

# NAAACP leader pushes environment of change

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Members of the Greensburg/Jeanette branch of the NAAACP were encouraged to foster an environment of change Saturday during the group's 46th annual human rights banquet.

Tim Stevens, president of the NAAACP's Pittsburgh branch and a speaker at the banquet, related a concept he once heard in a sermon to the roughly 300 people who attended.

"I want to work on creating thermostats for change," Stevens said. "There are thermometers and thermostats. You can either tell the temperature or set it. Everyone has a choice. I choose to alter the environment in which I live personally."

The panel of guest speakers at the Four Points Sheraton near Greensburg consisted of Doris Carson-Williams, president of the African American Chamber of Commerce in Pittsburgh; Timothy H. Johnson, vice president of National City Bank of Pittsburgh; and Stevens. Each spoke on the banquet theme "Lead-

ership in the New Millennium."

Carson-Williams said prior to her presentation that all of a person's skills and talents must be put together in order to become a leader.

Johnson focused on securing the financial future of families including wealth creation and a formula for financial security.

Stevens, who was recently re-elected to his fourth term as branch president, was focused on vision and commitment.

"Part of leadership is dealing with dynamics. There are ups and downs in life and, in spite of the (obstacles), you must still get to your destination," Stevens said.

He also discussed plans for youth involvement in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Stevens is working to incorporate new youth and leadership into the individual chapters by creating vice chairperson positions meant for youth.

"One thing we can not afford to do is be paralyzed by circumstances. We can't afford to be immobilized by negative situations. We need to be energized," Stevens said.

The Greensburg/Jeanette branch was chartered in 1955 and covers central Westmoreland County. Ruth Tolbert, president, said the branch tries to maintain the motto, "Working to bring the community together."

She said this is achieved, in part, through working with the law enforcement community to establish better relationships with the minority community, sponsoring youth programs, political debates, events promoting cultural diversity and educating the community about African American culture.

"The human rights banquet is a means of bringing the community, corporations and individuals together to celebrate a common cause," Tolbert said. "This way we are all on the same page working toward social justice, quality and fairness."

The evening also offered opportunities for a youth choir sponsored by the Greensburg/Jeanette branch to perform and for awards to be presented.

Anyone interested in obtaining a membership application should contact the branch at (724) 838-9146.