THE STOKES BROTHERS: MAKING THE AMERICAN DREAM COME TRUE

CMHA held an event where students were asked to follow the Stokes brothers' example

As part of CMHA's Black History Month Celebration, Former Congressman Louis Stokes spoke to a group of students on February 10, 2009 where he requested they follow he and his brothers' example. They met at CMHA's Louis Stokes Museum, established at the Quincy Avenue location where Louis and Carl Stokes grew up.

"It is truly a blessing to be able to have a living legend take time out of his schedule to share the accomplishments of both he and his brothers to the youth of our community," said Jeffery K. Patterson, CMHA's Chief of Staff and Operations. "CMHA and its residents are very fortunate to have this jewel of a museum in the heart of the Central Neighborhood."

A preview of a new television documentary was shown at the event about the lives of Louis and Carl Stokes. The documentary *Stokes: An American Dream* was produced by WVIZ/PBS IdeaStream and is airing Saturday, February 22 at 5 p.m.

Stokes: An American Dream takes a look at the lives of Louis and Carl Stokes, who changed the course of American politics. The program begins with the brothers as young men growing up in utter poverty and then moves through their journeys of perseverance and dedication as they became prominent Northeast Ohio politicians. Carl was elected the first black mayor of a major American city and Louis became the first black U.S. Congressman from Ohio.

"Carl and I helped break down a lot of barriers in this society," Louis Stokes told the students. "But it was done so you young people could have an opportunity to know that if these two boys did it, I can do it too."

Louis Stokes who retired nearly 10 years ago after serving 15 terms in Congress, told those in attendance how his mother scrubbed floors and did domestic work to make sure he and his brother Carl got an education.

"Get something in your head," is what Stokes says his mother told him and his brother Carl when they were young. Both eventually earned law degrees. Louis Stokes will turn 84 years old on February 23.