

# NEWS CLIPS

## HUD RECRUITING CITIZENS FOR FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Housing and Urban Development secretary Andrew Cuomo has launched an initiative to revitalize cities by recruiting hundreds of the best and brightest minds into government service through two- to four-year temporary fellowships. In partnership with Harvard University, HUD's Community Builders Fellowship will resemble an "urban Peace Corps," offering highly competitive posts for skilled professionals to help revive and strengthen neighborhoods. Community Builders will be based out of HUD's 81 field offices and will travel into nearby cities and towns to serve as the agency's first point of contact. They will be equipped with laptop computers and have access to the latest information on how the agency can assist communities and what HUD-funded efforts are already underway. "The Community Builders program marks a turning point in the way we approach problem-solving in our communities, especially our urban centers, which are facing complex economic and social challenges," Cuomo said. "We will link the determined energy and bold ideas of our brightest minds with the greatest needs in communities, creating a revolving door of talent between HUD and our communities and replenishing that talent every two to four years." HUD will hire 230 Community Builders this year and another 230 in 1999.

## SURVEY: FEW PEOPLE AWARE OF COCKROACH-ASTHMA LINK

Fewer than one percent of Americans can identify cockroaches as a leading cause of asthma attacks in inner cities, according to the results of a new survey. The survey was conducted by Louis Harris and Associates for "Fight Asthma Now," a nationwide campaign trying to raise awareness of the link between roaches and the high rate of asthma among inner city children. Allergy and Asthma Network/Mothers of Asthmatics, HOPE for Kids and the Clorox Company's Combat Insect Control Systems, are spearheading the campaign. This survey follows last year's landmark study that proved "that roach allergens are a major cause of asthma attacks in America's inner cities." The results, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, showed that children are at high risk of asthma attacks if they are allergic to roaches and their homes show high levels of roach allergens — the protein found in the saliva, droppings and remains of the insects. To make the public aware of the link between asthma and roaches, AAN/MA will be sending more than 14,000 volunteers to distribute 500,000 bilingual educational brochures in New York, Los Angeles, Houston and Miami and other cities with severe roach problems. Since 1980, the number of Americans with asthma has soared 75 percent to 15 million, according to figures released by the Centers for Disease Control. Rates are highest in the inner city, especially among African-Americans and Hispanic Americans.

## COST OF COLLEGE TOO HIGH FOR MANY AFRICAN-AMERICANS

A National Student Loan survey shows the cost of borrowing money may be too high for many African-American students. Nellie Mae, the country's largest non-profit provider of student loans, conducted the survey. It found that 69 percent of African-Americans who enrolled in college but did not finish said they left because of high student loan debt, as opposed to 43 percent of White students who cited the same reason. Data showed that the average student loan debt level, from a population of approximately 65 percent undergraduate borrowers and 35 percent graduate borrowers, increased from \$8,200 in 1991 to \$18,800 in 1997. Borrowers said that their college education debt is causing them to delay starting families, purchasing homes and making other major life decisions. The survey included responses from 1,098 undergraduate, vocational and professional student loan borrowers who began repaying their loans between January 1993 and July 1996. About 60 percent of college students financed their education in part through loans.

## 'JUNK YARD DOG' DIES IN MISS. CAR ACCIDENT

FOREST, Miss. — Sylvester Ritter, known to pro wrestling fans as the "Junk Yard Dog", was killed Tuesday in a car accident. Ritter, from Charlotte, N.C., was killed about 11:40 a.m. on Interstate 20 in central Mississippi. The Highway Patrol refused to give any other details. The nearly 300-pound "Junk Yard Dog" wore full length red tights with white boots and a dog collar. The collar had a large chain attached to it. He was known for his trademark head butts, and his finishing move was called "The Thump," a giant power slam. His contemporaries in the ring included Hulk Hogan, Jesse Ventura, Roddy Piper, Randy Savage and Nikolai Volkoff.

# Michigan legislation designed to help Black farmers

By Marcus Amick

Special to Sentinel-Voice

The Michigan House and Senate recently passed a resolution to help end years of discrimination in the state against Black farmers.

