How successful was the Million Man March?

By Kimathi Lewis
Staff Writer

Undoubtedly, black men from all walks of life made history as they gathered together last month for the Million Man March. The question, however, remains: How many will take it a step further? According to all reports, the March involved the largest gathering of black people in history.

The demonstration, held Oct. 16 in Washington, D.C., was dubbed a national day of atonement for black men by organizer and Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan.

Minister Farrakhan urged the masses of black men to stop blaming the oppressors and to take responsibility for themselves and their communities.

Critics contend the true success of the March can only be measured by the visible affects in the community.

Brother David 5X, a Clark Atlanta University student who assisted in the registration for the event, estimated about 200 CAU students, faculty and staff participated in the march.

Several local community groups said they have noticed an increase in black male participation.

“More men have been calling in every day to become mentors,” said Deborah Johnson, director of Client Services of Big Brother and Big Sisters in Atlanta.

She said the social service organization, which exist in nine counties in metro Atlanta, received a moderate increase of callers after the march.

“There has been significant increases, especially in Fulton and Cobb counties. Some actually said they went to the Million Man March and wanted to participate,” she said.

Babatunde Banjo, a spokesperson for the Coalition of 100 Black Men of Atlanta expressed a similar sentiment.

“There’s been phone calls coming in with people anxious to join,” he said.

To some participants in the Atlanta University Center, the march served as a wake up call to change their own negative behaviors while others said it reinforced their commitment to the community.

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In the case of Roland Washington II, 21, it was both. “I especially agreed with what Farrakhan said about joining organizations, adopting an inmate and some of the 25,000 black foster kids,” he said.

Washington, a senior at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, is attending CAU as part of the Olympic Host Broadcast Training Program. He said he plans to do his part in helping out the black community.

Washington said he was so inspired, the day after the March he decided to reestablish with his father, who was too sick to attend, an organization in Newark, NJ designed to “get children off the streets and stop selling drugs.”

The sports medicine major said he had previously discussed restarting the organization, initiating it in the 1950s, but the March simply reinforced their decision.

DeQuincy Hentz, 21, a Morehouse senior, said the March motivated him to turn his life around.

“I want to atone for my inad

Sports and entertainment program a perfect match

By Tarsha Burton
Staff Writer

Some of corporate America’s major players turned out Oct. 13 for the first Advisor Board Meeting on the Center for Entertainment and Sports Management (COESM), held at the Atlanta Merchandise Mart.

Among them was legendary baseball player Henry “Hank” Aaron, vice president of Turner Broadcasting Systems, Inc. Aaron is also chairman of COESM. Others included Jackie Lee, consultant for Laface Records and Ralph Jemigan, chief executive officer of International Sports and Entertainment Strategies of Atlanta.

The COESM was created in the spring of 1995. Unique in its own right, Clark Atlanta University (CAU) is the first Historically Black University to offer a program that combines both entertainment and business.

“LaFace Records believes in supporting those who support us,” said Ron Williams, who is involved in the Sports and Entertainment Management Association’s (SEMA) student charter organization at CAU.

Meanwhile, Aaron said it’s vital that this program be supported. “I think there is a need for it and I’m intrigued by the fact that it’s backed by the School of Business.”

Aaron further pointed out that many of the nations colleges and universities that offer similar programs do so through their athletic departments.

And LaFace’s Lee said, “LaFace Records believes in supporting those who support us.”

International Sports and Entertainment Strategies representative Ralph Jemigan said Atlanta will soon be one of the largest entertainment centers in the world.

“Our company wants to help those who are bright and hold an interest in the field.”

Dr. Edward L. Davis, acting dean for the School of Business Acting Dean said he is optimistic the program will be a success once it receives accreditation.

“[I]t is a need for it and I’m intrigued by the fact that it’s backed by the School of Business.”

-Hank Aaron