

# SYMPOSIUM 2008: THE EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING OF BAEO

PARENTAL CHOICE: THE VOICE OF OUR FUTURE

FEBRUARY 27–MARCH 1, 2008

SHERATON NEW ORLEANS

NEW ORLEANS, LA



**INFORM INSPIRE  
EMPOWER**

# INTRODUCTION

**Symposium 2008** brought together more than 600 parental choice supporters from coast to coast in New Orleans, LA, to engage in conversations and networking opportunities to continue the fight for quality educational options for Black children. Parental Choice: The Voice of Our Future was this year's symposium theme. Parental choice supporters spent two days (Feb. 28-29) focusing on how to inspire, inform and empower parents, students, educators, elected officials, emerging leaders, clergy, and donors as the struggle continues to improve educational options nationwide.

Participants' activities included the following: tours at some of Louisiana's high quality private and charter schools; a town hall meeting with Gov. Bobby Jindal; workshops on leadership, mobilization, quality educational options and academic excellence; volunteering at a neighborhood clean-up; and the grand finale, the Symposium's annual Chairman's Dinner.

We designed a new layout for this year's Symposium Documentation Report. Our new format highlights the different sessions and includes reactions from BAEO supporters, friends, donors and members. It is our hope that this new format illustrates the empowerment of participants that occurred at the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Black Alliance for Educational Options. So, tell us what you think. Send your feedback to [dmmcgriff@aol.com](mailto:dmmcgriff@aol.com).

**Mark your calendars for Symposium 2009: March 4-7, in Jersey City, NJ at the Hyatt Regency Jersey City Hotel on the Hudson River.**

In the Struggle,



Howard Fuller  
Chair, National Board of  
Directors



Deborah M. McGriff  
Chair,  
Symposium Planning Committee



Gerard Robinson  
President

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1. Dr. Deborah McGriff, *Chair, BAEQ Symposium Planning Committee*
2. Black Notes Jazz Ensemble
3. Chanda Smith, *Minnesota Mobilization Site*
4. PA State Representative Dwight Evans, *Member, Board of Directors*
5. Diane Davis, *Yoga & Pilates Instructor*
6. LA State Senator Ann Duplessis
7. LA State Representative Austin Badon
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11. Careerbuilder Drama Group
12. KIPP Orchestra
13. Kevin Chavous, *Treasurer, BAEQ Board of Directors* and Bill Oberndorf, *Chairman, Board of the Alliance for School Choice*
14. Andrea Thomas Reynolds, *Edison Schools* and Leslie Talbot, *Moderator*



## BAILEY AND SULLIVAN LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

The Bailey and Sullivan Leadership Institute strand focused on helping participants learn effective ways to raise money in their communities, understand the role of school support organizations and learn strategies to create and retain highly-qualified school personnel.

*“The nine-step process for recruitment and staff selection was helpful.”*  
C. Gordon, THE SCHOOL THAT LEADERSHIP BUILT



*“The session reinforced what I had learned from other conferences...but today I am finally making the connection.”*  
Carolyn Myer – RAISING MONEY IN THE COMMUNITY

*“Excellent information [and] outstanding presentations, especially in regards to the Milwaukee Renaissance model.”*  
C. Collier-Good - QUEST: A SCHOOL SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

*“The presenters framed their presentations based on the attendees’ expectations. The ideas for recruitment and retention of excellent employees were the most helpful for returning home.”*  
J. Lewis – The SCHOOL THAT LEADERSHIP BUILT

## MOBILIZATION

The Mobilization Strand focused on various strategies and methods to connect with local religious groups, bridge the political party divide and implement a successful rally, in the struggle to protect, expand and enact legislation for parental choice programs.

*"The information I received will help me in the future to plan a successful rally."*

Shannon Wilder – PLANNING AND EXECUTING A SUCCESSFUL RALLY

*"It was a top-notch panel that raised and addressed many issues!"* Chad Aldis – UNDERSTANDING THE TRUTHS ABOUT PARENTAL CHOICE (FACTS VS. MYTH)

*"It was extremely beneficial to hear viewpoints from a student, parent, educator, and policy activist regarding parental choice."*

Toya Tucker – EXPANDING, IMPACTING AND PROTECTING PARENTAL CHOICE



*"This workshop empowered me and provided ways to support BAE0 in future rally efforts"*

Gina Greggs – PLANNING AND EXECUTING A SUCCESSFUL RALLY

*"The presenters provided very useful information on how to plan an effective rally."*

Joe Casey – PLANNING AND EXECUTING A SUCCESSFUL RALLY

*"This session prepared me to continue fighting for educational options for my daughter and all children."* Darcelle Caldwell – DIALOGUE ON UNDERSTANDING THE TRUTHS ABOUT PARENTAL CHOICE (FACTS VS. MYTH)



