

African Advocate

Voice of African Immigrants & Refugees In Illinois

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED AFRICAN ORGANIZATION (UAO)

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OUR MISSION

The United African Organization is a dynamic coalition of African community-based organizations that promotes social and economic justice, civic participation, and empowerment of African immigrants and refugees in Illinois.

OUR GOALS

- ◆ Build the leadership and organizational capacity of the community
- ◆ Advance public policies to increase opportunities and support for immigrant and refugee integration
- ◆ Ensure that African immigrant and refugees have an active role in multiple civic arenas
- ◆ Promote community development and access to social services
- ◆ Serve as a viable model of African Unity and Empowerment

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We begin 2014 in gratitude to all of you who contribute in diverse ways to sustain our work that empowers so many African immigrants and refugees. Our energy for continuing this work is strong. We are filled with ideas for enhancing our existing programs and are constantly looking for our next step to enrich the lives of people within our communities. And your generosity is key to UAO's future! Please mark your calendar for the following programs:

African Youth Forum: Saturday - March 29, 2014

Chicago African Summit: Saturday - May 17, 2014

African Unity Gala & Awards: Saturday - September 20, 2014

Additional information on citizenship workshops, leadership workshops, and healthcare coverage enrollment events can be found at <http://uniteafricans.org/events>. Happy New Year!

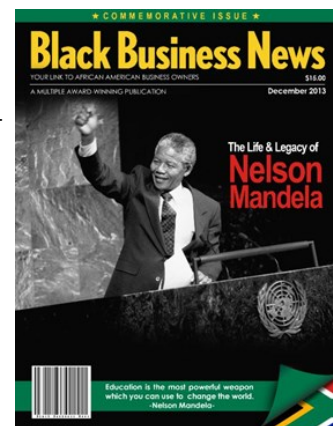
[Mail in your support here](#)

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MANDELA: A LIFE OF STRUGGLE AND TRIUMPH

The mortal remains of Nelson Madiba Mandela rest at his birthplace of Qunu, but his immortal vision of Africa united and at peace with itself will stay with us through eternity. Madiba was the crown jewel of African nationalism and its arduous battles against Western colonial occupation of Africa.

His early beginnings as an activist were intricately connected to the unfolding forces of the African liberation movement, which emerged at the turn of the twentieth century with the single goal of defeating colonialism and regaining Africa's independence. He was the last of Africa's Founding Fathers like Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Sekou Toure of Guinea, Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Amilcar Cabral of Guinea Bissau, Augustino Neto of Angola, Samora Machel of Mozambique, Leopold Sedar Senghor of Senegal, Milton Margai of Sierra Leone, and Houphouet Boigny of Ivory Coast. His ascendancy as the first democratically elected President of a free South Africa in 1994 marked the triumph of African nationalism and the effective end of Africa's anti-colonial struggles. [Read more](#)



77 DAYS LEFT TO ENROLL OR RISK PAYING PENALTIES

Upcoming UAO Events:

HEALTHCARE COVERAGE ENROLLMENT EVENT

The new healthcare law, called the Affordable Care Act or ObamaCare, impacts you and your family! You must have health insurance in 2014 or face paying tax penalties! Apply Now!

Monday, January 20th - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm - 10 West 35th Street, Chicago, IL 60616
 Thursday, January 23rd - 10:00am to 2:00pm - 4554 N. Broadway Avenue, Suite 328, Chicago, IL

CITIZENSHIP WORKSHOP

All residents who are Green Card holders for at least 5 years, or 3 years and married to a U.S. citizen are invited to attend a free citizenship workshop where they can get free assistance with their application to become a U.S. Citizen. Attend our upcoming citizenship workshop:

Saturday, January 25th - 9:00 am to 11:00 am - Truman College, 1145 W. Wilson Avenue, Chicago, IL

In spite of the initial hitches and confusion about the new healthcare law, called the Affordable Care Act or ObamaCare, enrollment is underway. We hope that you and everyone in your family is enrolled for health insurance, and that your 2014 is off to a happy and healthy start.

