

**19th Annual Black Men's Gathering
Green Acre Baha'i School
Eliot, Maine
United States of America**

July 16, 2005

The National Spiritual Assembly of
The Baha'is of Barbados
2nd Avenue Belleville
St. Michael
Barbados

Beloved Co-workers,

The men assembled at the nineteenth Annual Baha'i Black Men's Gathering extend their love and warm greetings to you and the Barbadian Baha'i community.

This year's Gathering has been blessed with the presence of a number of Caribbean men including your own Lionel Haynes adding a refreshing Caribbean flavor to our own perspective. We anticipate the blend of perspectives will spur growth in both communities.

The aim of the Black Men's Gathering, organized and lead for nearly twenty years by Dr. William Roberts, endorsed by our beloved Universal House of Justice, is to provide a safe haven for Black men in our Faith to explore and arrive at a heightened appreciation of the unique role they are called upon to play in the unfoldment of the World Order of Baha'u'llah and to empower them, through study of the Revealed Word and the guidance from the Universal House of Justice, to arise and shoulder valiantly the responsibility of equipping themselves with the necessary knowledge, insights, and skills to further advance the process of Entry by Troops.

This year we studied and consulted on the Ridvan Message of 2005 from the Universal House of Justice and the November 28th letter from the International Teaching Centre to all Continental Counselors. Participants have gained a fuller understanding of the two essential movements required by the Plan. Contributing to this understanding was a moving and cogent presentation by Dr. Eugene Andrews, a member of the Continental Board of Counselors for the Americas. Dr. Andrews further challenged the men to complete the sequence of Ruhi courses thereby enhancing the needed human resources so valuable to their communities.

This group of participants has demonstrated an appreciation of the special circumstances of their communities and a capacity to plan activities that will assist other men to arise

attracting people like themselves to our beloved Faith and to involve them in the growth process. Those men resident in the Caribbean have planned a BMG for November 11 through 13, 2005 in Tobago to advance these aims. In the next few weeks, Lionel Haynes will be sharing his experience of this Gathering with the Black men of Barbados with a view to establishing a Barbados Black Men's Gathering.

Across the United States, men who are replicating the BMG model have been instrumental in the enrichment and transformation of their communities and we have every confidence that with the support and encouragement of your institution, you will see, in the not-too-distant future, the fruits of this endeavor in Barbados as well.

We implore your prayers for our efforts to assist in the pursuit of the objectives of the Five Year Plan while we offer our prayers that these efforts will assist your community to achieve victory.

With sincere Baha'i love

Participants of the 19th Annual Black Men's Gathering 2005.