## QUALITY EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

A Symposium tradition continued as more than 100 participants toured high quality schools in New Orleans. Participants took home ideas, solutions and recommendations from the following schools:

Schools	School Leaders	Phone/e-mail
Andrew H. Wilson Charter School	Sheila Thomas	504.373.6274 / sheilathomas@cox.net
Dr. Martin Luther King Charter School Jr for Science & Technology	Doris Hicks	504.940.2243 / dorishicks@gmail.com
Fannie C. Williams Elementary School	Kelly Batiste	504.373.6228 / kelly.batiste@rsdla.net
KIPP McDonogh 15 School for the Creative Arts	Jonathan Bertsch	504.566.1706 / hcampbell@mcdonogh
Xavier University Preparatory School	Sister Eileen Sullivan	504.899.6061 / sullivannei@yahoo.com



## EXCELLENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The Excellent Academic Achievement strand provided professional development workshops designed specifically for educators working in charter and private schools that receive Title II funds for professional development. Several schools used Title II funds to support the attendance of approximately 150 teachers and administrators at this year's Symposium.

*"The empowerment that CEO provides for their youth has impressed me to the utmost. They [CEO staff] provide youth with a vision by empowering them to succeed."*

Nancy Gorden – PROJECT HIGHER EDUCATION: GETTING MORE BLACK STUDENTS TO COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

*"I will take home new ways to develop the minds of my students and apply different intelligences in the classroom to involve them."* Sharon Green  
– 21ST CENTURY CURRICULUM

*"I like what College Summit is doing with the students in high school."* Robert Bryant  
– PROJECT HIGHER EDUCATION: GETTING MORE BLACK STUDENTS TO COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

*"As a pastor and doctor, I want to make an impact in the lives of young people—this session met my expectations."*  
Trebreh Baaletth – HIP-HOP PROJECT

# CHAIRMAN'S DINNER:

## IF THERE IS NO STRUGGLE, THERE IS NO PROGRESS

Each year during the Chairman's Dinner, a special individual is recognized for their support and commitment to BAEO. Last year, BAEO honored Pennsylvania State Representative Dwight Evans. Previous honorees have included John Walton (posthumously), a true champion for parental choice, and Former US Secretary of Education Rod Paige.

This year, special honors went to Bill Oberndorf, Chairman of the Board of the Alliance for School Choice and Advocate for School Choice. "Bill is a strong friend and supporter of BAEO," said Board Chair Dr. Howard Fuller. "His consistent and continued friendship has made a huge difference for the families and children that our organization was created to serve."



*"Señor Howard Fuller blew my socks off with his dynamic speech. God has him in the right place to lead this movement that includes every parent with K-12 children who want the best educational opportunities for their children too!"*

- Rudy Hernandez

*"I realized I can impact the lives of children by getting more involved physically and financially with BAEO."* - Alkinee Jackson

*"The two young ladies that introduced the Board Chair were awesome. Fuller's speech was above anything I can describe. It was better than excellent."* - Dillard Stone

### **The following is an excerpt from Ashley Beckford's essay entitled, The Trip of a Lifetime.**

The last name that was called was mine. I was about to experience one of the greatest things of my senior year... I was chosen as one of the students to participate in the 2008 BAEO Symposium.

I got to participate in a life-changing event. For the past three years I have been a part of the Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO) and each year there is a Symposium. Each Symposium seems to out-do the one the year before it. This year was no exception. The theme this year was Parental Choice: The Voice of Our Future. I got to do two great things — be a presenter (Expanding, Impacting and Protecting Parental Choice session) and introduce Dr. Howard Fuller, BAEO's national board chair, at this year's Symposium. I got a chance to tell them about the huge fight that I got to partake in by being a part of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. I told them of the spectacular protest that we participated in each year. I flashed back to the first year when we wrote letters and went to Madison, and my sophomore year when we held a silent protest in the State Capitol rotunda.

