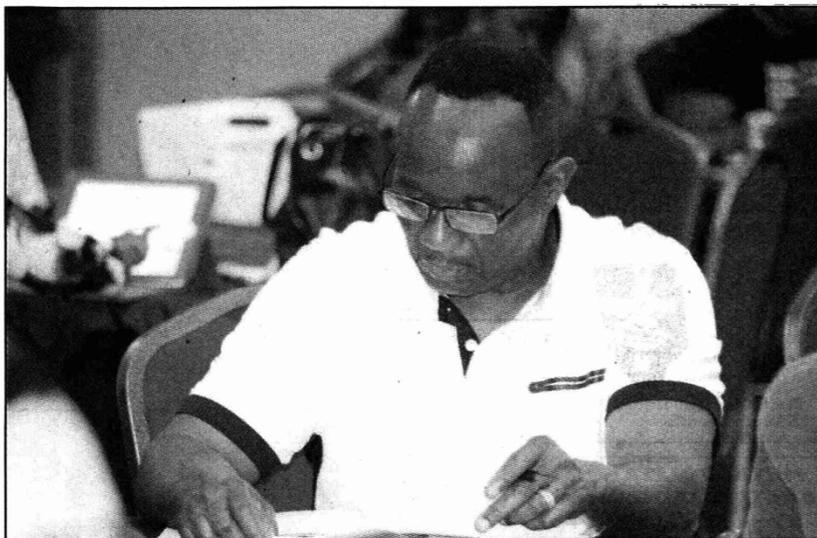




FINANCIAL LITERACY SYMPOSIUM—Many people go to the experts to learn more about finance.



FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY—Anthony Reynolds of the West End comes out to teach his kids about financial responsibility.

Many believe activist Hillman's impact on the community will be long-lasting

'Elsie was on their side'

By Dan Majors

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Fond remembrances of social and political activist Elsie Hillman continued to be expressed Wednesday, a day after her passing at age 89, with many voicing their belief that her impact on the community will be long-lasting.

Of particular note were the many people who recounted stories of how Mrs. Hillman — despite the wealth and influence she shared with her husband, Henry — stood with those in need.

Sometimes, she sat with them.

George Fechter of Mount Washington was a member of the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute Council with Mrs. Hillman. Three years ago, at a large meeting of the State Cancer Coalition, Mr. Fechter said, the executive director expressed disappointment that Mrs. Hillman could not attend.

"I am here," came a voice from the back of the room.

The director promptly invited Mrs. Hillman to take the seat reserved for her in the front row.

"Elsie responded she wanted to sit in the back with the cancer survivors," Mr. Fechter said.

"Elsie Hillman was about people and what was fair," said **Esther Bush**, president and CEO of the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh. "She is known for taking stands that had caused some people to quiver —

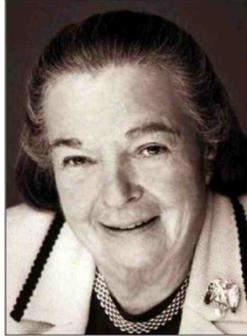
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in support of African-Americans, in support of women, in support of gays and lesbians. If they were people and they were not being treated fairly, Elsie was on their side."

She always was.

In May 1969, Republican John K. Tabor was running for mayor of Pittsburgh, and the local GOP scheduled a rally at the North Side Elks Club.

The problem was that the



Elsie Hillman "was about people and what was fair." club was "whites only," and the Catholic Interracial Council sent a letter of protest to Mrs. Hillman, chairwoman of the county party. Mrs. Hillman advised Mr. Tabor to instead attend a rally at a cafe on Foreland Street and asked members of the party to convene there.

The leaders' vote to meet at the Elks Club as planned was 10-0 with two abstentions.

"We've been having Republican meetings at the North Side Elks for 30 years, and will continue to hold them there," said J. Edward Waldron, chairman of the 27th Ward.

Mrs. Hillman caused a stir by making sure the public knew about the issue. She would cause such friction in the community and in her political party again and again.

"You can't say that she did not care about the repercussions, because Elsie was strategic in everything she did," Ms. Bush said. "So if Elsie said it, and she knew that it wasn't going to play out well, she said it that way

on purpose because she didn't want it to play out well. She wanted to ruffle whoever's feathers she was ruffling."