Almost everyone is REQUIRED to have health insurance in 2014 or pay tax penalties. US citizens and anyone with the following immigration statuses qualify for

<p>healthcare coverage: Lawful Permanent Resident (Green Card holder) Asylee Refugee Cuban/Haitian Entrant Paroled into the U.S. Conditional Entrant Granted before 1980 Battered Spouse, Child and Parent Victim of Trafficking and his/her Spouse, Child, Sibling or Parent Granted Withholding of Deportation or Withholding of Removal, under the immigration laws or under the Convention against Torture (CAT) Individual with Non-immigrant Status (includes worker visas, student visas, and citizens of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau) Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) Lawful Temporary Resident Administrative order staying removal issued by the Department of Homeland Security Member of a federally-recognized Indian tribe or American Indian Born in Canada Resident of American Samoa</p>	<p>Applicant for any of these statuses: Temporary Protected Status with Employment Authorization Special Immigrant Juvenile Status Victim of Trafficking Visa Adjustment to LPR Status Asylum* Withholding of Deportation or Withholding of Removal, under the immigration laws or under the Convention against Torture (CAT)* *Only those who have been granted employment authorization or are under the age of 14 and have had an application pending for at least 180 days are eligible</p> <p>With Employment Authorization: Registry Applicants Order of Supervision Applicant for Cancellation of Removal or Suspension of Deportation Applicant for Legalization under IRCA Legalization under the LIFE Act</p>
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UAO's certified staff are available to help you enroll. **So join us for a health care coverage enrollment event on Monday, January 20th from 10am to 2:00pm at 10 West 35th Street.** The four documents you need to apply are proof of identity including everyone in your household, Social Security numbers, income information, and immigration information.

[Read more](#)

[Call 312-949-9980 for more information](tel:312-949-9980)

2014-15 ILLINOIS DREAM FUND APPLICATION - LIVE!

Over 1,000 applications were received in the first year of the Illinois Dream Fund Scholarship competition. \$100,000 was awarded to 35 undocumented immigrants to attend two/four year institutions.

The Illinois Dream Fund is currently accepting online applications for the 2014-15 scholarship. This opportunity is open to undocumented/ DACAmented high school seniors & current undergraduates attending or planning to attend an accredited non-profit public/private institution in Illinois or outside of Illinois. Students must possess a 2.5GPA+ and meet the requirements of the Illinois Dream Act. Deadline is **March 1, 2014**. Learn more or apply online at www.illinoisdreamfund.org

Do you have events going on in your community? Let us know by emailing: events@uniteafricans.org

Share Your Story

We all have stories about how we, each in our own way, enrich our communities. Tell us how you GIVE BACK to YOUR COMMUNITY...

You could be featured in the next issue of African Advocate! Email: editor@uniteafricans.org

AFFORDING NATURALIZATION TO BECOME A US CITIZEN

Many green card holders who are eligible to apply for citizenship hesitate to do so because they are discouraged by the cost of naturalization. However, do not let the cost prevent you from applying! A Fee Waiver option is available to eligible applicants that could eliminate the cost of applying. You could be eligible for a Fee Waiver, if you are low-income and can prove that you are unable to pay the application fee. That is if:

- you receive a means-test benefit from the state or federal government, such as Medicaid, food stamps, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- your household income is at or below 150% of the poverty level ([see chart](#))
- you have a financial hardship, such as recent unemployment or high medical expense

Documents you can use to support a fee waiver request include:

- An official letter showing the beneficiary, the agency granting the benefits, and the amount of the benefits (SNAP, Medicaid, TANF, SSI, etc.)
- Federal tax return
- Recent pay check stubs
- Medical receipts
- Statement of payments on legal debt
- Documentation of unemployment benefits.

[Read more](#)

[Contact UAO at \(312\) 949-9980.](#)

Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders

The U.S. Department of State is currently seeking applications for a new exchange program for Sub-Saharan Africa, the Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders. The Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, the new flagship program of President Obama's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), will bring 500 young leaders ages 25 to 35 to the United States each year beginning in 2014 for academic coursework and leadership training and will create unique opportunities in Africa for Fellows to put new skills to practical use in leading organizations, communities, and countries. The Washington Fellowship includes a 6-week Academic and Leadership Institute, a Summit with President Obama in Washington, DC, an optional 8-week U.S. Internship, and Continued Activities in Africa. Completed applications, including all supporting documents, are due by January 27, 2014.

[Read more](#)

[Apply Today!](#)

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United African Organization

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Advocacy, Unity, Empowerment

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