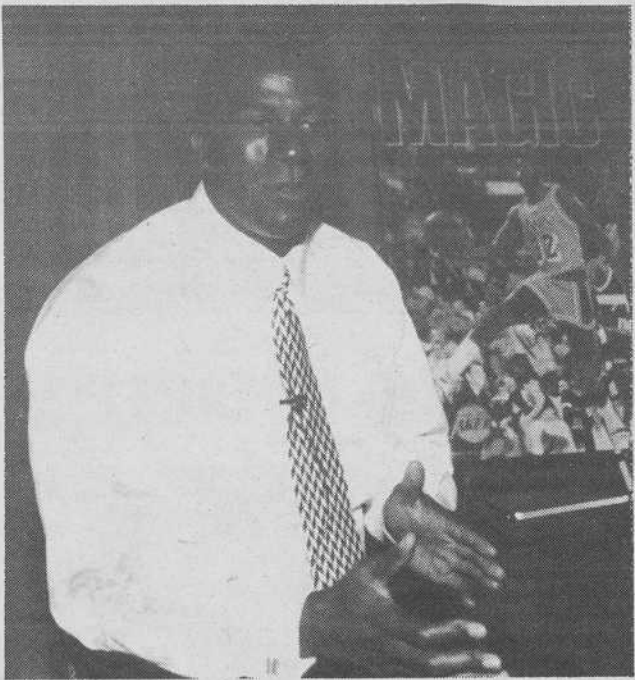


Lakers' great spreads a little Magic



Businessman and former NBA superstar Earvin "Magic" Johnson encouraged young people to avoid peer pressure, stick to their dreams and learn to overcome obstacles during a recent lecture at the Community College of Southern Nevada.

Photo by Savoy/LVS-Voice

By Nichole Davis
Sentinel-Voice

Former NBA superstar Earvin "Magic" Johnson urged kids to plan for their futures while following their dreams during a one-hour talk at the Community College of Southern Nevada recently.

The 37-year-old Michigan native and HIV spokesman tailored his Sept. 25th remarks to the youth in attendance. Johnson relayed anecdotes from throughout his life, focusing on challenges he faced and how he overcame them.

"I faced my first obstacle early

Shakur

(Continued from Page 1)

have said stands for "Member of Bloods."

Knight, who owns a home in southeast Las Vegas, also is the operator of the Flamingo Road nightclub Club 662. The numbers "662" correspond with the letters M-O-B on the telephone dial. Police said he gave them very little information during his interviews with them after the Sept. 7 drive-by shooting.

Knight and Shakur was driving on East Flamingo after the Mike Tyson-Bruce Seldon

on, when I was in the 9th grade, I had a reading disability," he said.

Already a standout basketball player, Johnson was reading at a 6th grade level. A caring teacher pulled him to the side and explained that he couldn't go to college unless he improved his reading.

He attended summer school for the next three years, taking a lot of grief from his friends for about a week each time. But by his senior year, "I was able to not only meet my grade level, I was able to surpass it," Johnson said.

The moral of the story is "don't

heavyweight boxing match, when a late-model white Cadillac pulled beside and a man began firing a pistol at the BMW. Knight suffered minor head injuries but Shakur was critically injured and died Sept. 13 at University Medical Center from complications suffered from chest and abdominal wounds.

Compton police said there have been a number of shootings in their area after Shakur murder and the motive of many have been in retaliation for the rapper's slaying.

let your peers or your friends stop you from doing something to improve yourself," he said, "or stop you from dreaming."

Johnson credited his parents for keeping him focused.

His father, a General Motors automotive plant worker, told him that he didn't want the three-time NBA Most Valuable Player to work at the plant. He wanted him to go to college and it changed his life.

"When your parents are on you young people, you won't really understand until you're older and away from them," he said. "I always remember to salute my mom and dad, 'cause without them I wouldn't be here."

It was only natural that Johnson would today be an entrepreneur. As a child, he made money any way he could, gathering up cans, mowing grass and shoveling snow. As a teenager, he worked for his dad and also cleaned executive offices on the weekends.

When he would get to the largest office in the building, "I would sit in there for an hour pretending I was" that person, he said. "That's where I started dreaming."

He also talked about basketball and HIV, telling the audience that having the disease was just another challenge he has faced.

"I'm a challenged person. All of the challenges I've had in my life I've met head on," Johnson said. More than 400 people turned out to catch a glimpse of Johnson, who entered the school's Nicholas Horn Theatre to a standing ovation.

