

BUSINESS

Black executives respond to affirmative action attacks

They say it's "a necessary means to a profitable end"

By William Reed
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Those who've been saying that blacks in corporate America have moved into America's upper-class and forgotten the rest of us should stop and take a look at the members and work of the Business Policy Review Council (BPRC).

In its "Corporate Response to Affirmative Action," the BPRC makes more than an endorsement of equal opportunity and affirmative action. The group provides

America and corporate leaders inspiring and measurable documentation of the initiative and success millions more blacks are capable of when given the chance.

"The current trend to dismantle affirmative action makes it imperative for corporate executives to respond to the issue," the report states. "Corporate executives must make the strategic, economic and bottom line arguments that demonstrate how profit margins, earnings, volume and market share have

Business Exchange

By William Reed,
publisher of Who's Who in Black Corporate America.



been, and can be, increased by including African-Americans in corporate employment, contracting and advertising.

They must not only dispel the distortions in discussions about affirmative action, but also must document the economic

impact of diversity on the bottom line.

The BPRC is comprised of the first wave of blacks to enter corporate America. It is an independent organization founded in 1982 to provide black executives with a professional network and forum to share expertise and give direction on public policy affecting American businesses and minorities. Members of the BPRC are among the blacks that during the 20 years between 1970 and 1989 gained upper middle-class status and

grew in size and clout.

For its report, the group invited heads of black organizations to a Hilton Head, S.C., retreat to discuss the national climate of affirmative action and how it affects African-Americans. In the discussions, all attendees agreed that the purpose of affirmative action is to "create and maintain an environment where merit can prevail."

"BPRCers have proven that in free enterprise, success is not measured by skin color, (See Affirmative, Page 13)



Federal Reserve conferees tour West Las Vegas

On March 5th, over 100 conferees toured Las Vegas communities in need of greater economic development as part of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco's 1998 Community Reinvestment Conference. Conferees saw reinvestment needs and successes, such as the West Las Vegas Arts Center. Pictured are Marcia Robinson (center), senior cultural activities specialist at the center, who greeted the Fed's Adria Graham Scott (left), community investment advisor, and Joy Hoffmann Molloy (right), community affairs officer.

Going digital can help avert currency crisis

By John William Templeton
Special to Sentinel-Voice

"Mother's Day" is about to go into cyberspace oblivion.

Although there might be a two-year limit on receiving certain types of federal assistance under welfare reform, the U.S. government was supposed to have gotten out of the business of sending out checks by Jan. 1, 1998.

Congress mandated that at least two-thirds of federal disbursements be transmitted electronically by that date. I've been racking my brain trying to figure out what would prompt African-Americans to embrace the digital age more fully, now I think that this may be it.

The preferred means of receiving assistance is Direct Deposit where the amount shows up in the receiver's bank account on the designated day of the month. Interestingly enough, banks have been doing everything possible to discourage poor people from opening bank accounts.

With 20 percent of American families too poor to afford the costs of a bank account, there is a looming train wreck.

The mythology of Black life holds that the entire community revolves around the first of the month, when welfare checks arrive.

This is preposterous because most states (See Cyberbank, Page 13)



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