



PRESS ONLY - Contact: Pam McDonald (510) 658-4623
NUMBER NOT FOR PUBLICATION
www.sanfranciscolinks.org
sanfranciscolinksinc@yahoo.com

ABOUT THE LINKS - FACT SHEET

About the San Francisco Chapter of The Links, Incorporated

The Western Area of The Links, Incorporated developed from a nucleus of three chapters chartered in 1950. The chartering of the Los Angeles, Oakland Bay Area and San Francisco chapters connected the chain of friendship in The Links, Incorporated from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.

Since 1950, the San Francisco Chapter of The Links, Incorporated has worked to provide hands-on service and support to local community based initiatives and organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area. Through its dedicated members, the San Francisco chapter of The Links Incorporated has provided thousands of volunteer hours and significant financial support to the community for almost sixty years.

Sample community service initiatives of the San Francisco Chapter of The Links, Incorporated include:

National Trends and Services

- * Community Health Fairs (Kaiser Permanente, Bayview-Hunter's Point)
- * Organ donor awareness program (California Transplant Donor Network, Kaiser) sponsorship of "Donor Sunday"
- * UNCF College Fund Walk-A-Thon: Annual Participation
- * Life Skills Management for Seniors

International Trends and Services

- * Maama Kits (childbirth safety in rural Africa)
- * African water wells project
- * School-in-a-box Rwanda education project
- * Edgewood Center: exploring Africa project

* Saturday Breakfast Club in Bayview-Hunters Point: Africa education workshop

The Arts

- * Collaborations with Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (*Henry Ossawa Tanner*; *Jacob Lawrence: The Frederick Douglass and Harriett Tubman Series 1939*; *Rhapsodies in Black: Art of the Harlem Renaissance and Eternal Egypt* exhibitions)
- * Co-sponsor, Opening reception for *David Driskell Collection* exhibition
- * Art acquisition funding support (sample artists: Elizabeth Catlett, Aaron Douglas)
- * Fine Arts Museums board membership and docent support
- * Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD): Board and fundraising leadership
- * MoAD major donor and docent support
- * "SFLINKS@MXA" - Jazz music, poetry and visual arts after school workshops at Malcolm X Academy in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood (SFUSD)
- * Links Treasure Awards – Financial awards presented to promising young leaders in the local arts scene.

Services to Youth

- * Project LEAD: High Expectations (George Washington Carver Elementary School)
- * "Responsibility Begins with Me" - Umbrella Program (Western Addition YMCA)
- * Edgewood Children's Center: hands-on support of program
- * Boys and Girls to Work program: sponsorship
- * Bayview Hunters Point Empowerment Task Force - Saturday Breakfast Club Literacy Program

About The Links, Incorporated National Organization

Founded in 1946 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, The Links, Incorporated is a not-for-profit organization of more than 12,000 professional women of color in 274 chapters located in 42 states and three countries. Members of The Links, Incorporated are committed to enhancing the quality of life in their communities.

The Links, Incorporated commitment to community service is manifested through four main facets: National Trends and Services, Services to Youth, International Trends and Services and The Arts. Regional areas and chapters embrace programs that combine the effective coordination of all four facets into a full "umbrella program."

About the Facets:

International Trends and Services

The Links, Incorporated and its non-profit arm, The Links Foundation, Incorporated have long had a commitment to improving the lives and livelihoods of people throughout the US, the Caribbean and the African continent. The Links continue to work to fulfill their objectives by developing a greater awareness of international issues and multicultural events through the personal involvement of its members and a focus on international concerns.

During the 1980s, Links chapters contributed financially toward the building of water wells throughout the African continent. In the 1990s, The Links sponsored The Uganda Tour of Light, and the making of quilts for the children of AIDS victims in Ghana. Links chapters have participated in other international programs, such as "Refugee Resettlement: Rwanda, Liberia, and Haiti" and "Rwandan School-In-A-Box" through UNICEF. Through the contributions of chapters and friends, books, educational supplies, and shoes (project "Heart and Sole") were also sent to Haiti, The Bahamas, Jamaica, South Africa, and West Africa.

This commitment continues under the organization's current program theme: "Touching Tomorrow Today, Globally." Under The Links' signature program "Education Across the Miles," chapters have donated more than \$300,000 towards the building of 31 schools in townships of South Africa and Nigeria. This program operates today in partnership with International Federation for Self-Help (IFESH). Earlier this year, The Links' Nassau, Bahamas chapter built a million-dollar shelter for women and children in Nassau in response to local needs.

Currently, the World Health Organization is closely aligned with The Links for the Safe Motherhood Initiative. As active participants in the Maama Kit Campaign, Links chapters have purchased thousands of "Maama Kits" to help alleviate the problem of neonatal mortality.

The Links continue to strengthen linkages within the global community particularly on the African continent and throughout the world, while diligently working for world peace and understanding.

National Trends and Services

The programmatic thrust of this facet has been to provide community programs that increase awareness of issues that affect the quality of life of African Americans. This facet focuses on health care and other issues of national significance.

Programs have included:

- * Linkages to Life: A signature program that stresses organ, tissue and bone marrow donation.

