

LAS VEGAS

Sentinel



Voice

VOLUME 18, ISSUE 27

GRIOT COMMUNICATIONS GROUP, INC.

November 6, 1997

"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

Prop 209 battle far from over

Special to Sentinel-Voice

SAN FRANCISCO — The battle over affirmative action in California will go on despite Monday's decision by the Supreme Court not to hear challenges to Proposition 209.

Californians approved Proposition 209 a year ago, voting to ban the use of race or gender in state hiring, contracting or school admissions.

Both sides of the debate are now saying the issue is headed back to court, and leaders are among those choosing sides.

Gov. Pete Wilson, Proposition 209's chief proponent, says he will sue California communities that do not abide by it.

But San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown says he plans to keep affirmative action in his city. "There will be no change in the program in San Francisco," he said.

Not if he can help it, says Glynn Custred, co-author of Proposition 209.

"Willie Brown, like Richard Nixon, thinks he's above the law. Willie Brown, like his soul mate George Wallace, is going to stand in the way of civil rights, and we are going to bring every legal measure we can against the Willie Browns," he said.

Ed Chen, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, predicts there will be many lawsuits over Proposition 209 in California.

"Several kinds of cases are going to come up," he said.

"What is the meaning of 209? One is what is a preference? Does it apply to school desegregation? Does it apply to remedies for proven discrimination? Does it apply to recruitment? We don't know those answers at this point," he said.

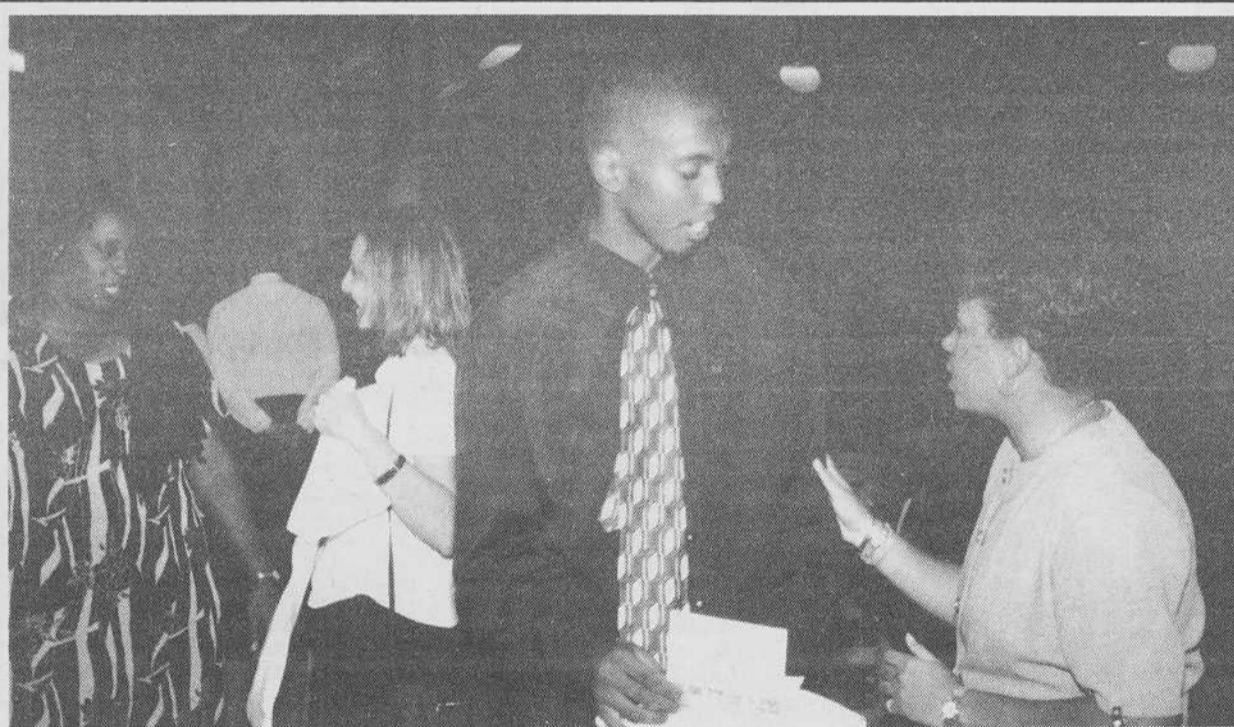
Chen says his organization will keep fighting Proposition 209.

