First Lady Michelle Obama an Inspirational Figure
This Women’s History Month
Excerpt by Princess Manasseh
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First, is a term with which Michelle LaVaughn Robinson Obama, has become quite familiar. From first generation college graduate to First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama has defied the odds to become first in achieving some monumental things. Born to working class parents on the South Side of Chicago, the first odds Michelle defeated were the statistics surrounding African American girls raised in Chicago’s inner city in the 1960s and 1970s. Following in her brother’s footsteps, Michelle got her undergraduate degree from Princeton and went on to earn a Juris Doctorate from Harvard Law School. Michelle and her brother’s achievements early on, marked great strides for their family. Their parents, neither of whom had the opportunity to earn college degrees, had now created a generation of college graduates that would undoubtedly pass on for posterity.

After passing the bar, Michelle accepted a position at a prominent law firm in Chicago, at the time, the only African American in her department and one of the few in the company. Michelle went on to meet Barack Obama at the firm when he was later hired as an intern and she was assigned as his mentor. Before long the two were dating and after two years, they were married. In 2008 Barack Obama was elected the 43rd president of the United States making him the first African American POTUS this nation had ever seen, and Michelle the first African American First Lady in our history.

Michelle, however, is remarkable in her position as FLOTUS for more than just her racial background. Michelle is the third First Lady in history with a postgraduate degree, after her two immediate predecessors, Hillary Rodham Clinton and Laura Bush. Michelle, along with Hillary Clinton is debatably the only First Ladies in history with the credentials themselves to run the country. Michelle delivered key speeches during both of her husband’s campaigns for office that contributed to his success.

Michelle’s story of struggle and achievement is uplifting and inspiring – one to be celebrated this March as our nation recognize Women’s History Month.

WORDS OF WISDOM…

Struggle is a never ending process. Freedom is never really won; you earn it and win it in every generation…Coretta Scott King, 1927-2006

No person is your friend who demands your silence, or denies your right to grow…Madam C.J. Walker, 1867-1919

The people must know before they can act…Ida B. Wells, 1862-1931

Truth is powerful and it prevails…Sojourner Truth, 1797-1883

Each person must live their life as a model for others…Rosa Parks, 1913-2005

Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world…Harriet Tubman, 1820-1913
In addition to celebrating Women's History Month, it is also the 50th anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

On March 19th, “Exploring Civil Rights: A Panel Discussion” was held in the Holmes Student Center, Capitol Room. Panelists discussed the impact of the 1964 Civil Rights Act generally and reflected on how it impacted each of them personally. The panel included three distinguished NIU scholars: Dr. Laverne Gyant, Director of the Center for Black Studies; Dr. Diane Rodgers, Associate Professor of Sociology; and Dr. Elvia Arriola, Professor of Law. Sponsors: Department of History and Women’s Studies & LGBT Studies Programs.

On March 26th, “Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Women in Leadership and Education” was held in the Barsema Alumni and Visitors Center. It was a celebration of conversation, networking, and celebration that welcomed four distinguished alumni to campus to share their experiences in educational leadership. (Seated right to left) Dr. Charissee Gillett, President, Lexington Theological Seminary; Gary Groth, Athletic Director, University of Nevada-Reno; Dr. Christine Sobek, President, Waubonsee Community College; and Patricia Yadgir, Vice President, American Quality Schools (standing) Dr. La Yonne I. Neal, Dean of the College of Education. It was moderated by Dr. Connie Fox, Associate Dean of the College of Education.
COMING IN APRIL

John Henrik Clarke Honor Society Ceremony
By Invitation Only
April 6, 2014, 2:00 pm
Holmes Student Center – Duke Ellington Ballroom
Induction of new members (3.0+ GPA)

JHC Advisor and S-Plan Coordinator, Ms. Regina Curry, rcurry1@niu.edu, X6183

19th Annual African American Leadership Conference Teen Summit
“Stand for Something or Fall For Anything: The Time is Now!”
Holmes Student Center – Carl Sandburg
April 4, 2014, 9:30 – 2:30 pm

The Teen Summit is part of the largest student-run conference in the State of Illinois. The focus of this year's theme will be educating the community concerning preventive methods to curb “youth violence” with high school students from DeKalb & Chicago.

Panel Discussion, Opening Ceremony, Lunch (Blackhawk), Workshops, Forums, Greek Exhibition Step Show. Keynote Speaker: Officer Joiner, Chicago Police Youth Preventive Program Coordinator

Teen Summit Coordinators: Adewale Adetunji, President, Black Student Union, X1709 & Community Outreach Coordinator, Mr. Derrick Smith, dsssmith@niu.edu, X4800