

A MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLISHER

The Historic Journey

"YES WE CAN"

With deep honor and humility, I present "*The Historic Journey, Yes We Can!*" –Vibrant lessons of instruction which illuminate the African and African American experience in America and the world. Through comprehensive teaching guides and stimulating instructional lessons constructed by master classroom teachers and educational consultants throughout this nation, some of the richest African and African American contributions to America and humanity are presented in "*The Historic Journey, Yes We Can!*" classroom teaching guide.

The inspiration for this project came after a request from Dr. Tom Benjamin, Jr. a pastor in Indianapolis, who wanted a video presentation shown to his congregation that would capture a moment in time when the United States of America elected its first African American president.

As I began working on this project, I felt the presence of the Divine Creator and the spirits of our ancestors who watched as I brought their stories to life again. Their stories would be shared with people of all ages who may have lived through earlier turbulent times when we were not even allowed to vote and others who may be unfamiliar with the larger historical narratives that led to Barack Hussein Obama becoming President of the United States of America.

The reaction of people who viewed the video was overwhelmingly positive and totally unexpected. Equally unexpected was the fact that educators from across the country, who saw the DVD at the National Council on Educating Black Children and the National Alliance of Black School Educators, asked that a simple activity guide be created to accompany the video. Since that time,

the collective efforts of many caring and supportive members of the community has grown into a comprehensive teacher's curriculum framework guide and interactive website. Both mediums trace the footsteps of ancient Africans, who constructed the steps of pyramids, to the time when enslaved Africans, with shackled ankles, left their footprints along the African coastline, until today when one of their descendants ascended the steps of the White House as President. This curriculum resource provides insight into the video clips and its footage which explores the story of African Americans in the history of the United States.

This historical journey and the subsequent victory that President Obama lives is not his own; countless others came before him and paid a price for his success and because of him, many young people believe that they can do things they never dreamed of before. The nation owes a debt of gratitude to both the known and unsung heroes of the past who risked or gave up their lives to bring newly founded justice to our nation. Some may think the story has come to an end and that President Obama's election means we no longer need to address the moral dilemma of the silent and subtle racism that our nation still faces. As such, this DVD and Guide of *The Historic Journey, "Yes We Can"* provides a bridge for people from all ethnicities to begin to openly dialogue about mutual concerns that will make us all better people and citizens. It is my energized hope that educators, students and American communities will become knowledgeable of and enlightened by the historic journey of a people from the shores of Africa to the Americas that led to the election of the first African American President of the United States of America.

Garry D. Holland

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