

February 2012

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Program for Strong African
American Marriages (ProSAAM)
University of Georgia
Boyd GSRC, Room 552
Athens, GA 30602
Phone: (706) 542-7015
Fax: (706) 542-6064
Email: prosaam@uga.edu
<http://www.uga.edu/prosaam>

ProSAAM and You

So, what's new?

*Updates from Dr. Tera R. Hurt,
Assistant Research Scientist*

I hope this newsletter finds you doing well and that you are preparing for spring to arrive! In the project offices, we are definitely winding down. Most of the research team has moved on to embark upon new professional and personal opportunities. The remainder of the team will transition off of the project in late spring and early summer. We'll still be sure to stay in contact with you by email and through our website. Please ensure we have your correct information on file. As our grant funds will have depleted, we will primarily use electronic means of communication in the future.

The administrative team, however, is still at work. For years to come, we will continue to analyze the information that we have collected from you. Towards this goal, on occasion, we may contact you to ask you some follow-up questions and or find out if you would be willing to take part in a follow-up study, pending receipt of future grant money. This is another reason we hope you'll be sure to keep your contact information updated with us.

We are currently working on a number of different manuscripts focused on couples and youth. Our goal is to deliver high-quality presentations at national conferences, publish our findings in high-impact journals, and hopefully shape the discourse on African American marriages in the policy and research arena. This program has received national attention, and many stakeholders await to learn of our results, including Jet Magazine. Some of our publications are already posted on our project website, including journal articles, the prayer journal, and the ProSAAM curriculum. Have you seen them? Visit the Publications link on our site for more information.

The bottom line is we couldn't have completed this process without you. We are forever grateful for your support of the program. We intend to keep you in the loop on various products as we move forward in this journey.

Reflections from project facilitators

*Reflections from Mr. Milton E.
Brown*

Everyone wants to do something fantastic and make a difference in the world. Some of us get that

opportunity earlier than others. I have been fortunate to experience this magnificent feeling as a facilitator.

The techniques that I learned coupled with my life experiences enabled me to relate to the multitude of issues families were facing. I knew many trials and tribulations would make me wiser. However, what I did not know is how these experiences could benefit others.

I know I made a positive impact in the lives of the families I saw. They never wanted our sessions to end and neither did I. They longed for a platform to be enlightened, heard, and understood. I witnessed remarkable transformations after each session. Knowing that "I" made a difference in someone's life was very gratifying. My goal now is to continue to share what I have learned,... and practice what I preach! Thank you to the program!

Reflections from Rev. and Dr. Komi and Tiffany Aholou

One of the greatest benefits of serving as facilitators for Komi and me was actually engaging with the different couples. As newlyweds, facilitating the sessions helped us realize that challenges in marriage are inevitable but that success in marriage is achievable for those who are willing to put in the work. This was evidenced by the participation of couples of varying lengths, from premarital to the golden years of matrimony

and even those on the brink of divorce. All of these couples had one common goal--a commitment to strengthen and enhance their union. Their pledge to each other and to the program affirmed to Komi and me the importance of marital enrichment, remaining open to learning new skills, and gleaning wisdom from other couple's experiences.

Meaning of Marriage Among Black Men

Highlighting successes from all too silent voices

In 2011, a small sample of men from the ProSAAM project took part in a study on the meaning of marriage. One thing is for sure, these men had wonderful things to share about their wives and how marriage has blessed their lives. The article is titled, "Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Meaning of Marriage Among Black Men." The article is significant in its focus on the meaning of marriage from the perspective of Black men, whose voices are rarely captured in the marital literature.

The men highlighted how marriage provided them with secure emotional support, a lifelong commitment, enhanced life success, and a secure attachment. The men spoke about the role of faith in their marriage, as well as how marriage requires continuous give and take. Lastly, the men reflected on how marriage has changed in their lifetime. Personally, many of the men noted how their respect for marriage has deepened over time.

Considering changes in society, the men provided reasons for the many changes in marriage today. These results will be published in a future issue of the Journal of Family Issues, one of the premiere publication outlets in the field. Once we receive clearance from the journal outlet to publicize the paper, we will post a copy of the article on the project website under Publications.

Marriage Resources

Every marriage has its season. Reach out for support when the storm comes your way.

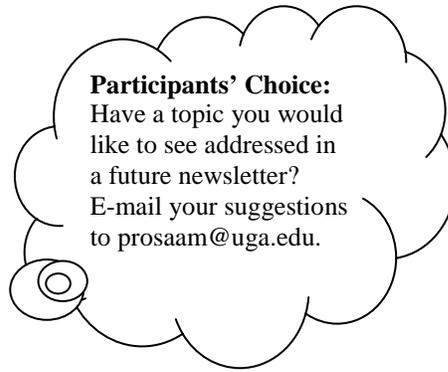
We recognize that challenges in marriage are inevitable. Sometimes, a couple could benefit from a little encouragement, mentorship, or guidance to help overcome such difficulties in their unions. For this reason, we maintain a list of resources on our website that are always available to you. Simply log onto our project website and follow the link For Enrolled Participants.

As you come across particularly useful and inspiring resources to strengthen marriages, please let us know so that we can add them to the website and share the good word with others.

Help Us to Keep in Touch

Please update your contact information.

Have you recently moved or made changes in your contact information? Please send us your new information by logging onto our website and follow the Enrolled Participants link and complete the form for updating participant information and additional contacts. You may also contact us via e-mail at prosaam@uga.edu or via phone at (706) 542-7015 with your information. Thanks for helping us to keep in touch with you!



In Memoriam

We would like to acknowledge and extend our deepest sympathy to the spouses and families of our participants who have passed away in recent months. We appreciate the precious time they shared with us. Their impact on African American families through their participation in the program is one of the many ways that their legacy will live on.