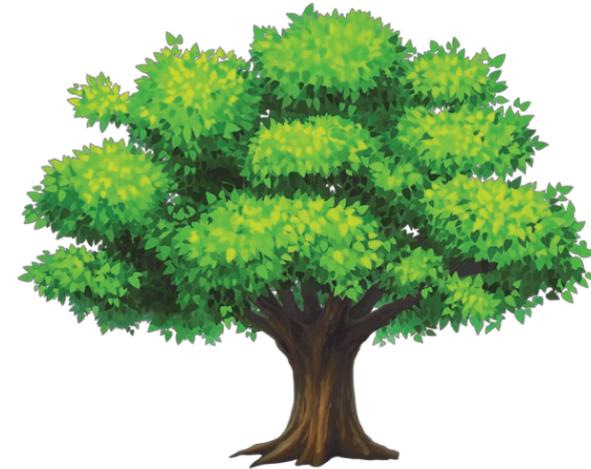
THURSDAYS AMANI Food Pantry (Greater Little Hill Church) 9:30a.m. -11:30a.m.  
3/16 Friends of Moody Park meeting (Pavilion) 4p.m.  
3/22 Youth Justice Milwaukee Summit, Wisconsin Black Historical Society, 1:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.  
3/22 Auer Avenue Community School Leadership Team Meeting, 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.  
3/28 Amani United Meeting (at COA) 4:30 p.m.  
3/29 COA Goldin Ethel Nutis Gill Family Resource Center Meet & Greet , 5:00-7:00 p.m.

## April

THURSDAYS AMANI Food Pantry (Greater Little Hill Church) 9:30a.m. - 11:30a.m.  
4/1 1st Saturday Meeting (Dominican Center) 8:30a.m.  
4/1 Housing Fair, Goldin Center, 12 p.m.-2 p.m.  
4/3 Amani Safety Committee Meeting (COA) 4:00p.m.  
4/4 Spring Election  
4/8 Job Fair, Goldin Center, 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
4/8 Amani Spring Clean-up  
4/14 COA Community Fun Night, Goldin Center  
4/20 Friends of Moody Meeting (Park Pavilion) 4p.m.  
4/25 Amani United Meeting (at COA) 4:30 p.m.

## May

THURSDAYS AMANI Food Pantry (Greater Little Hill Church) 9:30a.m. - 11:30a.m.  
5/1 Amani Safety Committee Meeting (COA) 6:00p.m.  
5/6 1st Saturday Meeting (Dominican Center) 8:30a.m.  
5/18 Friends of Moody Meeting (Park Pavilion) 4p.m.  
5/20 Bloom & Groom (Dominican Center)  
5/23 Amani United Meeting (at COA) 4:30 p.m.



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Issue 14: March 2017

# AMANI United

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

## AMANI NEIGHBORHOOD SEES DECREASE IN CRIME

According to data from the City of Milwaukee COMPASS database, crime in the AMANI neighborhood decreased 10.4% in 2016; and there was a 26.36% decrease in crime in AMANI over the past 4 years (2012–2016). One reason for this decrease is a collaborative effort between entities such as COA Youth and Family Centers, the Dominican Center for Women, and the AMANI United Community Neighborhood Association to engage residents and build community assets.

Barbara Smith, President of the Amani United neighborhood associated stated, “This information is very encouraging to me as a resident as well as an individual who has made a commitment to try to make Amani a safer community for everyone. We were able to form a Safety committee which consists of Amani residents, and we are equipped with a strong voice and the ability to make a change in the neighborhood. Neighbors have begun to communicate and know one another, not being afraid to speak up and speak out.”

COA Executive Director Tom Schneider noted 3 critical elements to this success: (1) Engaging residents to identify needed neighborhood assets, resident participation in planning, and residents seeing the results, (2) Building neighborhood assets in Amani to provide badly needed services and make the neighborhood a more desirable place to live and raise a family, and (3) Building the fabric of the AMANI neighborhood as a community of residents who look out for each other, and who are regularly engaged in their community. In the past 4 years, new neighborhood assets include a pediatric and family clinic, the new Moody Park, a family resource center, the new Burke Early Education Center, and the Amani United neighborhood association.

Sr. Patricia Rogers, Executive Director of the Dominican Center for Women, which is located in Amani, said, “I strongly believe that the lower crime statistics for Amani speaks to a community that moved from a neighborhood of least resistance to residents getting involved and voicing their concerns. I also believe that we will experience less crime as more residents take on leadership roles in the Amani community.”

