

Youths create Heritage Expo

By LIZA ROCHE
STAFF WRITER

It's 1 p.m. Thursday and that means downtime for Maywood resident Jackie Bosby and her volunteers.

Just an hour before, hundreds of children were walking through Hillside's Holiday Inn, either waiting for or finishing up a tour of the Black Youth Heritage Expo, put on by Bosby's company, JPN. The exposition ran from Feb. 22 through Thursday.

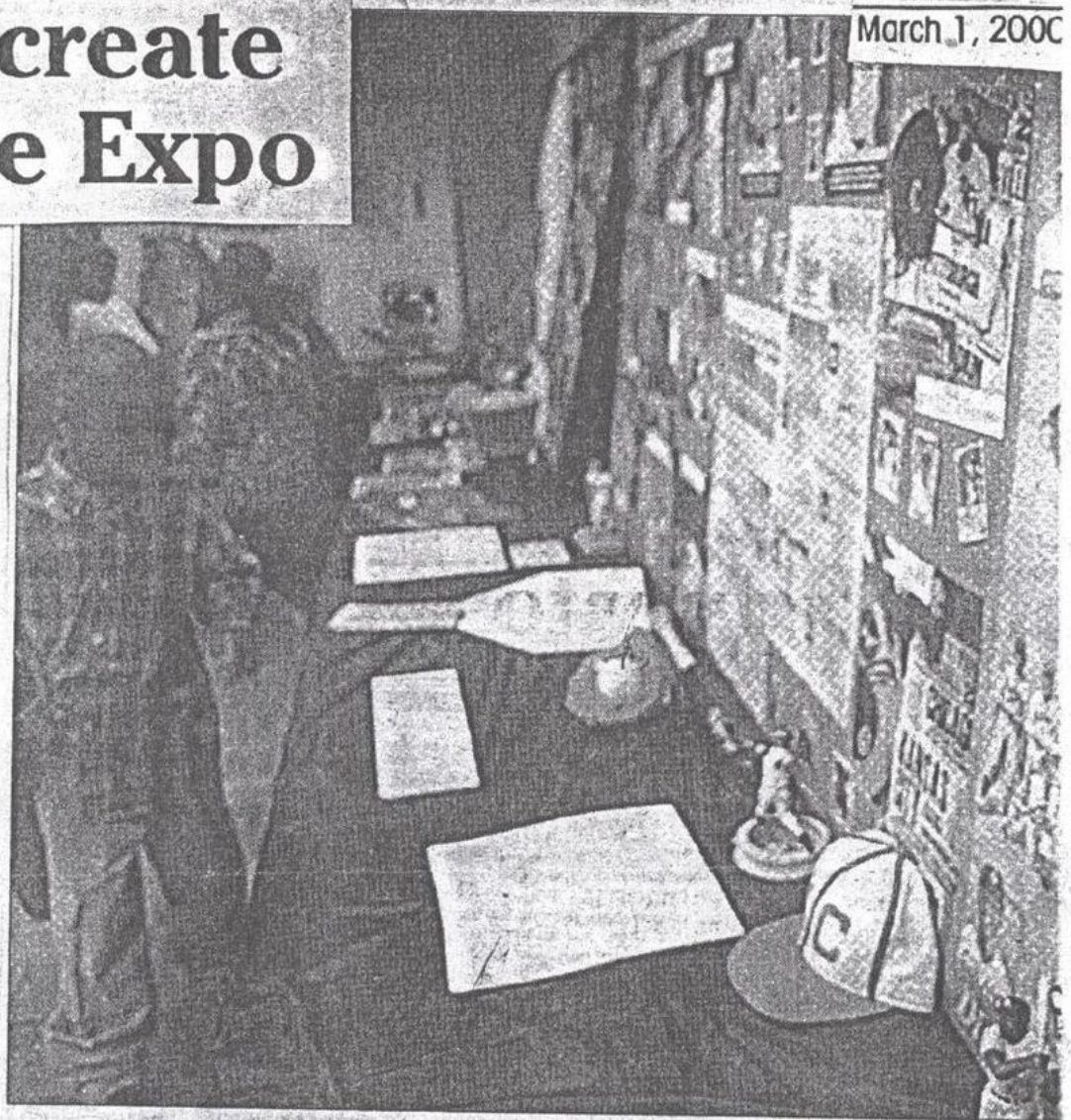
The free three-day event, which featured displays and speakers related to African-American history, is a dream thrust into reality for Bosby and her husband, Michael. The couple, having produced their seventh annual expo, wanted to create a Black History Month event for children that could also be created by children.

"My purpose in putting this together was not only to educate the public, but to let the youth be part of it," Jackie Bosby said.

Children are encouraged to provide displays on important black events or historical figures. High school students volunteer to act as tour guides for visiting classes of younger children. Bosby's own children volunteer in nearly every capacity.

This year, Victoria Carter, a student at Immaculate Heart of Mary High School in West-

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A presentation on the Negro Baseball League American heritage on display at the Holiday Inn was one of the many aspects of the African-

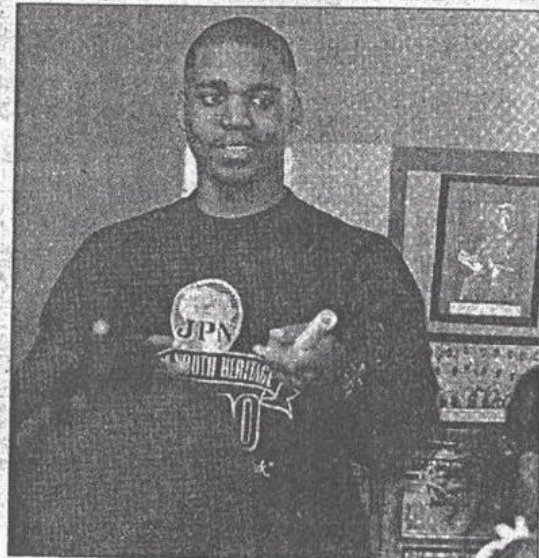
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chester, won the display competition for her presentation on the Bronzeville neighborhood of Chicago.

Bosby said the idea for the program began 10 years ago when she was working to help produce Chicago's Black Expo. The first Black Youth Heritage Expo was held in 1994 at Malcolm X College. This year, the program is planned to tour Detroit, New Orleans and Atlanta.

An estimated 2,100 children attended the Hillside expo over the three days.

"I've always felt that knowledge should be free," Bosby said. "If I can give knowledge to the kids, it is a 'no lose' situation."



Terence Sims, a senior at Proviso East leads students on tour of the Black Heritage Expo at the Holiday Inn.

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**JPN
Black Youth
Heritage
Expo**