



Call The Roll

An E-Publication of Columbus City Council

COUNCIL ADVOCATES RESEARCH CORRIDOR



Rich Rosen, VP at Battelle, joins Habash, Hudson, Vicki Butland, SciTech Interim Director, and Bob McGrath, VP of OSU, to announce Research Corridor

Popular Science magazine recently rated Columbus No. 7 nationally and No. 1 in Ohio in the use of high technology. That's a great start but not enough for Council President [Matt Habash](#) and Council member [Mary Jo Hudson](#), chair of Council's Jobs and Economic Development Committee. They want to transform the Kinnear Road corridor into a premier life sciences and technology research center.

Taking advantage of the region's "smart capital,"—its collective talents and brainpower— is key according to Hudson. **"If Columbus is to grow and prosper, all of central Ohio needs to grow and prosper," Hudson said. "None of us can do it alone. We need to leverage all the assets of central Ohio."**

She singled out SciTech, which currently houses 45 hi-tech firms, employing over 650 fulltime professionals and 120 OSU students, and occupies 250,000 square feet of space. **"These are the types of good paying jobs we need. They generate income tax to support critical City services like police and fire protection, and refuse collection."**

The Ohio State University, Battelle Memorial Institute, and the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce will help the City create more entrepreneurial ventures and technology-related jobs in the corridor, and help devise an incentive package similar to the Downtown Incentive Program, which has recently brought 1,400 new jobs to downtown Columbus. Hudson has also called for accelerated infrastructure investment on the SciTech Campus.

WORKING TO STOP FAMILY VIOLENCE

More help is on the way for victims of child and domestic violence as Council sent \$86,000 to the Central Ohio Animal Abuse and Family Violence Task Force as part of its 2005 budget amendments. Council member [Michael C. Mentel](#) sponsored the initiative. The Task Force advocates a multi-disciplinary response to the prevention of family violence, which often starts with animal cruelty before escalating to humans.

"Nationwide studies consistently link animal violence to child and domestic violence," said Mentel. **"Anything we can do to intervene early and break the cycle of violence makes sense."**

Funding supports cross-training of child abuse and animal cruelty investigators to better recognize signs of both forms of violence, and to enhance the sharing of information between victim advocates and professionals. In some cases women feel hostage and won't leave an abusive relationship for fear that the children or family pet may become the target of abuse.

A Closer Look



American Humane:
[Understanding the Link® between animal abuse and family violence](#)

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention: [Animal Abuse and Youth Violence](#)

OUCH ! IT'S TAX SEASON

Council President [Matt Habash](#) and Council member [Charleta Tavares](#) are again busy promoting the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program. The EITC is considered one of the most effective anti-poverty programs in the nation. Families earning less than \$35,000 a year can receive federal tax refunds of up to \$4,300. In 2004, the IRS estimates that over \$22 million went unclaimed in EITC refunds in Columbus. That represents about 13,000 families.



"The EITC program is a win-win all around. It helps Columbus families make ends meet by reducing their tax burden, and helps fuel the local economy," said Tavares.

This year, The Ohio State University-Fisher College of Business joins the effort in committing over 40 accounting student volunteers. Citywide there are over forty free tax preparation sites, including three sponsored by Council: The Legal Aid Society, the Godman Guild Association and the Ohio Hispanic Coalition for Spanish speaking clients.

Through March 15th, 150 local families received help.

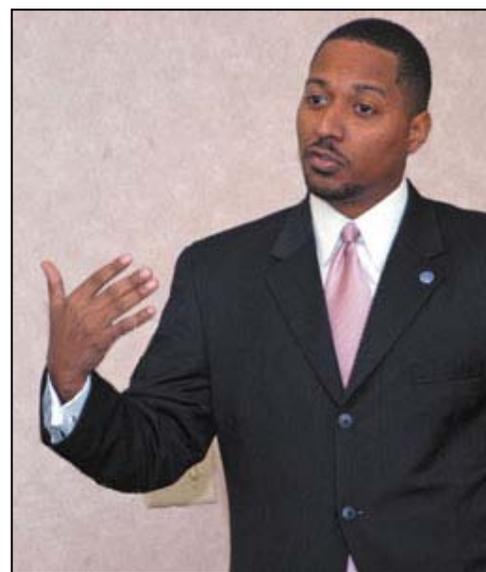
Charleta Tavares and Matt Habash with student volunteers, Karen DeLaubenfels and Kristine Locher of the Fisher College of Business.

