

LOCAL ECONOMIC AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT CHIEF RECEIVES NEW HIGH LEVEL HUD POSITION

By Victor S. Ingram

Long time city of Las Vegas Chief of Economic and Urban Development, Ken Williams, ends 17 years with the city to assume a high level post within the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. In his new federal position, Williams, 39, will answer directly for under Assistant Secretary Andrew Cuomo.

Williams' background in-

cludes extensive community development through local and federal grant funding. Williams' career began in 1976 as a management intern in the Community Development Block Grant program.

His experience extends to levels of federal grant procurement and funds implementation. Williams says he never sought the position, and had a great deal of difficulty making the

decision. Upon notice of his selection, Williams says he was overwhelmed at the opportunity. "I felt like I was in a state of shock; I couldn't conceive it would happen," said Williams.

He says friends, relatives, and a city which he had given so much of himself to developing made the choice very difficult to make. He gives special recognition to his sister, Marcia Estelle and her husband, Bill, for their

endless support in his efforts. A devoted family man, Williams' wife, Dianne, and their two children Erin and Devin, 7 and 10 respectively, will temporarily remain in Las Vegas until he has settled in.

Williams says his significant contributions during his tenure with the city include assisting with new focused goals for redevelopment. "I feel I helped the city get focused on revitalization

in the West Las Vegas, East Las Vegas, and the Meadows Village area," says Williams. He also commented on the present city administration's sincere commitment to redevelopment.

"Mayor Jan Jones and Councilman Frank Hawkins have shown a sincere commitment to redevelopment," says Williams.

His main goals in assuming his new position are to assist the department in streamlining various processes. Williams says the Secretary of Housing, Henry Cisneros, has mandated that HUD redirect itself. "My number one goal is to help the Secretary in his reinventing of Hud," says Williams.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION GIVEN TO COMMUNITY PEACE ORGANIZATION

By Victor S. Ingram

Community Peace of Las Vegas was awarded the National Conference of Christians and Jews' 1993 National Conference Community Hero Award on Monday, November 1st. Along with four other honorees: Charles Lenzie, Chairman of the Board & CEO of Nevada Power Company; Arthur Nathan, Vice President of Human Resources of the Mirage Casino & Hotel; Mujahid Ramadan, Executive Director of Nevada Partners, Inc.; and R&R Advertising, Community Peace was honored during the annual Hero Victory Banquet at Caesars Palace Hotel & Casino. Community Peace, which gained recognition as a facilitator of communication between police and local residents during the pre-Rodney King verdict, has been a vocal opponent of police abuse and brutality.

Organization chairman, Elgin Simpson, says the organization still continues to fight for the rights of local residents. "Our goal is to establish Community Peace as a bridge to link communities, cultures, religions and people of all colors, creeds, and nationalities," says Simpson when questioned about the group's overall purpose.

While hysteria is no longer at pre-verdict levels of severity, Simpson says the group still focuses on increasing mutual understanding between residents and police. The group continues to patrol neighborhoods and relay grievances to local police and court representatives. "Community Peace's mission didn't change simply because the riots were over; the mission remains to help the downtrodden individual," says Simpson.

When questioned about recognition from the National Conference, Simpson says his organization is honored to receive

the award. He says the Conference, which has parallel goals of fostering peace and goodwill, has an impeccable reputation for it's contributions.

"When you receive an award from an organization which does the same thing that you do, it is a tremendous honor," says Simpson. He credits the tireless efforts of his board of directors and team leaders for the award. "As spokesperson for this organization, it is critical that the public understands the committed behind-the-scenes efforts of Community Peace," says Simpson. The group's board members are responsible for administration while team leaders perform community relations

in their respective areas.

Community Peace has several upcoming projects which it hopes will continue to increase the awareness within the community. Simpson says the group wants to develop a coalition of mothers, who have lost children to gang violence or currently

have children involved in gang activity.

He says by pooling these women together a common united effort can be achieved. "A coalition of mothers in the community will definitely help us in our efforts to abate gang activity," says Simpson.

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