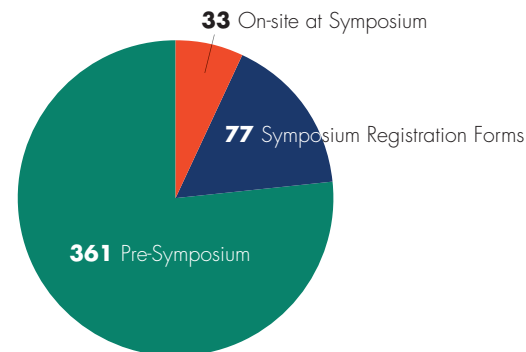
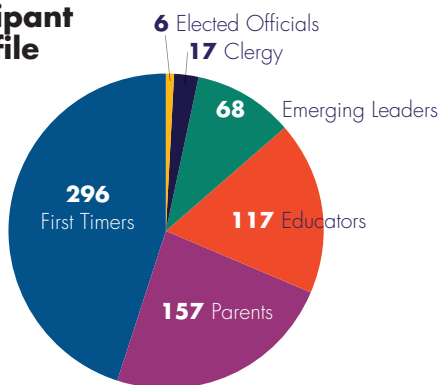
One other great experience was being able to introduce Dr. Fuller. In addition to being the BAEO national chair he is also the Board Chair of CEO (Clergy for Educational Options) Leadership Academy. Jasmine Davis, my peer, got to experience this with me. Once we were done, I realized that this would be my last Symposium as Ashley Beckford the high school student. The next Symposium I will be in college. BAEO has been a very significant part of my high school experience and this introduction gave me the chance to give back to a person who was very helpful to me during this time.

To conclude, Symposium 2008 was one of the greatest things that I have experienced. I had fun, met new people, and opened my eyes to a whole new place. New Orleans was a wonder in its own. I will add that to one of my top favorite places. This is my senior year and the BAEO Symposium 2008 will always be one of my best memories from this special time in my life.

# PARTICIPANT PROFILE AND MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

Support BAEO's mission to expand, protect and enact legislation for parental choice programs for Black children and families. Join, renew or upgrade your membership today. Visit [www.baeo.org](http://www.baeo.org) and download a membership application.

**Participant Profile**



**Membership Growth**

New, Renewed and/or Upgraded Memberships

*"I wanted to take a minute to congratulate you on a very well planned Symposium 2008. I am glad I was able to attend my first one, but not my last! I was overly impressed with the parents and young leaders for their courtesy & commitment to the cause in improving education opportunities for African American and other minority K-12 students." - Rudy Hernandez, a first timer*

## NINE TIME REPEATERS

Mashea Ashton  
W. Raymond Bryant  
Zakiya Courtney  
Dwight Evans  
Howard Fuller

K. Miata Fuller  
Deborah McGriff  
Angelete Melhado  
Annie Oliver  
Selina Wellington

## EIGHT TIME REPEATERS

Cheryl Brown  
Anthony Courtney  
Gail Foster  
Kelli Fuller  
Francine Fulton  
Felice Green  
Sherry Hopkins  
Evelyn Jones  
Jacqueline Joyner Cissell

John McVicker  
Marilynn McVicker  
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Lawrence Patrick, III  
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Virginia Walden Ford

## SEVEN TIME REPEATERS

Basimah Abdullah  
Willie Brezell  
Margaret Briggs-Kenney  
Margaret Ekam  
Rufus Ellis  
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Gail Hawkins-Bush  
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Imani Humphrey  
Sharmain Matlock-Turner  
Shree' Medlock

John Morris  
Donnamaria Parker  
June Perry  
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Thomas Stewart  
Ken & Joyce Sullivan  
Kenneth Sullivan  
Leslie Talbot  
Kimberly Turner  
Johnathan Williams

## SIX TIME REPEATERS

Yvonne Ali  
Tammy Allen  
Aretta Anderson  
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Tracy McDaniel  
Monique Miller  
Adrian Morgan  
DeAmo Murphy  
Holly Hasina Murphy  
Joseph Patrick  
Teresa Price  
M. Saungkatahu Richey  
Patricia Sadler  
John Skeif  
Dorothy Smith  
Hal Smith  
Sherry Street  
Kent Strong  
Christopher Sullivan  
Tasha Tillman  
Willie Timmons  
Dorothy Travis  
Donyale Whitmore

† deceased

*"Most hearty congratulations for the many successes of Symposium 2008! Ultimately, your hard work created a special time and place for networking, learning and moving forward."*  
- Bob Pavlik, a five time repeater

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Advance the mission of BAEO by financially supporting Symposium 2009  
the 9th annual BAEO meeting, on March 4-7, 2009,  
at the Hyatt Regency Jersey City Hotel on the Hudson River in Jersey City, NJ.

BAEO is actively seeking corporate, group and individual partners to support  
the parental choice movement by making a tax-deductible contribution to Symposium 2009.

Your tax-deductible contribution helps to:

- introduce best practices to teachers,
- strengthen emerging leaders, and
- introduce working class families to the parental choice movement.

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Contact Tycely Williams at [tycely@baeo.org](mailto:tycely@baeo.org) or  
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**baeo**  
Black Alliance for Educational Options  
9<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING

# Ninth Annual Symposium

**March 4-7, 2009**

Hyatt Regency Jersey City Hotel on the Hudson

Hosted by Greater New York and Newark Friends of BAEO



## BAEO MISSION

**The Black Alliance for Educational Options actively supports parental choice to empower families and increase quality educational options for Black children.**

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Black Alliance for Educational Options

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