With the sustained and substantial decrease in crime, the Amani neighborhood is seeing the results of the combined impact of resident engagement and building neighborhood assets.

According to Amani Byrne Coordinator, Britney Roberson, continued efforts are being planned that will continue to be impactful in terms of addressing crime. The Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) program was launched in 2012 as part of the Obama Administration’s National Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative. BCJI was designed to help local communities develop place-based, community-oriented strategies. The hope is that Byrne will help increase neighborhood participation and relations, reduce crime, and increase neighborhood safety. BCJI will offer residents lots of opportunities to take part in the vision, research, and implementation.

The Amani Neighborhood Initiative is also 1 of 8 “place-based population change” initiatives selected nationally by UCLA and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation as models for community transformation.

by **Tom Schneider**, COA Executive Director; **Britney Roberson**, AMANI Byrne Coordinator;  
**Barbara Smith**, AMANI United President; **Anne Olson**, COA Development and Public Relations Director; and  
**Sr. Patricia Rogers**, Executive Director of the Dominican Center for Women

## Join the Friends of Moody Park!

By Pepper Ray, Interim Chair

August 20, 2015 marked the official grand opening of Moody Park in the Amani community but efforts to revitalize the space started long ago. Endeavors to generate activities that benefit the neighborhood and to keep the park safe are some of the guiding principles for the Friends of Moody Park (FOMP). This group is an unincorporated association of volunteers established for the purposes of promoting the preservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the area.

Moody Park is the 2016 winner of the Brewers Community Foundation Public Spaces Award for Milwaukee Neighborhood Development Innovation (known as the MANDI). FOMP has also planned the grand opening celebration, coordinated park concerts, advocated for security cameras, hosted two go kart events and the annual Earth Day community clean-up.

**ALL ARE WELCOMED TO THE MONTHLY GENERAL BODY MEETINGS THAT TAKE PLACE MARCH – OCTOBER, THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH IN THE MOODY PARK PAVILION AT 4P.M.**

For more information concerning the Friends group please contact Pepper Ray at Pray.bnncp@gmail.com.



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Dominican Center for Women  
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Medical College of Wisconsin  
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Safe & Sound  
United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee

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## DEDICATION: MRS. LEATHA P. WEST

by **Princess Byers**, Marquette University

Mrs. Leatha P. West (February 29, 1948-February 2, 2017) was known for her kindness, her influence in the community, and for never biting her tongue. Her presence within the AMANI community was consistent and she was dedicated to finding solutions so that her community could thrive.

"I remember when we would have our meetings, and before the meetings Mrs. West would just sit in the corner and observe what was going on. Every now and again you would see her pull one of the students to the side and give them advice and they listened...that's was just who Mrs. West was. If she had it, she would give it to you."

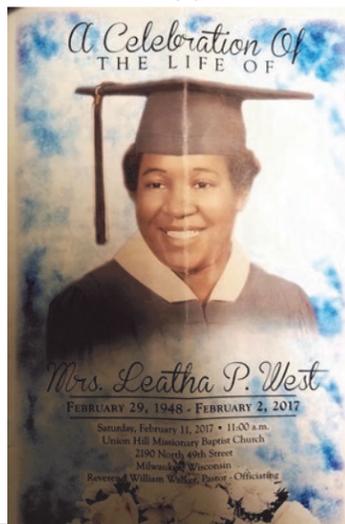
"If I had never met Mrs. West, I wouldn't be where I am now. I would still be a rowdy had it not been for her strong words and unselfish guidance, says Antywon Williams, a former COA participant who was mentored by Mrs. West.

Wife, mother, grandmother, mentor, and friend are a few of the associations one would use to describe Mrs. West. Throughout the years, Mrs. West showed her commitment to the community by serving in every way she could. She frequently volunteered at COA's Goldin Youth and Family Center and was also a member of the AMANI United community group. In addition, she was also mission and choir president at her church, Mt. Vernon Missional Baptist Church. A very

special endeavor that Mrs. West committed to was her role in assisting with the Hunger Task Force when the summer meal program is held.

We are thankful for her presence, her unselfish heart, and kindness. This issue of the AMANI United Newsletter is dedicated to Mrs. Leatha P. West.

*On February 2, 2017, Mrs. West received a resolution from AMANI United courtesy of President Barbara Smith. She was also honored by Alderman Khalif Rainey who presented the family with an official city proclamation.*



## Safe Streets for Students

by **Michelle Allison**, Community School Coordinator, United Way of Greater Milwaukee

At the beginning of the school year parents of students at Auer Avenue Community School expressed a concern regarding the one way street on Auer Avenue between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. Drivers were totally disregarding the One Way, driving down and parking on the wrong side of the street. Auer Avenue suggested that the One Way Street be extended to Hopkins to hinder drivers from driving down the one way illegally.