Former city Councilman Sala Udin worked with Mrs. Hillman on a number of issues, including the "Save Our Summer" project to keep the city's swimming pools open in 2004 and a task force formed to address Pittsburgh's financial plight.

"She was a worker bee, and she kept everybody else working," Mr. Udin said.

"She was easy to work with if you came to work, because she was going to put you to work. If you just came to put your name on the letterhead, then you were going to have a problem with Elsie."

"Elsie was not just going to write you a check," Ms. Bush said. "She had to understand your cause and believe in it and see what direction you were going in. And if it was a one-shot event you were sponsoring, she wanted to be part of it. She was not going to write a check and say, 'There you are, Esther, let me know how it goes.' She wanted to know when it was and where it was and she would come by.

"It was not just the resources, her heart was what made the difference. The best thing that Pittsburgh can do is to emulate Elsie's heart, her support, her caring for people, her understanding of the human condition. She believed in us

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understanding of the human condition. She believed in us all."

Esther Bush,
president and CEO,
Urban League
of Greater Pittsburgh



EMOTIONAL SPENDING—Tammy Thompson, proprietor of Thomas Real Estate Consulting Development, speaks about “emotional spending.”



AMONG LISTENERS—Esther Bush and Howard Slaughter are among the many others listening to the speakers on finances. (Photos by J.L. Martello)



ESTHER BUSH

Sleep Health

August begins the fifth year of this monthly series and partnership among the New Pittsburgh Courier, Community PARTners (a core service of the University of Pittsburgh's Clinical and Translational Science Institute—CTSI), the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh and the UPMC Center for Engagement and Inclusion. These pages provide you with valuable research information on health topics that may affect you, your family or friends and connect you to research opportunities and local health resources. All articles can be accessed online at the New Pittsburgh Courier website.

This month, the "Take Charge of Your Health Today" page focuses

on the importance of sleep and how it affects our overall health. Jennifer R. Jones, MPH, community engagement coordinator at Pitt and Esther L. Bush, president and CEO of the Urban League, discussed this important topic.

JJ: Good morning, Ms. Bush. I'm excited to sit down with you as we begin our fifth year of these "Take Charge of Your Health Today" pages! Can you believe it has been that long?

EB: Jennifer, I'm thrilled to see these health pages continuing in the Courier. I'm so proud of this partnership. Providing the community with current research information on important health topics is fundamental to our mission of working to enable African Americans to achieve self-reliance.

JJ: We're proud to partner with you in that work, Ms. Bush. There's so much research happening at the University of Pittsburgh and throughout Allegheny County, and the community needs to know about it. I know that each month I learn something new! Our August page focuses on the importance of sleep. Prior to this month, I didn't think much about how important sleep really is to our bodies and our health.

EB: Believe me, Jennifer, I respect the value of sleep. I know that I probably don't sleep the recommended seven hours each night. Dr. Buysse emphasizes a few key things about sleep. Sleep research shows that adults who don't get enough sleep have

higher rates of chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease and obesity. We need to start talking about sleep importance, just as we know we need to eat healthy and exercise regularly. Our brains need sleep, and a regular sleep pattern is helpful.

JJ: Yes. It's really amazing to stop and think about all the positive benefits sleep has for our bodies. In excess, "sleep thieves," like alcohol, screen time and caffeine, can prevent restful sleep. It's really important for adults, children and especially adolescents to get the right quality and quantity of sleep. Research also shows that adolescents who get fewer sleep hours have worse standardized test scores, more car accidents and even more incidences of suicide.

EB: I'm really glad we are focusing on sleep, especially as we look around the bend to the end of summer and school starting back up again. There are currently multiple sleep research opportunities at the University of Pittsburgh. I encourage everyone to review these opportunities, and if you know you have a problem with sleep, don't brush it to the side. Talk to your health care provider about your concerns.

JJ: That's great advice, Ms. Bush. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to discussing next month's topic—pregnancy health.

If anyone has questions about the information on this page, email PARTners@hs.pitt.edu.