- * The Gift of Life: What African Americans Need to Know About Organ Donations. A film created by the Metro-Manhattan Chapter of The Links, Inc and sponsored by HBO during the Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival received National attention.

- * Hurricane Katrina: Response to this tragedy included The Links, Incorporated partnering with the Children's Defense Fund, Women of the Storm, and The Links Foundation, Inc. to respond to the needs of displaced victims and support of Universities in the area.

- * Renewal of the "Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments of 2006." Links across the country worked with Congress to achieve this important piece of legislation.

- * No Child Left Behind legislation - Links work with schools to support children

- * The Dorie Miller Signature Campaign to Obtain the Medal of Honor for Heroism in World War II: Links work to obtain 1 million signatures to send to Congress

- * Rosa Parks Statue to be Placed in Statuary Hall, U. S. Capitol: Links attend signing of historic bill H.R. 4145 authorizing a stature of civil rights icon to be placed in ceremony

- * General Motors and Safe Kids Partnership: Program designed to help families practice vehicle safety.

The Arts

The program envisioned for The Arts had its basic guidelines drafted by Link Margaret Hough when the Arts Facet was established at the 14th National Assembly in Nassau 1964. It was determined that there was a desperate need for private arts patrons to support creative artists of African descent. Over the past forty-two years, The Links, Incorporated have established a strong and rich history in support of the performing and visual arts. They have provided scholarships for talented individuals, sponsored quality programs for showcasing emerging talent as well as established artists, through many on-going programs and projects for their respective communities.

The Links, Incorporated are at the forefront of organizational advocacy for the preservation of our African American cultural heritage. Outstanding local and national projects have made the name "Links" synonymous with excellence in arts activities, which have included conducting arts camps in the southern states, showcasing artistically talented individuals, and making financial contributions to major art museum exhibitions. The Arts Facet is in the process of establishing criteria for and securing financial resources for new exhibitions and increased opportunities to integrate the African American arts into the mainstream art

culture. Priority has been given to promote African American Art identified from the four geographical areas. Private and governmental sources will be tapped for funding to develop educational programs that will create and develop an audience for and promote the acceptance and appreciation of world cultures.

On the occasion of The Links, Incorporated's 60th Anniversary, they showcased the New York premiere of "Game Play: For Flute, Viola, Cello and Harp, composed by T. J. Anderson, distinguished African American Composer. The Ritz Chamber Players, a widely acclaimed African American chamber music ensemble performed this work at the Lincoln Center in New York City on Sunday, May 14th in a special Mother's Day concert.

Services to Youth

In 1958, at the 10th National Assembly in New York City, The Links, Incorporated committed itself to a search for "academically talented and/or gifted youth" as the major goal of a new National program. During the period of 1958-1962, operating under the "Educating for Democracy" theme, more than 2,000 gifted youth were discovered. At the 1962 Assembly in French Lick, Indiana, the membership of voted to continue and expand the National program focusing on youth.

The Services to Youth facet has evolved to incorporate a variety of efforts aimed toward African American youth and families. The mission of the Services to Youth facet is to provide a range of innovative, substantive and sustainable Pre-K-16 programming that contributes proven results to key educational and/or social/community issues.

Educational target areas include: literature, SAT preparation and test-taking skills, computer-assisted instruction, and tutoring and career awareness. Social/Community target areas include: teenage pregnancy, juvenile crime and delinquency, alcohol and substance abuse, mental and emotional illness, breakdown of the family and incarceration rates among African American males.

Historically, a highlight of the Services to Youth facet, is the leadership The Links, Incorporated has shown in the fight against drug and alcohol abuse. Through a grant received from the National Institute of Drug Abuse, National and Area leaders participated in program development workshops at the Chapter, Area and National levels to train youth on drug and alcohol abuse prevention.

Project LEAD: High Expectations, was one of these programs designed to increase levels of awareness regarding drug and alcohol abuse as well as promote self-concept development. Chapters partnered with other community groups to disseminate these programs. Project LEAD: High Expectations continues as a signature program of the Services to Youth facet.

Through the Services to Youth facet, The Links, Incorporated is committed to maintaining a strong leadership role in addressing the critical issues of public education. Key areas of concern include: the digital divide, reduced enrollment of African American males in post secondary education, and leveraging the No Child Left Behind Legislation to improve student performance.

About The Links Foundation, Incorporated

The Links Foundation, Incorporated is the philanthropic program arm of The Links, Incorporated, an organization of professional women of color located throughout the United States, the Bahamas, Germany and South Africa. Under Foundation guidelines, grants are made to support the four program facets of the Links, Inc., which include Services to Youth, the Arts, International Trends and Services and National Trends and Services.

The Links, Incorporated has had a long tradition of promoting and engaging in educational, civic and inter-cultural activities in order to enrich the lives of members of the larger community. The Foundation was established in 1979 to enhance and expand the philanthropic endeavors of The Links, Inc. The Foundation provides grants to innovative programs that address problems to be solved, or opportunities to be seized that are of regional, national or international significance. The Foundation seeks proposals that provide creative responses to the changing needs in the general fields of health, education, social services, cultural and international affairs that are beneficial to communities of African descent.

The Foundation is a non-profit corporation operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

For a printer friendly PDF, click [here](#).

Return to Events Page [here](#)