

# PRESSRELEASE

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## For Immediate Release

**Date:** February 6, 2004

## Essay & Art Contest in Honor of Black History Month

**Michigan City, IN** (February 6, 2004) – Michigan City students have an opportunity to win computers, YMCA memberships and savings bonds in essay and art contests that honor Black History Month.

The contests were initiated by an ad hoc committee of the Human Rights Commission and supported by these sponsors: the Michigan City Social Status of African-American Male Commission Anti-Tobacco Campaign, Michigan City Area Schools, Horizon Bank, the Michigan City YMCA, the News-Dispatch, and adsnet.com.

In 1915, historian Carter G. Woodson proposed a "Negro History Week" to honor the history and contributions of African Americans. Nine years later, his dream became a reality. Woodson chose the second week of February to pay tribute to the birthdays of two Americans that dramatically affected the lives of blacks: Abraham Lincoln (February 12<sup>th</sup>) and Fredrick Douglass (February 14<sup>th</sup>.) The week-long observance became Black History Month in 1976.

The essay contest is open to all middle school, junior high and high school students in Michigan City. Essay entries must not exceed 450 words; essays of more than 450 words will be disqualified from the competition. All entries must be printed double-spaced on plain paper and accompanied by an entry form. The essays will be judged anonymously on the basis of evidence of research on black history events or individuals, excellence of content, originality of thought, and clarity of composition in expression and grammar. First prize is a notebook computer; second prize is a one-year membership to the Michigan City YMCA; and third prize is a \$50 savings bond.

The art contest is open to all elementary school students in Michigan City. Entries must be original works and may not be printed from a computer. All entries must be accompanied by an entry form. Art entries will be judged anonymously on the basis of evidence of research on black history events or individuals, originality and design. First prize is a desktop computer; second prize is a \$150 gift certificate; and third prize is a \$50 savings bond.

Essay and art contest entries should be sent or delivered to MCAS: Hours For Hours, A. K. Smith Center, 817 Lafayette Street, Michigan City, IN 46360. Entries must be postmarked by February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Contest flyers and entry forms are available at City Hall and on the city website at [www.emichigancity.com](http://www.emichigancity.com). For more information, contact Chip Cotman at 219/873-2026 X314.