

# NAACP

“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in healthcare is the most shocking and inhumane.” Martin Luther King jr.

## African American Professionals Speak

On December 10, Diane Marshall RN, spoke to the Young Ladies of Purpose (YLOP) at Westport jr. high. YLOP groups are run by Springfield Public Schools to inspire and encourage African American jr. high girls. Future speakers will include Diane, Tehesha Stegall Nurse Practitioner and Kuleya Bruce a local architect. Similar groups are run for the young men. We hope to be able to provide inspiration and encouragement for the young men also.

## Register to Vote!

The Greene County Clerk's Office is the place to get informed about voter registration, polling places and ID required. The number for the Clerk's Office is (417)868-4060. The website is [greenecountymo.gov](http://greenecountymo.gov)

Get registered, get informed, vote.

## Meet Janet Ofori-Yeboah Nurse Practitioner

*Tell us about your background and education.* I grew up in Ghana, one of 8 siblings. My father had a good job with a company called the “Cocoa Research Institute”. The



company had a high quality private school that we were able to attend as children. My family was “blended”, with my siblings all under one roof. My father was very focused on education and always said, “knowledge is power”. My mother was a community health nurse and so was my stepmother. I have a sibling who lives in NY, one who has an MBA and works for the ports and harbor authority in Ghana. One sister has a Masters of Public Health and works for the National Health Care Service, two sisters who are teachers and one who has a

diploma in agriculture and does some consulting. We had one sibling pass away.

*What did you study in college and how did you find nursing?* My original plan was to study law but I had not been serious enough in high school and hadn't scored high enough on my final exams to get in to the program I wanted.

## Senate Report Looks at Voter Suppression

Voter suppression targeting African Americans is not new. Recent techniques have included:

- Limiting voter registration access by reducing numbers of polling sites in majority black areas.
- Requiring photo ID.
- Shortened early voting timelines.

In our last election the Senate Intelligence Committee found Russian efforts online to exacerbate existing racial tensions and undermine our process. Fake social media accounts attempted to create confusion on voting regulations, dampen voter enthusiasm for Hillary Clinton, decrease voter turnout and encourage voters to vote for third party candidates in a concerted and ongoing effort to help their preferred candidate, Donald Trump.

A sharp decrease in African American voter turnout in 2016 may have had many factors. 66.2% of African Americans voted in 2012 and that declined to 59.4% in 2016. Wisconsin, which Trump won by about 10,000 votes, saw the biggest drop in African American voter turnout from 73% to 45%.

So I studied Drama and theater arts at the University of Ghana and ended up teaching Language Arts at the school I had attended as a child. I joined my husband in Canada where he was going to graduate school. In Canada I worked as a housekeeper in hotels but in time got a job as a home support worker which sparked my interest in being a nurse. We became naturalized Canadian citizens and then I started nursing school. My husband got a job at Southwest Baptist University (SBU) in '97 so I was able to continue nursing school there. I got my Associates Degree in Nursing through SBU/Mercy and then my Bachelors Degree in Nursing at Mercy. While going to nursing school I had four children under 4 years old and worked nights. My husband was a great help during that time. I worked 14 years on the medical/surgical floor and 9 years in the ER at Citizens Memorial Hospital (CMH) before becoming a nurse practitioner. I earned my Masters Degree of Nursing from MSU. *Tell us about your family?* My husband is a professor at SBU and teaches Political Science. Because of that, myself and our children have been able to attend college there, as we are dependents of an SBU employee. My oldest son, Manny, teaches middle school in Bolivar. David is studying psychology and communication and we have twins, Sylvia and George. Sylvia is majoring in Social Work and George is majoring in Biology.

*Have you experienced racism while you've been here and how so?* Really only a few times in my career, a few incidents in thousands of interactions. Mostly it was just rudeness. My co-workers and the doctors have been very supportive. Because I speak with an accent I have been told to "speak English". Mostly however, the racism has been subtle. I feel like I have to work harder because of my gender, color and background. *What are your goals for the future?* Perhaps in 10 years to earn my Doctors of Nursing Practice (DNP) Degree, teach and volunteer. My most important goal is to be a mentor for my children. *What advice do you have for young people?* You do not have to accept your circumstances if they are not satisfactory, keep an open mind and work hard for your goals. There is nothing like a failure to learn from, and then move on.