"We are going to continue to fight for equality. We believe that affirmative action in certain circumstances is required, is warranted and is the only way to really achieve true integration in our nation," he said.

Although the Supreme Court would not hear California's case, it will eventually rule on the issue of affirmative action.

The justices have agreed to hear a Piscataway, New Jersey, case over a school board's decision to lay off a white teacher but keep a black teacher.

In that case, the court will have to decide if affirmative action can be used to foster diversity even if there is no past record of discrimination to remedy.



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

Neighborhood College graduate Alan Fowler receives congratulations from Kelly Woods, of the Clark County Neighborhood Services Design Team, while fellow graduate Tomiko Barnes (rear left) accepts compliments from a friend during the Oct. 29 graduation ceremony at the Clark County Government Center.

26 graduate from "Neighborhood College"

By Lee Brown
Sentinel-Voice

Twenty-six students — from teens to retirees — graduated Oct. 29 from an inaugural county program geared toward leadership.

Smiles and hugs were common as participants in the Clark County Neighborhood College Program celebrated their commencement.

The ceremony, at the Clark County Government Center, highlighted students who took part in the new 10-week leadership program designed to aid the community interaction with various agencies and government staff, to find and manage resources the community on tap and to develop a variety of empowerment projects and programs.

"Through the project, we're trying to find a good avenue to be able to bridge government and the citizens together — getting them to work

together on projects and issues," said Jennifer Lances, manager of Clark County Neighborhood Services Division.

"When I first started the program, I was kind of intimidated by all the adults there," said Alan Edric Fowler, a 17-year-old senior at Western High School, and the youngest of the graduates.

"But I just want to get the message out to all the young people out there that you shouldn't let walls like that keep you down. Youth can do things in the community. Just because you're not 18 years of age — things can be done by the youth. Especially all of the black males out there. They feel that the way society is, they don't have a voice, they don't have a say in what goes on. But they do."

Fowler worked with Variety Day Home, a day care center located on D Street. They have a resource center there with computers.

His plan: to expand the resource center concept so that other low-income day care

centers could surface.

Lances said there are other communities in the country who have developed neighborhood colleges, but Las Vegas' is unique in that it has added the project component to it.

"When we were asked to look at developing a neighborhood services program in the county, we recommended to the board — and they approved — the development of the Neighborhood College in order to give citizens the tools needed to interact in government — to do programs in their community," she said.

Thus, the college was designed to teach residents how to interact effectively with government and fellow residents.

"Over the 10 weeks in the class we helped them (participants) more clearly define their project or issue and develop an action plan for it," Lances said. "And

(See Graduation, Page 6)

NAACP to review ethics

Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON — Two NAACP national board members have admitted stealing from associates. Two others are under investigation for their financial dealings.

Two years after it adopted a code of conduct in response to financial problems, the nation's oldest and largest civil rights group is again trying to quell doubts about its organizational ethics.

NAACP Chairwoman

MYRLIE EVERS-WILLIAMS

Myrlie Evers-Williams said the association will conduct a full review of its ethics policy in lieu of the latest problems involving members of the 64-person national board. None of the cases involved misuse of NAACP funds, she said.

"It is critically important that this be handled in a fair way, and it will," Evers-Williams said. "I will not take sides on this."

Some say the review is not enough. Joseph Madison, a national board member from Washington, said the board members who admitted wrongdoing should resign whether NAACP funds were involved or not.

"These are personal friends, but they should step down for the good of the organization," Madison said. "We need to get our focus back on the attack on affirmative action, police brutality and economic development."

Hazel Dukes, a national board member from New York and close aide to Evers-Williams, pleaded guilty last month to attempted grand larceny. Dukes, the 65-year-old former president of New York City's Off-Track Betting Corp., admitted in court that she took more than \$13,000 from a leukemia-stricken employee who had trusted her to cash her paychecks and help pay her bills.

Last year, another Evers-Williams supporter on the national board, James E. Ghee of Virginia, was sentenced to six months in jail after pleading guilty to 11 misdemeanor counts of embezzlement. Ghee, who remains a member of the NAACP board, originally was charged with felony embezzlement of \$38,517 from an estate and faced a maximum of 20 years in prison.

Two other board members who aren't aligned with Evers-Williams also are facing financial questions.

The Rev. Henry Lyons, president of the National Baptist

(See Ethics, Page 3)