

Rodney Slater travels long road to FHWA top job

Washington, D.C.—For Rodney E. Slater, it has been a long winding road from the cotton fields in the Arkansas Delta to administering a \$20 billion budget for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) at the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Slater remains on the road carrying out a mission that affects and benefits all of America. He is the first African-American Administrator, and the 19th overall chief highway executive since the agency's inception in 1893 as the Officer of Road Inquiry. In the three years that

he has been in office, Slater has traveled to all 50 states, more than 300,000 miles, meeting with thousands of American citizens who use, construct, maintain and manage this nation's huge transportation system.

In June, Slater led a 10-day cross-country Road tour, from

San Francisco to Washington, D.C. in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act, under President Eisenhower, and the 40th birthday of the interstate highway system.

When officials and staff at FHWA and U.S. Department of

Transportation say Slater is one of the most effective administrators of FHWA in the agency's 103-year history, this is no political hyperbole. Slater's record of performance provides collaborating evidence.

A native of Marianna (Lee County) in rural Arkansas, Slater served in the Administration of Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, first as a member of the Arkansas State Highway Commission, beginning in 1987, and in 1992 was appointed chairman of the Commission. He is a close friend and advisor to President Clinton, having traveled with Clinton on the campaign plane during the 1992 presidential campaign. He was the only African-American passenger on the campaign plane as a senior advisor to the president.

After Clinton was elected, Slater delayed coming to Washington in order to be with his pregnant wife. Slater is always mindful of his priorities—family first. He is, by nature, soft spoken, affable, an intense



RODNEY SLATER

listener, and genuinely humble, a rare trait for political lords and barons in Washington. He has not forgotten his roots, nor the days of his early youth, picking cotton and peaches in the small, rural community of Marianna, Arkansas.

Slater received a football scholarship to attend Eastern Michigan University, where he graduated in 1977 and in 1980 graduated from the University of Arkansas School of Law.

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Project Youth to hold conference

By Nichole Davis
Sentinel-Voice

Project Youth, an educational empowerment program for at-risk teens, will host its first-ever youth conference this weekend at the Doolittle Community Center.

Registration for the event will be held at the center, located at 1901 N. J St., starting at 9 a.m. Saturday.

Admission is still open to all workshops, panels and discussions, but a Sunday luncheon is already booked to capacity, organizers said.

The theme of the free two-day conference is bridging the gap between parents, community and professions, said Founder and Executive Director Rena Smith.

Communication skills, drugs and violence and HIV/AIDS prevention are among the five

workshop topics to be discussed Saturday.

Participants will rotate among all the one-hour-long classes with a lunch break from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch will not be provided.

Michelle Cotton, field coordinator for the federally-funded Teens, Crime and the Community program, will give the keynote address at the luncheon to be held from noon to 1 p.m.

"Through this conference we're hoping to get more kids and parents involved (in the program)," said Founder and Executive Director Rena Smith.

This is the first year in the group's four-year history that event organizers did not hold a back-to-school fair in August, Smith said.

They opted instead to hold this weekend's conference,

because "we decided our kids need to know how to prevent crime," she said.

The group has, however, been very active in the community, officials said. During the last year alone, teens organized a walk against drugs, designed a drug hotline billboard and fed the homeless at Christmas, officials said.

Since the start of the program, which is funded by grants from the federal Weed-N-Seed program, more than 400 area youth have also taken classes, like self-esteem, conflict management and street law.

"When we formed four years ago, we were really tired of seeing our youngsters go in and out of the juvenile justice system with no new alternatives," Smith said.

The mission is still the same, but to continue doing good work,

the grassroots group needs new teens and parents to fill its rosters, as participants only stay in the classes for 15 weeks at a time, Smith said.

By having events like this weekend's conference, organizers hope to drum up the needed resources, because "without the support of the community, we will not survive."

"Our funding is always in jeopardy," Smith said. "We write grants, and they are always in competition. We need the manpower and resources," only new participants can bring.

For more information, call 647-5800.

Brown to keynote weekend luncheon

By Nichole Davis
Sentinel-Voice

Motivational speaker and former television talk-show host Les Brown will be the keynote speaker at a weekend convention for Las Vegas black public administrators. The event is open to the general public.

The local chapter of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA) will host their 6th annual luncheon Saturday at the Tropicana Resort and Casino, 3801 S. Las Vegas Blvd.

The event, which will be held in the Caribbean Room, starts at 11:30 a.m. with a business card exchange and mixer.

Advance tickets cost \$35 per person. The day of the event tickets prices increase to \$40.

Most widely known as the host of the nationally-syndicated *Les Brown Show*, Brown is also the author of *Live Your Dreams*, a

best-selling motivational book, and husband to longtime R & B singer Gladys Knight.

The speaker, who calls himself an expert on "human potential," has made a career out of teaching people how to shed negativisms and reach for the gold.

More than 150 Las Vegas turned out for the fifth annual luncheon where Dr. Dennis Kimbro, author of *Think and Grow Rich: A Black Choice*, discussed how to prepare oneself to be a financial giant.

It is hoped even more people will turn out this year to see the former syndicated talk-show host, organizers said.

A portion of the proceeds from the event will help fund scholarships for University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate students, who are interested in public administration, said NFBPA banquet chair Cranford



LES BROWN

Crawford.

"There is always a need for education, and the NFBPA wants to help out," he said, "especially in the area of public administration, which is a growing field." For ticket information, call Sylvia Clark or Crawford Cranford at 455-5210 or Albert Crosby at 455-5436.

TRANSPORTATION WORKSHOP NOTICE

Resort Corridor Major Investment Study

Purpose of the Workshops:

The Regional Transportation Commission desires public input and comments to some proposed solutions for enhancing transportation mobility in the Resort Corridor. Potential solutions and available technologies will be presented in an "open house" format.

Study Area:

The Resort Corridor is generally described as the area bounded by Valley View Boulevard on the west, Maryland Parkway (and Eastern Avenue at some points) on the east, Washington Avenue on the north, and Windmill Lane on the south.

When & Where:

Tuesday, September 17, between 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., at Paradise Park Community Center, 4770 S. Harrison Drive.

Saturday, September 21, and Sunday, September 22, between 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., in the Meadows Mall, first level in front of Sears.

Where You Come In:

The public workshops are held to present current study findings and to accept comments from individuals, organizations and agencies. Input is especially needed from residents and businesses in the area, and from individuals who regularly travel through the Resort Corridor for work or pleasure.

For Additional Information:

Call the Resort Corridor MIS staff for additional information on the workshops at 455-4481.

A Spanish-language interpreter will be on-site for the workshops. A sign language interpreter can be made available by contacting 455-4481, or TDD 455-5997, no later than five days prior to the workshop. The workshop locations are serviced by Citizens Area Transit. Call CAT®-RIDE (228-7433) for route and schedule information.



Marcia L. WASHINGTON

State Board of Education
District 2, Subdistrict A

Special thanks to all of the voters who showed their support by casting their vote for me as your State Board of Education representative.

Voters you made it possible for me to go to the the General Election on November 5. Again, thanks and I need your vote in November!