

Education

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HILTON

Where Are The Educators On EBONY's: The 100 Most Influential Black Americans List



KEITH O. HILTON

Each year, EBONY Magazine identifies a group of influential African men and women. Some are bonafide leaders, but many are simple prominent personalities.

Correctly so and like clockwork, right after the issue appears, EBONY is flooded with letters from readers asking why certain people are on the list or why some were left off.

To EBONY's credit, and perhaps because it truly wants to be objective, probably the most influential African in the world was left off the list. That person is EBONY's own founder, John H. Johnson.

African Americans and Africans throughout the world look to and read his publications religiously. Now that is influence and power. HILTON: HIGHER EDUCATION acknowledges and respects Johnson Publishing Company's leading position.

But there may come a time when more than a few people will begin to notice the difference between a "leading" and "leader" position. This is not a "Black Thing" but rather a case of markets and positioning.

That is also why HILTON: HIGHER EDUCATION remains critical of JPC for not moving with or stepping forward with the African world and become an "INCORPORATING AFRICAN WORLD MAGAZINE."

But where are the educators on this list of leaders? More specifically, where are our college presidents? What kind of message is EBONY sending annually to young people, graduates students and prospective educators?

In terms of some occupations, the EBONY list is more than accurate and definitely does a better job of recognizing these individuals than most other publications.

Yes, Dr. Henry Ponder is on the list, but not in his role as Fisk University President. Yes, Dr. Clifton Wharton is on the list, but his position of Chair and CEO of TIAA-CREF, although very influential, is actually detached.

What about the presidents of such premiere world class institutions as Clark Atlanta, Spelman, Hampton, Howard (the Harvard of the HAI's), Meharry, Southern?

What about the African president of predominantly European American major colleges such as Cal State Fullerton, Colorado State University, Michigan-Dearborn or University of Houston?

What about the presidents of influential education organizations such as the United Negro College Fund, the National Alliance of Black School Educators or NAFEO?

EBONY can not list every person nominated or liked, however, the fact still remains that the vast majority of business people, congressperson, educators, theologians, etc., will continue to receive their formal training in institutions of higher education.

If education and educator are not recognized as one of the most influential fields in this country, then whom can we blame 1) as other publications edge into our markets and 2) as some of our young people don't understand the value of the education?

HILTON: HIGHER EDUCATION is designed to dialogue with college and world readers. Education is ongoing and certainly not limited to school classrooms. Let's talk (714)899-0650.

NEW LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN SUPPORT OF HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

By Sharna Wilson-McMillan

The ability of the nation's historically Black colleges and universities (HBCU) to secure funding for improvement projects is the subject of new legislation recently introduced in the House of Representatives by two Missouri democrats.

Rep. Alan Wheat and Rep. William "Bill" Clay have authored H.R. 1503, the "Historically Black College and University Capital Financing Act of 1991," which seeks to help HBCU's raise the large amounts of advance money needed to finance major capital projects, such as the repair and improvement of libraries, laboratories, dormitories or special education facilities.

"Because of the small size of HBCU's and the large number of disadvantaged students they serve, HBCU's usually lack the ability to secure private credit to finance major capital projects," Wheat told the House on March 20. "This bill would allow HBCU's to enter the bond market by providing them with a federal guarantee of up to \$500 million in bond debt."

Wheat and Clay have contacted historically Black school in an effort to drum up support for the bill.

"In order for this legislation to be enacted, we need the broadest range of support from you and your constituencies," they said. "We are requesting that you encourage members of your Board Of Trustees, alumni, supporters, faculty, students, contributors and friends of your institution to send letters of support requesting that their

respective representatives in Congress co-sponsor H.R. 1503."

The bill would authorize the Secretary of Education to provide insurance on bonds issued to eligible institutions. The insurance means that the bonds, which are sold to generate revenue, would be paid by the government (up to \$500 million) should the school default on their payments.

The bill also includes a safety provision, establishing a reserve fund from which payments on delinquent debts would be made, "thus limiting the risk to the government," according to Wheat.

Historically Black colleges and universities have been in existence for more than a century. While they represent only three percent of the colleges and universities in this country, they educate nearly 40 percent of the nearly one million Black students seeking higher education. Clay believes sustaining HBCU's is in this country's national interest.

"The graduates of these institutions of higher education make a significant contribution to the gross national product of our nation through their specialized knowledge and technical skills," said Clay in introducing the Act. "It is most important as a part of the multiplier effect that this contribution of service continue to go forward with the support of the Congress."

The bill also contains two other important provisions. The first establishes an HBCU Capital Financing Advisory Board, which will provide advice to the

Secretary of Education on the best way to implement construction financing. The second calls for the utilization of minority business in implementing the Act, including bond underwrit-

ers, marketers, accountants, construction contractors and managers.

The bill has been referred to the Committee on Education and Labor for debate.

30 "AT RISK" HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS TO RECEIVE SPECIAL SUMMER JOBS

In a unique, incentive driven summer jobs program, thirty (30) economically disadvantaged students attending Ranch and Las Vegas High Schools will have the opportunity to earn up to \$1,785 in a 3 month program. Nevada Business Services (NBS) in cooperation with City of Las Vegas, Parks and Leisure Activities, and the Clark County School District, has developed a summer jobs program designed to give "at risk" students incentives to maintain good grades and graduate from 11th to 12th grade, according to Las Vegas City Councilman Scott Higginson.

Higginson serves as Vice-Chairman of the NBS Job Training Board, a group of elected officials overseeing job training programs funded by the Federal Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA.)

This is a one-of-a-kind jobs program that rewards economically disadvantaged high school juniors for achieving good grades, said Higginson. "The prospect of having a good job and earning a little extra money creates the type of incentive

students can relate to."

Jobs will be full time for three months with the City of Las Vegas Parks and Leisure Activities Department. Participants will assist in routine park maintenance and construction of additional recreational facilities.

Because Rancho and Las Vegas High Schools have the highest concentrations of "at risk" students, they were selected to participate in the program. Individuals school administrators developed the criteria for selection of the participating students, under the guidelines specified in the Job Training Partnership Act.

The cost of the program will be approximately \$75,000 according to Higginson, which will be allocated from the current youth training budget of the Nevada Business Services. NBS administers federal and state job training funds by developing and implementing job training programs for economically disadvantaged and handicapped adults and youth, as well as dislocated workers. To learn more about job training programs, call Nevada Business Services at 647-7600.

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