

Focus on **THE IMPACT OF THE MILLION MAN MARCH**

# New faces will help to shape the future

*Some say it's time to 'pass the baton'*

By **Hollis R. Towns**  
STAFF WRITER

**T**he Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. went to Washington with a dream. Minister Louis Farrakhan went with an agenda.

Now, people like the Rev. Albert Love, Steven Muhammad and Mike Weaver — a new generation of community leaders who have moved into the spotlight because of the Million Man March — believe they must put together a plan.

The challenge will be to use the tenets from last Monday's march to remake and re-energize the black community while gently prodding the established black power base to support a new approach to problem-solving.

"If [the old leaders] are wise, they'll pass the baton, bow gracefully and step aside," said the Rev. Timothy McDonald, pastor of First Iconium Baptist Church, who considers himself a part of that old leadership. "We've got to go to work in the community, and make a lot of changes."

Many of the new generation of leaders believe the future of the city rests with self-improvement and community activism. Most have worked for years fighting the drug trade, registering voters and helping wayward youth. None has held political office.

For them, turning to government programs for answers is not the solution. So on Tuesday, activists who worked to stage the march will meet at First Iconium to discuss a new direction for the black community. They plan to address economic development, volunteerism, crime fighting and voter registration.

"We don't profess to have all the answers," said Love, pastor of Boatrock Community Baptist Church in south Fulton. "But at least we're beginning to put together a dialogue."

Love, who founded the south Fulton church 12 years ago, heads the nonprofit Love In Action Ministries. He has been working to address recreational and community needs near the Boatrock public housing project for more than a decade.

In the weeks prior to the march, he spearheaded an effort that registered several thousand new voters.

Mike Weaver, a longtime youth volunteer who heads the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta's community development program, said black people can no longer afford to watch passively as sweeping changes occur in statehouses and in Washington that impact their communities.

"We are the products of our environments," he said. "If no one around us ever cared or got involved, then we asked, 'Why should we?' Those kinds of attitudes have hurt our community."

He wants to recruit more blacks to join organizations such as the Urban League, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Big Brothers-Big Sisters.

In his 2½ hour speech on the steps of the nation's Capitol, Farrakhan, the controversial Nation of Islam leader, implored black men to atone for their sins, respect women, vote and join various community organizations.



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◀ **The Rev. Ron Sallor Jr.**, 21, an Emory University senior and member of the National Board of Directors for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. An accomplished speaker and political activist. Gave an address at the Million Man March.

▼ **The Rev. Albert E. Love**, 50, founder and president of the nonprofit Love in Action Ministries. Vice president of administration for the Concerned Black Clergy.



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▲ **Mike Weaver**, 30, director of community development for the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta. An active volunteer.



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▲ **Dwayne Marshall**, 21, an Emory University senior majoring in management and marketing. President of the Brotherhood of Afrocentric Men.



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◀ **Steven Muhammad**, 39, a native of Chicago. Local coordinator for the Million Man March. Minister of finance for the Atlanta Mosque of the Nation of Islam.

"The main problem with black people is we do not understand structure," said Muhammad, Southern regional coordinator for the Million Man March and a member of the Nation of Islam. "A lot of times, we'll holler 'racism.' A lot of time we just don't have the discipline of being on time, working a full day for a full day's pay, or of being respectful of those around us."

Muhammad said the teachings of Islam and its self-help approach to problem-solving are methods the

black community should embrace. "Those of us who are active have to inspire others," said Dwayne Marshall, president of the Brotherhood of Afrocentric Men (BAM), an Emory University student organization that addresses concerns facing the black community. "We can't keep blaming the system for our problems. We need to set examples through our own individual actions. Collectively, the results would be astounding."

On Monday, Marshall and other student leaders will hold a forum in

the Winship Ballroom at Emory to discuss their plan of action.

"The political scene in Atlanta is about to heat up and make some turns," said W. Ron Sallor Jr., an Emory student and national board member for the NAACP.

"We're looking to get [people] in Congress who are kind to black people. We want [people] who will be kind to black folks in state government. One thing this march has done is to serve notice that it is no longer business as usual."