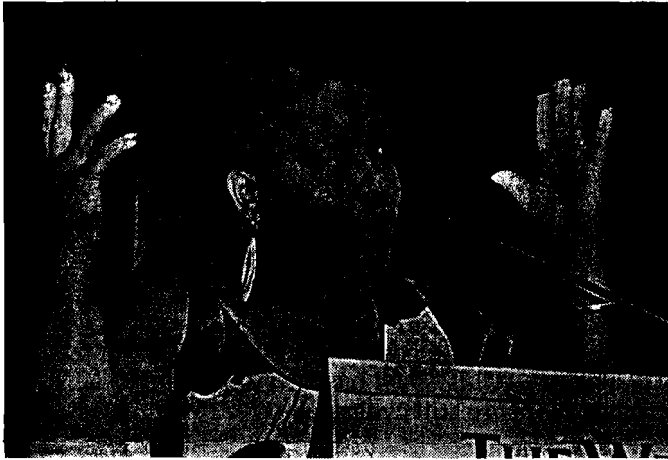


Rebecca Dailey of Johnson Publishing Co. enthusiastically welcomes more than 430 guests to the SisterSpeak Luncheon held at the Westin Hotel in downtown Indianapolis. The luncheon, sponsored by Ebony Magazine and the makers of Pine-Sol Cleaners, recognized not-for-profit agencies in Indianapolis.



Diane Amos (The Pine-Sol lady) returned to her hometown to share words of wisdom and encouragement, with her own hilarious touch, as a speaker and performer.



The SisterSpeak honorees, acknowledged for the service to women through their respective not-for-profit organizations are (left to right): DeShong Perry-Smitherman and Ericka Gibson, co-founders of A Girls Gift Inc.; Jennifer Robinson, founder of Daughters of Destiny; Cris Meadows, founder and president of Harvest Girls International; and Pamela Goodwin, founder of Women in Motion Inc. Not pictured: Tamika Catchings, founder of Catch the Stars Foundation, Inc. (Photos/G. Van Sickles)

a young male involved in a recent crime. The officers were rude to Straub's son and refused to explain why he was being detained.

When a woman involved in the crime informed the officers they had the wrong person, they released him, but not before they searched him, threw his keys in a sewer, threw his hat and wallet in a puddle, and told him to "just go the f***" home.

"I apologize for use of the word, but I was trying to illustrate the point that I agree that law enforcement professionals, whether here in Indianapolis or in other places, sometimes get it wrong and can be arrogant and offensive," Straub said. "The negative aspects of policing are often more about language used and rudeness extended than use of force. If we focus on use of force we will not solve the problem. What we have to do is get to communication and how we address each other as people."

In reference to the term "you people," Straub said it was not used.

"The term that got used was "you folks," which is something I refer to people in large groups frequently," he stated. "It was pointed out to me that it had some connection with the derogatory way of talking to African Americans, and if I offended somebody with "you folks," I apologize for that as well, but I did not ever say "you people."

Despite the controversy, Straub hopes the meeting will start an honest discussion about "what is really going on" between the police and the community.

Straub said he is still on good terms with concerned ministers, and has spoken

Plains the population is 45 percent Latino and 12 percent Black. Prior to being commissioner there, Straub was deputy police commissioner of training in diverse New York City.

"I understand the history, because I was a young man who grew in the '60s, and witnessed National Guard soldiers in New York beat African-American men and women," Straub said. "I saw it firsthand and watched it on television."

Straub said he also vividly remembers the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy, and noted the impact they had on Indianapolis.

"Indianapolis was one of a few cities that did not riot after King's assassination, in large part because of the message Kennedy delivered at a local park that night," Straub said. "I think that is significant, along with the fact that there is now an important statue at that park where a white man and a Black man are reaching out to each other."

Straub believes the statue is symbolic of unity that can take place in the community in a broader context.

"We have to not get mired in history, but use it to inform the present and guide where we want to go in the future," Straub said. "If we have conversations not between African Americans and Caucasians, but between individuals, between Bill, Frank, James and Jordan, we will have forward movement."

Next week: Straub discusses diversity at IMPD, what officials learned from the Brandon Johnson beating and new programs that create trust between police and youth.

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