



IDA B. WELLS COMMEMORATIVE ART COMMITTEE

P.O. Box A3334
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60690-3334
773-382-6115 ♦ www.idabwellsmonument.org

For Immediate Release
Contact: Michelle Duster
773-382-6115

150th Birthday of Ida B. Wells Recognized With a Reception in Her Bronzeville Neighborhood Near the Site of the Future Monument to be Created in her Honor

(World-Renowned Sculptor Richard Hunt, Featured Guest)

OFFICERS

SANDRA YOUNG
Co-Chair

MICHELLE DUSTER
Co-Chair

ANN MCKENZIE
Secretary

JESSICA CAFFREY
Financial Secretary

MEMBERS

JULIE ELENA BROWN

DONALD L. DUSTER

NATHAN MASON

SHIRLEY J. NEWSOME

LEE PRATTER

ANTHONY ROGERS

LEROY SQUARE
(In Memoriam)

CHARIS D. TRIPPLET

CLAUDICE WARE

JOSEPH WILLIAMS

(July 20, 2012 - Chicago, IL) On Monday, July 16, 2012, The Ida B. Wells Commemorative Art Committee (IBWCAC) hosted an informal reception to celebrate the 150th birthday of Ida B. Wells. She was born a slave in Holly Springs, MS on July 16, 1862 and became an influential journalist, teacher, anti-lynching crusader, women's rights activist and civil rights pioneer. The Committee has commissioned world-renowned sculptor and Chicago native, Richard Hunt, to create a monument that will capture the life, times and work of Ida B. Wells. Wells lived, worked and raised a family in the Bronzeville neighborhood for over 30 years from 1894 until she passed on March 25, 1931.

The reception was held at the beautiful Oakwood Terrace Senior Building, 3750 S. Cottage Grove, in newly developed Oakwood Shores on the former site of the Ida B. Wells homes. There was an assortment of cheese, meat and fruit along with lemonade and birthday cake for the guests.

Mr. Hunt talked about how he was influenced by the Bronzeville neighborhood while growing up including taking advantage of opportunities at the Abraham Lincoln Center. He gave an overview of his vision for the 20-foot monument that will include three different sections that will focus on different concentrations of work Ida B. Wells was involved in. Over 80 business, civic and political leaders, as well as local residents and interested supporters enjoyed updates and a tour of the site at 37th & Langley where the monument will be installed. The site is a short walk from the house Wells and her husband, Ferdinand L. Barnett, lived in on 3624 S. King Drive which has a landmark status.

Fourth Ward Alderman William D. Burns gave remarks where he explained how Ida B. Wells tried to build bridges between the middle class and the more working class people in the Bronzeville neighborhood. He stressed how she led the example of how to treat our neighbors as ourselves. CHA Commissioner Sandra Young, who also lived in the Ida B. Wells homes, mentioned that even though the homes are no longer there, the great work that Ida B. Wells did should be remembered. Jessica Caffrey, Financial Secretary for IBWCAC said that the estimated cost of the monument is \$300,000 and so far almost \$50,000 has been raised.

With this project, Chicago will join the very few U.S. cities that honor through monumental sculpture an African-American woman. Once installed, the monument will be donated by IBWCAC to the City of Chicago's Public Art Collection.

IBWCAC is composed of representatives of former Ida B. Wells public housing resident leadership, UJIMA, Inc., the office of Fourth Ward Alderman Will Burns, The Habitat Company, Chicago Housing Authority, North Kenwood-Oakland Conservation Community Council, the Oakwood Shores Development Team (The Community Builders and Granite Development Corporation), Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI), City of Chicago Department of Housing and Economic Development, and Ida B. Wells' family members.

To learn more about the project and download a donation form please call 773-382-6115 or visit www.idabwellsmonument.org. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.