

# Camp Parks Celebrates Black History Month

February 26, 2010



The moment was festive, the venue was at the Camp Parks Community Activities Center and the event was a clear success. Not because the guest speaker was Minister Stephanie Burrell, spouse of famed rap artist MC Hammer, not because the music was provided by an outstanding musical duo, provided by Sgt. Curtis Crittenden and Ureka Crittenden, or that the spiritual dance by Desaree Dickerson-Curtis was captivating and entertaining, but because the event was diverse, inspirational and enriching.

“I thought it was fantastic that Jamie Edwards would invite me to this event,” said Burrell. “I was especially excited about this event because it’s the first time I’ve ever been asked to do something like this [by the Army].” Burrell also expressed a special connection to the military because of her spouse’s former membership in the Naval Reserves.

In her soft but authoritative brand of speaking Burrell talked about the Army Core values and its relationship to the struggle of black people. “Our society has sometimes missed the mark,” said Burrell but when we stand together and celebrate our diversity, we become stronger. She went on to say that our

Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage is a great reflection of society as a whole and a worthy goal to strive for.

The event was coordinated by the Equal Employment Opportunity coordinator, Richard Fielder and organized by Jamie Edwards, Michael Narvaez (Director, Morale Welfare Recreation [MWR]) and SSG Lida Wylie. MWR also provided funding, and staff support to conduct the event.

“This was a great event,” said Lt. Col Michael P. Friend. This is one of the best events that I have been to when it comes to celebrating our diversity. He added that the music, dance and the guest speaker was more than he had expected and he appreciated the efforts that made it happen.

The event concluded with a food sampling of traditional fare that included of BBQ ribs, Black eyed peas, and Yams.

The Crittenden’s are available for private events and can be contacted at: [curtis.crittenden@us.army.mil](mailto:curtis.crittenden@us.army.mil) or by phone at: (773) 573-5763

Clockwise from the left, Sgt. Curtis Crittenden (Saxophone Player), Minister Stephanie Burrell, Mrs. Desaree Dickerson-Curtis (black dress), Jamie Edwards (green dress) and Treasure Edwards, and singer Ureka Crittenden.