Johnson stood center stage, speaking with the aid of a cordless microphone in front of three poster-size photos and a 30x50 foot American flag, which filled the back wall.

The multi-talented star's remarks were well received by the audience, which at several points during the event broke into shrieks of laughter.

Johnson picked out a child from the audience to act out scenes with the Chicago Bulls' superstar Michael Jordan and former Boston Celtics' legend

Larry Bird.

Although professional basketball was his life for 12 years, the star said he would never play again, with no explanation. Johnson has already re-purchased a partial ownership in the Lakers where played for his entire career and is now a vice president.

Other than that, he spoke little about basketball, and that was just fine with the audience.

"It was down to earth and brought a lot of inspiration to myself and other people there," said Gary Knight, a 31-year-old school bus driver who came directly from work to see his idol in his uniform.

"By looking at TV, I thought (Johnson's demeanor) was propaganda, but seeing him in person, I saw it was for real," he said. "And that made it even more inspirational as far as bringing awareness to myself and society."

Richard Moore, the president of the community college, agreed.

"I think he was one of the outstanding speakers of my lifetime," Moore said. "He is one of the great heroes of America."

"I'm just very impressed. He just got me. He's just magic," he said.

Johnson's address, the first speech in this year's Distinguished Lecturer Series, was funded in part by a donation from the Lincy Foundation.

Recent presidential candidate and multimillionaire magazine publisher Steve Forbes will present the series' next address December 12th. Tickets cost \$15 for adults and \$10 for students and seniors.

For more information, call 651-LIVE.

COMMENTARY

Crack to the inner cities via the CIA

Special to the Sentinel-Voice

Outrage continues to grow as more facts about Central Intelligence Agency's connection to drug dealing in the nation's black communities become known.

Already members of the Congressional Black Caucus have held meetings with CIA Director John Duetch as black groups around the country rally to demand an open, public inquiry by an independent party into the matter.

In August, the San Jose Mercury News ran a three-part series that linked the explosion of crack cocaine in the U.S. to a San Francisco Bay area drug ring that sold tons of cocaine to street gangs in Los Angeles and funneled millions into drug profits to the U.S. backed anti-Communist rebel militia in Nicaragua, better known as the Contras.

Local AmeriCorp program changes hands

By Nichole Davis
Sentinel-Voice

As the national AmeriCorp program starts its third year, the local chapter of the community service program has changed hands beginning this month.

For the last three years, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas had coordinated the program, which was first promised by President Bill Clinton during his 1992 campaign.

But "we're closing the program, and all of our remaining participants will complete the program by the end of September," said outgoing director Tracy Cotton.

"We felt it better fit the needs of the Clark County School District better than it fit the needs of UNLV," he said.

The CCSD has assumed command of the project Tuesday and will add 20 new positions. That will bring the total number of participants to 50, school district officials said. Twenty-three of next year's positions have already been filled.

The majority of the participants will work as teacher's aides in at-risk schools. They will be paid \$5.25 an hour and earn a college credit valued at more than \$2,700 after putting in 900 hours of service. The credit can be used to pay back student loans or to pay for college classes, officials said.

The CCSD program differs from the original scope of the UNLV project, which included work in environmental and legal non-profit agencies.

"We wrote the program to trim down to what we needed in our schools," said Carol Tipton, CCSD director of federal programs.

CCSD's program also faces other changes.

For one, the national program's budget is only guaranteed for one more year. After that, the program is at the mercy of Congress, Tipton said.

Secondly, all of the CCSD's positions will be part time, unlike the UNLV program where full-time positions were also available. School district members will work 19.5 hours a week, Tipton said.

But despite the changes, school district officials hope to have a year as successful as this last one.

"We had some wonderful AmeriCorp workers that helped kids in our schools," Tipton said. "And we wanted to ensure that happened for least one more year."

Nationwide, an estimated 25,000 members are serving in 430 AmeriCorp programs. More than 69,000 people have already gotten college scholarships.

For more information about the CCSD AmeriCorp program, call 799-8444.

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CORRECTION:

Last week's news brief about the Committed 100 Men banquet included incorrect information about J. David Hoggard Sr. He was one of the earlier presidents of the Las Vegas NAACP, but not its first. Also his late wife Mabel Hoggard was the first state-certified black teacher. H.P. Fitzgerald was the area's first black principal, not Mable Hoggard. The Sentinel-Voice apologizes for the mistake.

(See Crack, Page 6)