The resolution introduced by State Rep. Ed Vaughn, D-Detroit, urges the Department of Agriculture to take strong steps to stop all discrimination against Black farmers, to settle pending claims and to encourage the Congress to enact legislation to waive the statute of limitations for discrimination cases.

Recent investigations by the Congressional Black Caucus and organizations such as the National Black Farmers Association revealed that Black farmers have

overwhelmingly been denied access to capital, a vital component of farming operations.

When not denied outright, the investigations showed that loan approvals have taken far longer for Black farmers than for White farmers.

According to a recent article in the June issue of *Emergence* magazine titled "Bitter Harvest," Whites received 91.4 percent of the USDA loans approved during 1996-1997 while Black farmers received less than three percent.

According to NBFA, the USDA has foreclosed on 1,000 Black farms in the last several months. Reports show that Black farmers are losing land at the rate of 9,000 acres a week.

"The plight of the Black farmers is a crucial issue in that they are facing extinction by the year 2000 since they're less than one percent of the 1.9 million farmers in the country in a trillion dollar industry," said DeWayne Boyd, legislative assistant of Michigan Congressman John Conyers.

"Michigan's agricultural industry is a \$40 billion industry and we only have 125 Black farmers in the state," he said. "We will be immeasurable if the numbers go any lower."

A federal judge has urged the USDA to settle a \$2.5 billion lawsuit filed by hundreds of Black farmers and is also considering whether the case should represent an

estimated 2,500 Black farmers who claim they were discriminated against between 1983 and 1997.

Vaughn, who serves as vice chair of the House's Agriculture Committee, said Michigan's House and Senate resolution will help to relieve what has become a troubling epidemic.

"We've got to do something to save Black farmers and save Black land," he said. "The USDA has ripped Black farmers off over the years and it's been proven. This concurrent resolution, which I believe is one of the first of its kind in the nation, will help to put the pressure on the USDA to settle these claims."

Marcus Amick writes for the *Michigan Chronicle*.

# Ex-legislator back in fray on racism debate

Special to Sentinel-Voice

NEW YORK - After 12 years out of politics, Julian Bond is back at the forefront of one of America's most divisive issues - racism.

"Over the last decade, I think racial relations have stagnated or gotten worse," the new head of the NAACP says in the June 8 issue of *People* magazine, blaming congressional conservatives. "They've aroused white America's fears about such things as affirmative action and rhetorically they've gotten the upper hand."

In the early 1960s, Bond helped found the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, SNCC, an offshoot of Martin Luther King Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership



JULIAN BOND

Conference.

Bond, 58, became a Georgia state legislator in 1965 and a state senator in 1974. In 1986 he made an unsuccessful congressional run, then retreated from politics, turning to academia.

In February of this year, he was named chairman of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

"If you told me when I was at SNCC that I would be chair of the NAACP, I would've said no way," Bond said. "I would've said they were a bunch of old, gray-haired people. But now I am one of those gray-haired people, and I want the NAACP to be the most powerful advocacy group in America."

# Rosa Parks OK after fall at home

Special to Sentinel-Voice

DETROIT — Civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks was in good condition Sunday after suffering a fall at home the previous day.

Parks, 85, was hospitalized at Detroit Medical Center, where tests to see whether she had a heart attack or a stroke reportedly were negative.

Karen Dumas, Parks' spokeswoman, said it was unclear when she would be released.

Parks gained fame in 1955 for refusing to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Ala., bus to a white man, which was required in that segregationist era. Her arrest touched off a black boycott of Montgomery

buses.

She has lived in Detroit since 1957. In 1987, she founded the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development, which stages an annual "Pathways to Freedom" bus tour taking students to historical civil rights sites around the United States.



ROSA PARKS

## UNLV

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could not support him as a human being," said Kamaria Osayande, Coleman's mother.

Osayande said the university's attitude then turned callous. They berated her and her family and attributed Coleman's departure to "bad attitude," despite his record of community service and being a team leader.

Coleman is pursuing his mechanical engineering at the school and claims coaches once asked him to change to an easier, less stressful major. He was not interviewed.

"It was a 100 percent call of the Chancellor's office as to how to proceed with the inquiry," McDonald said.

"It's no longer about me; it's bigger than me," Coleman said who had no idea that he would be at the center of all this. "It involves the whole community."

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