BOYCE CONNECTS WITH KIDS

Council member [Kevin Boyce](#) put on his speaker's hat during February's Black History Month to connect with hundreds of youth at seven different events, including the first ever Black History Month celebration at Fairwood Elementary and during a roundtable discussion at the African-American Male Resource Center at The Ohio State University. He spoke to younger audiences about the importance of youth making an effort to know their history. **"It is important for EVERY young person to be aware of the great contributions blacks have made in this world, and especially within the Columbus community,"** Boyce told the attentive audiences.

As a product of the inner city of Columbus and the [I KNOW I CAN](#) program, Boyce assured the kids that each one of them had potential—they just need to tap into it to achieve great things. His advice: **"If you want to go to college, you can. You just need to find the motivation and inspiration within you."**

The Fairwood program included spiritual dancing, singing and poems read by the students, and bulletin boards depicting "From Slavery.... to Freedom.... to Greatness." At Ohio State, Boyce discussed leadership.



Boyce speaks to students during a Black History Month event.

Photo Courtesy of Terreece M. Clarke

FIXING HYDRANTS

You probably did not know that Columbus has over 25,000 fire hydrants. That's about one for every thirty persons. Council members [Patsy Thomas](#) and [Kevin Boyce](#) recently learned that Columbus fire hydrants sometimes stay out of service for up to a year—apparently much longer than comparable Midwest cities—and that presently over 2.3% of the hydrants were broken. While existing policy made sure that adjacent hydrants were not simultaneously out of service, both Council members wanted improved maintenance.

As a result of a meeting with Division of Water and Division of Fire representatives, businesses and residents can sleep a little easier knowing that new policies will soon ensure that 99% or more of all City hydrants function on any given day; out-of-service hydrants get fixed within 120 days; and automated monitoring gets implemented.

“It’s better to be safe than sorry. This could have become a critical public safety concern,” Thomas said. **“A higher percentage of working hydrants can only quicken firefighter response in emergencies. Kevin and I really appreciate the operating agencies’ willingness to make this a high priority.”**



ENHANCING HEAVY RESCUE SERVICES



“Jaws of Life” demonstration.

If you’ve ever witnessed, or been in a serious auto accident, you appreciate the speed and skill that Columbus Fire emergency rescue crews gets to the scene. However, concerns about response time to vehicle accidents along the outerbelt prompted Safety and Judiciary Chair [Michael C. Mentel](#) last year to find funds for additional “Jaws of Life” type equipment. Extrication tools were deployed at four fire stations located near key interchanges, effectively doubling capacity, while Mentel promised to work with the Fire Division and leadership of Local #67 to take a deeper look at heavy rescue operations.

Drawing on a number of previous studies and current surveys of other major cities, Mentel recently issued his report outlining steps to make rescue operations even more effective. You can see the full report by clicking on the following link: (PDF) [Heavy Rescue Services: Executive Summary of Recommendations](#).

“The heavy rescue technicians, who pop car doors, crawl into confined spaces, prop up collapsing buildings and save other firefighters jeopardized in the line of duty provide a tremendous service to this City,” wrote Mentel. **“Council hopes the approach outlined both supports and honors the dedication of our front-line heavy rescue personnel and paves the way so they can even better protect the citizens of our Columbus.”**

A few of the recommendations include:

- Implement a heavy rescue reporting system to help determining future deployment, training and equipment needs of the Division.
- Equip more engines with rescue tools – Council funded two more sets at its February 28th meeting.
- Move toward an even more flexible, responsive technical rescue structure with two additional “full heavy rescue” units, staffed appropriately who have full trench, rope, structural, auto/machinery, confined space, water/ice capability.