



ITCOP E-News

Debra Powell-Wright & Pat McLean-RaShine

~ IN THE COMPANY OF POETS ~

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Taking Care of Our Bodies Taking Care of Our Selves

By Debra Powell-Wright

As with many other initiatives with a life span of one-month recognition, that highlights both the spirit of celebration as well as the need for attention, April is designated as Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). Across the country and across the world, the sexual assault of women and girls has increased to epidemic proportions. In response to this disturbing phenomenon, many individuals and organizations are doing tremendous work to support and help heal victims of such violent crimes against humanity. One such individual is Philly's own Aishah Shahidah Simmons.

Aishah is the producer, writer, and director of the recently completed, award-winning feature length documentary *NO!*. Through testimonies from survivors, commentaries from acclaimed scholars and community leaders, impacting archival footage, spirited music, dance, and performance poetry, the reality of rape, other forms of sexual violence, and healing in African-American communities are unveiled. *NO!* made its Philadelphia debut on the campus of Drexel University. From one who had the honor of witnessing this masterfully powerful film, the voices of women of color rang loud and clear, and an ugly truth is spoken. And that difficult conversation is one of the many discussions planned for Wisdom Word Women's fall conference, "From Womb to Womanhood." The conference will provide a place for the voices of women and girls to be heard. Not only will there be a safe place to discuss societal ills previously silenced due to the marginalized space inhabited by women and girls of color, "From Womb to Womanhood" will be a place to celebrate our best selves.

Mark your calendar—October 27-29, 2006—and invite a woman you love.

For more information, visit www.inthecompanyofpoets.com.

FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS GET LISTED!!!

In The Company of Poets would like to promote the work of female owned and/or operated businesses and service providers in the Philadelphia and surrounding areas. Our monthly newsletter, ITCOP E-News, includes essays on our previous performances, listings of our upcoming appearances, features on women in business, and listings of organizations that provide services by and for women and girls. We invite you to take advantage of this opportunity to network with artists, who may be interested in your entrepreneurial expertise. The listing is free, and limited to the newsletter's space requirements each month. Please send your name, business name, address, telephone number, website (if applicable), and email address to: ITCOPoets@aol.com.

You will be contacted at a later date to be spot-lighted as one of our 'Sistah's of the Month.' We look forward to hearing from you.

About In The Company of Poets

Since November 2000, In The Company of Poets has evolved from reciting original poetry at open mic events, to being invited to perform as an opening act for renowned performance artists. Their work has taken them from local special events to regional and national conferences; from facilitating writing workshops for youth, to staging and directing musical "choreopoems" featuring students from their poetry writing classes at Temple University's PASCEP Program (Pan African Studies Community Education Program). The duo has been widely acclaimed for their versatility, professionalism, and genuine sisterly love. They are In The Company of Poets, conscious and spirited warrior women telling stories of their wisdom who would be pleased to make your acquaintance.

The women who appear in the ITCOP E-News are writers, poets, performers, entrepreneurs and businesswomen. Their services reflect the continued strength and resilience that women possess.

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In The Company Of Poets will be performing at the Fourth Annual Delaware County Peace Festival on Saturday, May 13, 2006. Join us if you can. For info go to:

www.delcopeacecenter.org

Sistah of The Month



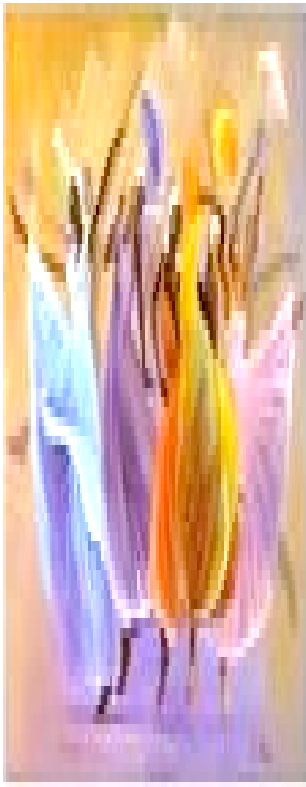
Terri N. Austin

Travel Consultant - Terri's 809 Posse Productions Travel

As you read about this Sistah of The Month, she will be bound for the Black Paris Tour with four sistah/friends at her side, including our very own Pat McLean-RaShine. Their flying out of the country together demonstrates how like-minded sistahs travel in similar circles. Terri, having already been a travel agent for more than 15 years, decided to establish her own venture as a result of hearing *In The Company of Poets* perform together for the first time several months before their formal debut in November 2000. Her love for all things Caribbean, especially reggae music, reminded her of the days when dub poetry—a significant literary form with its roots in the oral political and reggae culture of Jamaica—coincided with the Black Arts Movement in America.

Terri got the idea of coordinating a cruise featuring *In The Company of Poets* with renowned reggae artists—Freddie McGregor, Marcia Griffiths, Dean Fraser, and the then leading reggae backup band, The 809 Band. It was spoken word meets roots and jazz music. The first “Big Ship Sailing on The Ocean” cruise (named after a Freddie McGregor hit), sailed in 2000 and 2001, and **Terri's 809 Posse Productions Travel** was born.

Since then, Terri has established a reputation for putting together fantastic travel excursions that include more than arranging airfare and hotel. Her niche market has become ethnic travel, as well as history and cultural tours. A Barbados beach party, a pre-travel picnic, and an after travel picture party are among the events that she coordinates in conjunction with the travel experience. If you need a travel agent that has traveled the world, Terri is the one for you. She can be reached at 1-800-464-9602 or 215-849-0922.



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Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape
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Ph: (717) 728-9740
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www.pcar.org

Other Web sites:
www.teenpcar.com
www.menagainstsexualviolence.org
www.wherestheoutrage.org

 National Association of Women Writers
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