



Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

The new William and Dorothy Raggio High Tech Center at Western High School

Raggio Tech Center? Lawmaker questions naming facility after Sen. Bill Raggio

Catisha Marsh
Sentinel-Voice

Sen. Bill Raggio may get the new Community College of Southern Nevada's Tech Center at Western High School named after him and his wife.

But not if some community members can help it.

On Monday, Assemblyman Wendell Williams, Clark County School District Board Trustee Shirley Barber and a group of concerned citizens met with CCSN president Dr. Richard Moore who named the center.

"It's a slap in the face," Williams said. "Raggio has been very unkind to Clark County. It is appalling for our community to be disrespected like this."

Williams was referring to Raggio's vote against Clark County on the Fair Share Bill that changed the distribution of tax dollars in Clark County's favor. And although the gaming industry operates statewide, Raggio helped pass a neighborhood casino bill that limited places where casinos can locate in only one place—Clark County.

"He would never step foot in Western on his own, but



they're naming the center after him? It just doesn't make sense," Williams said.

Neither Raggio nor Moore could be reached for comment. When asked if she thought Moore would change the name of the center after the meeting, Barber said, "I don't think that Dr. Moore is going to give in that easily. He is very political. He's astute and he's no doubt gaining some political favors in return for this."

Leaders supportive of building new schools

Catisha Marsh
Sentinel-Voice

With some powerful nudging, the Clark County School District Board of Trustees agreed last week to add rebuilding old schools to its January agenda.

Assemblywoman Chris Giunchigliani, D-Las Vegas, urged the board to consider building more schools to house the growing student population as opposed to bigger schools.

"Smaller schools are better for disadvantaged students," she said, explaining that schools, when rebuilt, shouldn't be warehouses.

Assemblyman Wendell Williams, D-North Las Vegas, called the condition of schools in District C "embarrassing."

"New middle schools will provide a tremendous resource for the community," Franklin Simpson, program coordinator for project Weed 'N' Seed, said.

"Not only will they serve to improve the lives of students, parents can be put to work



Nevada legislators Wendell Williams & Chris Giunchigliani

constructing the new buildings and schools can be used after hours as community centers."

Board Trustee Shirley Barber supports rebuilding new schools and said she has organized a team to research the costs.

Giunchigliani said that the city had bond monies from 1994 and 1996 that had not been used and could be redirected to this initiative. Members of the board contested that idea saying these funds had been earmarked for other uses.

Board chairwoman Susan Brager said that the city must also look to the state government to provide funding for new schools.

C.O.W. delivering computer aided programs

John T. Stevens III
Sentinel-Voice

Las Vegas who live in computer-deprived communities now have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the basics of technology. Computers on Wheels or the C.O.W. program lets people without access to computers graze on on-line information ranging from math to reading.

Priori Enterprise, 333 N. Rancho Drive, is a company that provides local social programs. It started C.O.W. in 1997, a mobile unit that provides computer training and assistance to people who need to enhance their math,

reading, typing, and English as a second language skills. It also includes lessons on how to get and keep a job. C.O.W. also stands for Clinic on Wheels, which supplies preventive medical attention, and Classroom on Wheels, an offshoot that offers child care.

C.O.W. buses make stops at Buena Vista Arms, Halle Hewetson Elementary School, Clark High School, the West Las Vegas Library and Doolittle Recreational Center.

"We'll train them and send them out to companies to get jobs," said Regina Brandon, vice-president of Priori. "It's

not just for African-Americans, but for anyone who needs assistance."

Twenty-seven year-old Zinnie Lee, who is a mother of three, participates in C.O.W. "I enjoy the program and it has helped me to improve my typing. I would like to work somewhere as an accountant," she said.

The C.O.W. programs are funded by the state education department. The computers and classroom share a \$118,000 Even Start grant, while the clinic is funded separately by the department. In order for the program to get grant monies, participants in the computers program

have to meet certain requirements. They must take part in adult education, either by obtaining a G.E.D. or take up English as a second language. To take advantage of child care, the parents must have a child between the ages of birth to eight years in early childhood education, and join parent and child involvement classes.

"The program raises people's self-esteem and they can see their progress," said program analyst Pam Andrews who teaches two classes. She has eight students. "They get the training they need to get jobs to help themselves."



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C.O.W. program instructor Pam Andrews assists Jewel Washington during a computer application class.

Jewel Washington, 33 and a participant, said, "This program has really motivated (See C.O.W., Page 3)