

18th Annual Black Men's Gathering
Green Acre Baha'i School
Eliot, Maine

17 July 2004

Continental Board of Counsellors/Americas
C/o Counsellor Rodrigo Tomas, Central Office
Costa Rica

Allah'u'Abha

Dear Friends,

The participants of the 18th Black Men's Gathering humbly convey to you their warm, sincere and loving greetings. The 18th Annual Black Men's Gathering was held July 10-17th at Green Acre Baha'i School in Eliot, Maine. A primary focus of this year's gathering was concentrated on developing and expanding an outward looking orientation with emphases on productive action and measurable results.

Inspired by the encouragement of Counsellor Gene Andrews and Dr. Billy Roberts, 117 Black Men vowed to undertake specific plans to advance the pace of entry by troops by way of the three core activities and the increase in the number of mini-Black Men's Gatherings held throughout the United States. In light of our special designation and concomitant responsibility as representatives of the "pupil of the eye," we resolved to take the following actions during the course of this upcoming year. We will:

1. participate in helping lead each of our home communities to the next stage of development by individually committing to complete the main sequence of Institute courses,
2. increase the numbers of new believers of African descent by holding mini-Black Men's Gatherings in the communities in which we reside with the objective of increasing the number of new believers by next year's gathering,
3. actively participate and demonstrate leadership in encouraging members of our communities in participating in the three core activities,
4. hold ourselves accountable as model fathers, uncles, brothers, husbands, and mentors of children and youth in the Baha'i and African American community,
5. continue to communicate and network with brothers from the Black Men's Gathering throughout the year to support and advance our personal, spiritual, and community goals,
6. make measurable strides towards outreach to the greater community to attract participants to the three core activities with specific focus on inviting people to

- become believers,
7. increase the outreach to non-Baha'is of African descent and dormant Baha'is, and
 8. be a source of inspiration, unity, and leadership in our respective communities in the area of furthering the two essential movements of the current Plan.

The 18th Annual Black Men's Gathering stands united and committed collectively and individually to accelerating growth of human resources for the Cause of Baha'u'llah over the next twelve months, and beyond, concentrating our energies on attracting new souls to this beloved Faith.

The Black Men's Gathering joyfully extends our heartfelt appreciation to your esteemed and respected Institution, the Continental Board of Counsellors and appreciate your continuing generous support of our efforts; and whose precious encouragement we value.

May the radiant light, fragrance and promise of this most great Dispensation find you and your families well and at peace.

With loving Baha'i Greetings,

Participants of the 18th Annual Black Men's Gathering

C/o William Roberts
wroberts@usbnc.org