



The Building Community Institute

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E-Newsletter

"The Foundation"™

COMING SOON

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www.cliffontaulbert.com
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<http://thepowerofcommunity.blogspot.com>

Clifton L. Taulbert's
Monthly e-Video Series*:
Unleashing the Power of Community
please call: 888-388-6348

* Video Series is a year-long subscription based service, sent directly to your email.

IT'S A MATTER OF YOUR WILL

As most of you know, I grew up in the Mississippi Delta during the era of legal segregation. This era, was not designed to build productive caring citizens, oftentimes, it was just the opposite. However, because I found myself surrounded by a cadre of caring individuals, porch people from the 20th century, my life and the lives of countless thousands changed. Their "will" to ensure for me a future better than their lives made all the difference. The power of their "will" will not be forgotten, nor will the community that they built. Recently, I experienced a group of educators, parents and community leaders from South Bronx, who like my elders, looked beyond their reality and with vision and purpose set out to make sure that the youth within their lives had a better future. They understood the value of the K-12 Corridor (educating the young people within their lives) to the success of their neighborhood and to the society to which these young people would have a chance to build.

While the memories of Orlando and seventy top managers of the Social Security Administration was still on my mind, I stopped by Tulsa, spoke to my wife, repacked and headed off to White Plains, New York where I would meet, for the first time, this group of educators from South Bronx. I knew the reputation of that part of New York. South Bronx educators made the news in many ways and so did their schools. It was a tough part of New York. I wasn't sure what or whom I would encounter, but upon my arrival, Principal Gaskins of the Bronx Leadership Academy greeted me. The handshake was firm and I felt I was in the right place. Our brief conversation about the Academy and the success they were experiencing was heart-warming. I listened and took it all in stride. However, it was later on that evening, while their guest at dinner that I encountered the source of their success. I saw in his team a cadre of 21st century porch people, a diverse group of people who were being challenged to live beyond historical mental models—a group of people challenged to be intentionally unselfish and vision driven. Their school's fifteen-year journey clearly showed the impact of what can happen if the good "will" of the people is galvanized.

I am convinced that the education of our youth within the K-12 Corridor is key to the on-going success of this nation. From their ranks, our society builders will come. Yes, our children are the ones who must grow up and continue the legacy of greatness and goodness that was observed by the Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville who in the 1830's paid America a visit. Their roles in our future are too important to be left to chance. As my elders did and as the team from the Bronx Leadership Academy is doing, all of us at every level: Educators, business men and women, parents and community links, must allow our good "wills" to be galvanized to make sure that every youth recognizes their importance to the life of this planet. We cannot afford to sit back and wish for the best. Now is the time to step up and in the face of great challenge, make decisions to create "hope" in the most unlikely places. History tells us that we can do this! The key is CARING. When we CARE, acting to benefit others comes naturally. Surprisingly, this is also what I told the top managers of the Social Security Administration while in Orlando. They too were challenged to galvanize their "will" to lead so that others would want to follow. This is what educators are challenged to do within our K-12 corridor... as you teach, at any level, lead with care, so that others will want to follow.

Remember, a good community requires builders and becoming a builder is a matter of your will!

- Clifton L. Taulbert