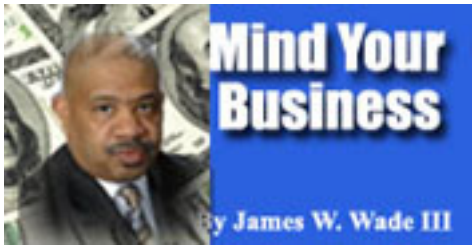

As we close out Women History Month, I want to say you are appreciated for all you regardless of your job. Thanks for all of the contributions you have made.

Women's Education, Women's Empowerment

During the Cleveland International Film Festival, the Call & Post Newspaper sponsored a film entitled "Colour Me" which provided a look into the question, 'Are you Black?'

The movie was purely based on the importance of education through the eyes of a young man.

I was happy to see the response to the film from races across the board. First time film maker Sherien Barsoum documents Anthony McClean, a bi-racial motivational speaker and actor.

I say that to say, as I continue to salute various women during the month of March, I am proud to say the director did a good job and was a female.

It has been said education is the strongest weapon against ignorance, and the 2012 theme for Women's History Month is "Women's Education – Women's Empowerment."

March is Women's History Month , at least in the United States. (It's October in Canada) If you have a daughter, niece, granddaughter, or other girl in your life, give her a biography of a woman who accomplished important goals. If you can match the woman to the girl's interests, all the better. (If you don't know her interests, celebrate the month by getting to know them.)

I want to salute Renee Singleton, founder of Singleton & Partners – the sole multicultural marketing firm in the Northeast Ohio region. Singleton branched out on her own in 2002 after more than 20 years in marketing and broadcast media industries in
Cleveland
and
Atlanta
.

Her vision in forming Singleton & Partners was to fill the void between traditional marketing to mainstream America and the need to develop strategies and tactics to target women and the rapidly growing multicultural audience.

Singleton made a commitment to help her clients implement relevant marketing campaigns to reach its diverse communities and remain competitive in the global marketplace.

Singleton's commitment to excellence has been recognized with awards from leading organizations in the industry, including one of Northeast Ohio Top Ten Business Owners by the National Association of Women Business Owners and Kaleidoscope Magazine's Top Entrepreneur.

In just a few years, Singleton's efforts have paid off, and her firm has caught the attention of several high-profiled clients. The firm has a proven performance record in planning and executing campaigns on behalf of public and private clients interested in reaching emerging markets.

Prior to forming her own company, Singleton served as a general sales manager for Radio One's Cleveland market. She was the first African-American in local radio to hold that post. During that time, she managed a $15 million annual revenue budget that included negotiations, securing local and national advertisers, and developing relationships with the media,

community, and business leaders.

Singleton earned a bachelor's degree in business management and is pursuing a master's degree in marketing.

Women play an increasingly important role in the workplace these days and women are opening businesses that are bringing them out of the living room into the board room. While more women are being represented in engineering and scientific fields, more progress needs to be made at senior management levels.

According to a National Science Foundation report, the percentage of science and engineering doctoral degrees awarded nationally to women increased dramatically between 1966 and 2000, from 8 percent to 36.2 percent. In the agricultural and biological sciences, these statistics were even more impressive. The percentage of women earning agricultural doctorates grew from 1.4 to 29.1 percent over the same 34-year period. The percentage of women earning biological doctorates went from 14.8 percent to 44.8 percent.

Women these days have been forced to be more active in the business world and that can be proven daily by seeing women working day by day either to maintain a family or just to seek a better life.

Although women now outnumber men in American colleges and universities nationwide, this reversal of the gender gap is a very recent phenomenon, according to the National Women's History Project.

The fight to learn was a struggle waged by many tenacious women spanning a number of years and varying cultures.

The equal opportunity to learn, which today is often taken for granted, owes much to Title IX of the Education Codes of the Higher Education Act Amendments. Passed in 1972 and enacted in 1977, this legislation prohibited gender discrimination by federally funded institutions. Its enactment has served as the primary tool for women's fuller participation in all aspects of

education, from scholarships, to facilities, to classes formerly closed to women.

I want to take a moment to celebrate my mother for all of her wisdom and guidance. It does not have to be a special month to appreciate a woman who has made a difference. A woman's job is hard. I've seen this first hand.

With passion and courage, women have taught us that when we band together to advocate for our highest ideals, we can advance our common well-being and strengthen the fabric of our nation. Each year during Women's History Month, we remember and celebrate women from all walks of life who have shaped this great nation.

As we close out Women History Month, I want to say you are appreciated for all you regardless of your job. Thanks for all of the contributions you have made.

I have realized it just takes persistence and perseverance. That's what Women's History Month is telling today's young: "If she can do it, so can I."

You go, girls!