The Amani Safety Organizers hosted a special meeting in September 2016 inviting residents and families to come and share their concerns about the street. Alderman Khalif Rainey was present to listen to the concerns and give feedback. He then instructed the Department of Public Works to do a study to look at how we could create a safer street. A follow up meeting was held in January with Alderman Rainey, a representative from the City Department of Public Works, residents, and the Amani Organizers.

As a result of residents coming together with the families and staff of Auer Avenue, Alderman Rainey is moving ahead with the installation of the eastbound one-way control on Auer Avenue between Hopkins Street and 23rd Street. Legislation will be introduced at the April 7th, 2017 Public Safety Committee for this one-way control. If it is approved a work order will be issued for the installation of the necessary signage for the one-way control and work will most likely be completed in about three to four weeks after issuance of work order.

Congratulations to the Amani Residents and the Auer Avenue families and staff who worked together to get the one way street extended and calm down the traffic for the safety of everyone.

## COA GOLDIN HOSTS BLACK HERITAGE PROGRAM

by **Scottie Posey**, COA Goldin Operations Manager

On Friday, February 17, 2017, 150 residents came to COA's Goldin Center for the bi-monthly community fun night, which focused on Black Heritage in celebration of Black History Month. Damien Smith (Safe and Sound) and Ashley Harrell (the COA Burke Early Education Center Director) guided the event as MC's and welcomed several presenters:

- Alderman Khalif Rainey welcome attendees and also gave a special dedication to Mrs. Leatha P. West.
- Ajamou Butler, of Heal the Hood, and Destinny Fletcher, community health navigator for Children's Hospital of Wisconsin and poet, contributed to the program with strong poetry performances.
- NOVA School's gospel choir provided song throughout the program.
- Auer Avenue 5th Graders also performed a song.
- COA Goldin pre-teens, under the leadership of pre-teen group leader Ashley Shakelford, performed a beautiful dance melody.
- Children from COA's Burke Early Education Center performed a Black History skit.
- Finally, COA's very own, Ellie Boone, gave a vivid performance that took everyone back to the way things use to be.



There was immense crowd participation. Entertainment was provided by the Milwaukee Reparatory Theater and Flye Gang Entertainment. Audience members were asked trivia questions with the opportunity to win prizes. Food was provided by Cousin's Subs.

**COA thanks everyone who participated in this event and invites you to attend the next free Community Fun Night, which will focus on health and wellness, on Friday, April 14, 2017 from 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.**

## ARTS CORNER



by **Ali Carlucci**, A.W.E. AIR Program Director

COA Goldin Center youth are working on the City of Milwaukee's MKE Plays initiative with Artists Working in Education, Inc (A.W.E.). COA Youth and A.W.E. artists are creating artwork for a brand new playground at 21st and Keefe. Youth will be working with the artists this school year and summer at Goldin Center to design and create a piece of art for the new playground.

Based on neighborhood input, designs for what the new playground will look like are underway. The groups plan to unveil the playground and artwork near the end of summer. Neighbors are invited to share their feedback and learn about the plans by contacting Joe Kaltenberg the MKE Plays Program Coordinator by calling 414.286.8532 or emailing [mke-plays@milwaukee.gov](mailto:mke-plays@milwaukee.gov).

You can also meet representatives from A.W.E. at the March 28, 2017 Amani United meeting where they will share their progress with residents. The project is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Learn more at [AWE-INC.ORG](http://AWE-INC.ORG).

## CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF WISCONSIN

by **Destinny Fletcher**, CHW Community Health Navigator



"The idea is to capture our community through connection and creative integrity. We are understanding and believe in our neighborhoods, so why not create a home within it?"

This is a quote from our new Children's Hospital of Wisconsin Community Health Navigator, Destinny Fletcher. Destinny brings a community-focused and creative approach to the Amani and Franklin Heights community in her new role. She has spent her first month job networking, creating connections, and building a bridge of reassurance throughout the neighborhoods she serves. She has worked closely with the Dominican Center, 53206 Drug Free Communities Board, and COA Goldin Center. Destinny takes her role as an advocate for change and a resource within the community very seriously. She looks forward to continuing her commitment to improving the health and well-being of children and families in the Amani and Franklin Heights community.

Please contact Destinny at 414-239-0904 for assistance with housing, medical care, jobs, educational opportunities, alcohol or drug abuse issues, and healthy food.