



FRED HYMES

CCSN staffer describes 30-year fight against institutional racism

Al Triche
Sentinel-Voice

"This ... was retaliation, for not 'scratching where I don't itch.'" - Fred Hymes

An African-American staff member at Community College of Southern Nevada, who began working there when the school opened, is charging the institution with racism. Fred Hymes says mistreatment he endured as an employee has inhibited his career of nearly three decades, and has damaged his health.

Hymes formal complaint, filed April 7 with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), says in part: "I believe that I am being discriminated against because of my race ... and in retaliation for complaining of race discrimination in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended."

Twenty-eight years ago, Hymes went to work at what was then Clark County Community College as an audio-visual technician. During his very first year on the staff, he said, his department head referred to him as a "nigger" while on a staff retreat.

Not one to let such things pass, he complained to then-president Charles Donnelly, who, Hymes says, told him he shouldn't have "such a thin skin." Hymes formally complained to the affirmative action arm of the college's personnel department and says not only did the issue go unaddressed, but the actual record of his complaint has not-so-mysteriously disappeared from CCSN files.

What Hymes calls a pattern of mistreatment, administrative inaction and retaliation for his complaints have led him along a path that has taken him to the EEOC. He says the situation, for him, became intolerable between last September and the end of March.

For his first two years, he claims, he had been tormented by his department head, Ken Hill - the individual who earlier

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NAACP president's son shot dead

Special to Sentinel-Voice

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department is investigating the apparent shooting death of Andre Collins, the 31-year old son of NAACP Las Vegas Branch president Gene Collins.

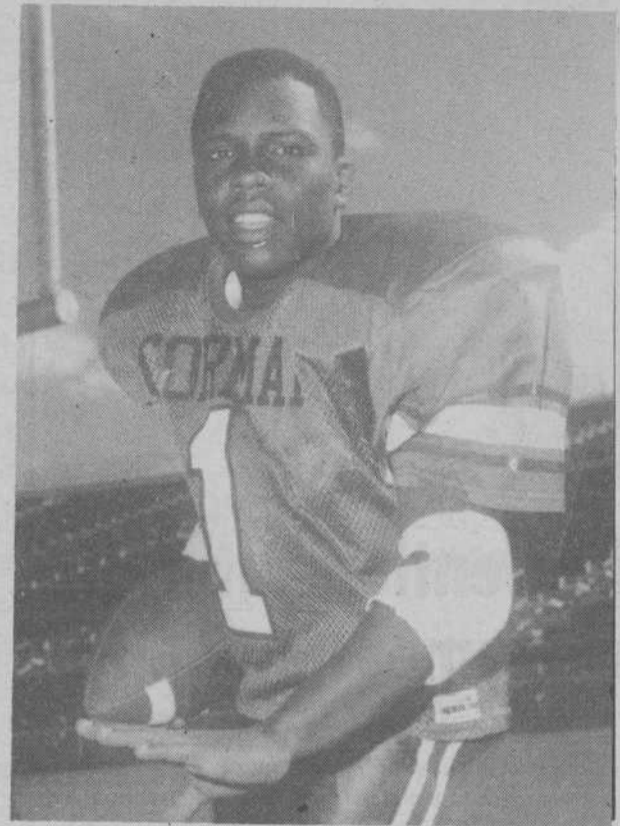
The homicide which occurred on Tuesday evening is the 28th this year.

"We received a call last night at 9:19 p.m. Andre Collins was found deceased, obviously from a gunshot wound," said Lt. Wayne Petersen, head of Metro's homicide department.

Petersen said it occurred at "a recording studio located at 880 E. Sahara. The studio is owned by a friend and business associate of the victim. He is the one who found Mr. Collins. We believe he was seen alive at the recording studio at around 7 p.m."

His father can't understand why this happened. "He was both loved and respected by his friends," said Gene Collins. I just want them (Metro) to find the person(s) who are responsible and ask them why."

"We have no possible indication of a motive (or) possible suspect. We're talking with the victim's family and friends to determine who last saw him alive, said Petersen. There



ANDRE COLLINS

was no other evidence or witnesses to help us with the investigation. We'll be asking for anyone with information to call us."

"Tambourines to Glory" set to shake up Las Vegas' cultural scene

Catisha Marsh
Sentinel-Voice

AACAF's Langston Hughes' gospel comedy "Tambourines to Glory" goes up Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the West Las Vegas Library Theatre, 951 West Lake Mead Blvd.

AACAF, the African-American Cultural Arts Foundation, is producing the show to infuse Las Vegas with a heightened appreciation for culture and theater, in addition to Las Vegas already being the "Entertainment Capital of the World."

"Tambourines to Glory" is an original gospel comedy by noted writer and poet Langston Hughes. The stage is set when one of the lead characters, Essie Johnson is evicted from her Harlem, New York City apartment in the 1940s. Her neighbor and friend, Laura Reed, comes to her rescue and the two embark on a scheme to make money by founding a curbside ministry that evolves into a full-blown Harlem church called "Tambourine Temple."

"This is our first endeavor in sponsoring a production of this magnitude and we feel that a production such as this and the anticipated success of it will allow us to sponsor other plays and cultural events for the community," said Ramon Savoy, Vice-President of AACAF and publisher of the *Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice*.

"We've been up against a lot of adversity," said director Dianna Saffold, but we've been under an umbrella of grace. At the outset of the show, we lost two lead actors. Fortunately, Makeeba Ricks, who plays Essie, stepped into a lead role. Laura, played by Patrice Ashley, came aboard and having worked with her before, I can say she always gives it all she's got."

Saffold, who has been in Las Vegas for 12 years, has directed several plays. "Tambourines to Glory" will be her seventh production, locally.

She trained at Karamu Theaters in Ohio, the same school that Hughes came from.

Local celebrity Power 88 deejay Galaxy Glenn will star as Buddy Lomax, the personification of the devil. Through conniving ways, greed and corruption he helps build the Tambourine Temple.

"Galaxy has proved that he really is 'The Complete Entertainer,'" said Saffold, because he's remained disciplined and committed to the community theater experience."

The cast is really diverse. It comprises experienced veterans to fresh, beginning actors from 8 to 70-years-old. Q, an up-and-coming Chicago-based R&B singer, will make a guest appearance as a bartender and fifteen-year-old comedian Mark Heath, who has performed at the Apollo and opened up for the rap group Outkast, is playing the role of C.J., a young, guitar plucking choir boy who falls in love with Essie's daughter, Marietta, played by debuting actress Janelle Dent. Vera Lee, an accomplished drummer and singer, who has headlined in

nightclubs across the country, is playing the role of Birdie Lee, the church's conscience. Grant Harrison, a local community theater favorite will also appear as Deacon Eddie Pryor.

And everyone's favorite afternoon drivetime deejay, Billy 'T' Thompson will also lend his talent as Brother Bud, who evolves from a stumbling drunk to an exemplary deacon of the church.

"My production staff took a 60-year-old play, a group of community actors, a small budget and sheer desire and have made my dream come true by helping me bring Langston's rhythmic prose from the pages of his book to the stages of Las Vegas," said Saffold.

"I just can't say enough about my family, Freddie and Chandler, who support me in my endless quest to make my mark in theatre," she said.

"Tambourines to Glory" premieres Friday at 7 p.m. at the West Las Vegas Library Theater. The VIP reception (See Play, Page 2)