

The "Wednesday Word"

October 6, 2021

"Beau"

A little over 8 years ago I moved into a house adjacent to Beau's house in an eastern New Orleans neighborhood. He had only moved there himself mere months earlier. Not long after moving in, my bride joined me and we befriended the many great neighbors around us including Beau. He quickly proved to be a really great neighbor who would look after our home when we were away, pick up packages, and let us know if he saw anything out of order. While he was repairing the fence between our properties I asked if he would be interested in a gate so that when my kids were in town they could use his pool and when he wished to use our deck there would be easy access. He said, "Man I was about to ask you the same thing!" We put in a gate. (Note: Recently Hurricane Ida knocked down that fence...we've debated about putting it back up.)

As the years went by, we became much closer. He married his longtime girlfriend and she soon joined us in the neighborhood. By now he had the spare keys to our house and front gate and they also had the password to our security system. You could not find a better neighbor than that! Involved in a number of civic and social organizations Beau always invites us to the organizations' events: Mardi Gras parties, cookouts, toy giveaways, fundraisers, and the like. Who needs a social calendar when you got Beau? Just this summer, these two next-door neighbor couples travelled to the Caribbean for a long overdue post-lockdown getaway. We had the best time as our travelling styles were completely compatible. We all wanted just to take it easy, and we did.

And then last Friday happened. Beau's bride called to tell me, "He's gone." Just days after returning home following a not uncommon surgical procedure, Beau had passed away. Shocked, shook, and in great disbelief (we had planned to watch football on Saturday), we attended to his wife while trying to process for ourselves what was happening. Like so many of you reading this now, there has been a seemingly unbelievable amount of death in these last two years. Certainly, COVID has been responsible for a great deal of these cases, but like Beau, not all of these were directly related to COVID. Or were they? The toll that this disease has taken will never be fully understood, but there can be no denying it's lasting deleterious effects.

The point in sharing all of this is two-fold. One; we have got to be vigilant in taking care of ourselves and others as it relates to COVID safety, physical health, and mental health. Check on one another and definitely

check on yourself. Two; I had not fully processed how good a friend Beau was until I learned that I would not get to watch the game with him, we would not be taking that next couples-trip, we were not going to hang out in our backyards again, and we were no longer able to do so many of the things we enjoyed doing. Good friends are a gift. Appreciate them while you can. I cannot get my brain (or my heart) around this loss. I guess I just miss my friend.

Stay well, stay safe, stay COVID smart, and continue to do good work,



AABHE Notes:

- We are looking for **New AABHE Board Members**. *Board Membership Eligibility: "...those who have demonstrated commitment to the mission of AABHE with active involvement in the life of the association. All nominees must be a member for at least two years."* For more info contact: Dr. Roland B. Smith, Jr., Chair, Governance and Nominations Committee: rbsmith@rice.edu
- Coming later this month and in early November...



The graphic is a promotional flyer for AABHE events. It features a dark red and yellow color scheme. On the left, there is a photo of a person at a laptop. The top right has the AABHE logo and the text 'AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF BLACKS IN HIGHER EDUCATION'. The main text on the right announces 'THE GREAT RESET: CAREER EMERGENCE BEYOND A PANDEMIC' on November 12, 2021, from 10am to 6pm EST. Below this, it describes the Career Expo as an immersive experience with panel discussions and workshops. A QR code and a 'REGISTER TODAY!' button are also present. On the left, a '2021 RESEARCH WEBINAR' is advertised for October 27 at 1:00 PM EST, focusing on 'ACCESS, ADVOCACY, & ADVANCEMENT'. It lists two distinguished presenters: Dr. Rhonda V. Sharpe and Dr. Fred A. Bonner, II, with their respective titles and affiliations. A QR code and a 'SCAN TO REGISTER' button are provided for the webinar. At the bottom, contact information for AABHE is listed.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF BLACKS IN HIGHER EDUCATION 

THE GREAT RESET:
CAREER EMERGENCE BEYOND A PANDEMIC
November 12, 2021
10am - 6pm EST

Join us for the AABHE Career Expo on Friday, Nov. 12 from 10am to 6pm EST. This is the first AABHE Career Expo, and we're excited to bring leaders, professionals, graduate students, and constituents together to learn, connect and engage.

This event is designed to be an immersive experience! The Career Expo will feature panel discussions, workshops, and opportunities to engage with educational institutions, career experts, and fellow attendees.

Join us to strategize your next professional development goals and career exploration.

#AABHEempower

REGISTER TODAY!

2021 RESEARCH WEBINAR
ACCESS, ADVOCACY, & ADVANCEMENT:
Using Data to Support the Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Narrative in Higher Education

OCT. 27 | 1:00PM EST

This research webinar is for any higher education professional interested in strategically advancing diversity in the areas of human resources, student and faculty recruitment, retention, academic affairs, public policy, and more.

DISTINGUISHED PRESENTERS:


Dr. Rhonda V. Sharpe
Founder & President of the Women's Institute for Science, Equity, and Race (WISER)


Dr. Fred A. Bonner, II
Professor, Endowed Chair, Founding Executive Director of the Minority Achievement, Creativity & High-Ability (MACH-III) at Prairie View A&M University

SCAN TO REGISTER

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