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Our View

Sentinel-Voice: 19year family affair

Nineteen years ago this week, a legacy was born; a legacy sculpted from Black struggle to tell our story; a legacy fathered by Frederick Douglass' Northstar newspaper; a legacy passed on through the generation and inherited by today's Blackowned publications.

The Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice was born 19 years ago, thanks to Ed and Betty Brown. Like many other Black-owned periodicals, it was family-owned and its birth went unheralded by most of mainstream America.

And like its cousins in the Black newspaper realm, it struggled in its formative years to turn a profit, to hire needed staff, to get advertising, to meet production schedules, to cover the stories the community wanted to see covered and to provide a voice to a people long silenced by the mainstream media.

Like some of its cousins, it skirted all the problems, using hard work and savvy, while it watched other family members fail to make it past infancy. Some newspapers pushed passed infancy and made it into pre-school, only to falter in their third or fourth years of existence.

The elementary years proved a learning experience as the paper grew in several different areas: coverage area, readership, respect. More and more cousins fell by the wayside.

In junior high, the Sentinel-Voice grew even stronger, welcoming community input from the city's most respected blacks. More and more cousins fell by the wayside.

The early teen years saw the paper fall on hard times. Though Las Vegans expected their paper every week, publishing became harder and harder. As profits dropped, so did morale. The Sentinel-Voice teetered on the brink of extinction.

All was not lost.

Rising phoenix-like from the ashes, the paper rebounded under new management (and a new family) and refocused on its mission to provide the Black community with news it could use.

Now in its collegiate years, the Sentinel-Voice faces a task as daunting as it first faced when it started in 1979: It must transcend the "littlebrother" label tagged to many Black newspapers and prove itself the equal, or better, of the mainstream media. Criticism will follow the task. Indeed it already has. Cries bellow from different pockets of the community contending the paper has lost sight of its focus, is controlled by advertising and doesn't report all the news.

The criticism is fine. It's common for families to argue and fight. We, at the Sentinel-Voice, view the Black community as a family. We've tried to keep our family abreast of the news that affects them and report it as fair and objective journalists should. We have tried to be a resource. Sometimes we've failed. Other times we triumphed magnificently. But we've always kept









Black youth learning that achievement is cool

Special to Sentinel-Voice Achievement is cool.

That's one way of characterizing the goal of our Campaign for African-American Achievement, the national effort we and a broadbased coalition of black religious, professional, fraternal and civic organizations have launched to inspire more African-American youngsters to strive to do well in school.

Last Saturday, we held our inaugural induction ceremony for the Thurgood Marshall Achievers Society, our campaign's honor society, which, of course, is named after the late civil rights hero and United States Supreme Court

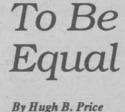
In twenty-seven cities across the country, local Urban League affiliates joined with partners' local representatives to honor more than 2,200 elementary and high school-aged youth. Each youngster received a certificate for their induction in the Achievers Society and a jacket with the Society's logo designed by the talented young fashion designer Karl Kani.

We want our youth to believe that achievement is cool. As in "hip." As in desirable. As in good,

Millions of black youth are already achieving. They are flexing their intellects and developing the discipline and scholastic skills they need to prepare for their future.

We want to celebrate those youngsters and use their myriad examples to persuade more of their peers that they, too, can shape their own future by believing achievement is cool.

Our emphasis



By Hugh B. Price President National Urban League

want to point out that it must be

even more ingrained in

African-Americans if we are

to prosper in the 21st century.

must understand the meaning

of the expression found in the

19th-century memoirs of many

former slaves who educated

themselves: "I studied because

I found that knowledge is

Our coalition, which

the

denominations and 65,000

churches of the Congress of -

National Black Churches, has

made a start in expanding the

efforts many of us-have carried

on individually for years. The

Campaign coalition also

includes such organizations as

the Pan Hellenic Council of

black fraternities and sororities,

the National Alliance of Black

School Educators, the

Congressional Black Caucus

Foundation, the National Bar

Association and the National

Black Child Development

modeled on the McKnight

Achievers Society established

a decade ago by Dr. Israel

Tribble, Jr., president of the

Education Fund and an Urban

Florida

Tampa-based

The honors group is

power."

includes

More of our youngsters



educational achievement is League trustee. That program hardly something new. But we has inducted a total of 14,000 black youngsters throughout the state. I was in Washington, D.C.

last weekend, along with General Colin L. Powell, retired chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Thurgood Marshall, Jr., Thurgood Marshall's son, at the ceremonies at Metropolitan Baptist Church, a pillar of strength for its inner-city neighborhood. We saw the excitement on the faces of the 24 students we inducted and witnessed their acceptance of the responsibility Powell charged them with.

"We didn't work this hard," he said, holding the students'

rapt gaze. "We didn't come this far. We didn't pile generation upon generation of achievement to fail now. Achievement is what I want you to get. It's yours for the asking. It's yours for the dreaming. But it will only come if you're willing to work for

Our inductees, from schools in and around the District of Columbia, told us they got the

Melody Shaw, a ninthgrader at Washington's Patricia Roberts Harris Education Center, said, "I think we are setting a good example for students who come behind us. We're showing them that if they want to excel in school, they really can."

Heavenly Hicks, a junior at Central High School in Prince George's County, Maryland, called the ceremony "a very moving experience for me. The (Achievers) Society is a good place for young African-Americans to be able to excel."

The responsibility of adults - parents, educators, and religious, civic and political (See Achievement, Page 16)

Les Vecus Sentinel Voice

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