

## NEWS BRIEFS

### STUDY: U.S. CHILDREN ARE STILL SEGREGATED

America's children are being exposed to racially limited social and academic surroundings, but their parents have more opportunities, according to a new study. "We are seeing diversification of American society," Brian Stults, a researcher for the Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban And Regional Research, an urban research center at the University of Albany, told reporters. "It is evident everywhere, but not when we go home at night." The center studied America's racial segregation patterns by using 2000 U.S. Census facts out of 331 urban areas from 10 years ago.

### AFRICAN-AMERICANS AND WOMEN CLIMBING THE GOVERNMENT LADDER

The U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), in their studies of high-ranking employees in 24 federal agencies, reported more women and minorities in the Senior Executive Service are now being promoted by the federal government compared to 10 years ago. The GAO reported that most of the non-White promotions were of African-Americans. Members of SES are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. They hold jobs in the legislative, judicial branches, law-enforcement and intelligence agencies. In addition, SES members hold highly ranked positions in the executive branch.

### EBAY BANS KU KLUX KLAN, NAZI OR ANY OTHER HATE ITEMS

Ebay, the popular online auction site, has banned items associated with the Ku Klux Klan, Nazis or any other hate items. Ebay officials also said it would extend its new policy to murder souvenirs, including the artwork and letters of criminals. Among the items found by Ebay were medallions with nooses and whips from the 1800s costing \$500, and Klansmen postcards. FBI investigation documents of 1,500 pages about Viola Liuzzo, the civil rights worker murdered by three members of the KKK in 1965, were also featured on the site. "As the Ebay community expands around the globe, we are encountering different laws and different points of view as to what constitutes illegal, offensive or inappropriate items," Mike Jacobsen, the company's attorney, told reporters.

### JUNK FOOD TARGETS AFRICAN-AMERICAN TV VIEWERS

Sixty percent of food commercials are directed to African-American television viewers, said a recent study. The study, from the University of Chicago Children's Hospital, also showed that a disproportionate amount of commercials for desserts and soda aired on Black shows. It showed Black shows received 31 percent of dessert advertising and 13 percent of soda commercials, as compared to, respectively, the 11 percent and 2 percent general population shows received. It also showed that 27 percent of Black television show characters are overweight, as compared to 2 percent on general audience shows. "These ads and the programming content may influence the eating behaviors of African Americans," senior study author Anjali Jain told reporters.

### CLEVELAND MAYOR NOT SEEKING FOURTH TERM

CLEVELAND (AP) - Michael R. White, the longest-serving mayor in the city's history, announced Wednesday that he will not seek a fourth four-year term this year. White, 49, a Democrat first elected in 1989 after serving on the City Council and in the Ohio Senate, announced his decision at Miles Standish Elementary School in his lifelong neighborhood. White said he wanted to spend more time with his family and "have done what I have come to do." White, who had said repeatedly that the mayor's job was the only one he ever wanted, thanked residents who "have given me an honor which I will never forget." The mayor has had several recent successes, including clearing the way for a long-delayed \$1.4 billion expansion project at the city-owned airport and voter approval of a school tax increase and bond issue. He had \$1.1 million in a campaign fund. White's decision is sure to make the mayor's race wide open, with no early front-runner. Two other Democrats, state Sen. Dan Brady and former Clinton administration official Raymond Pierce, have announced their candidacies.

## More Secret Service agents claim bias

WASHINGTON- More black agents joined a racial discrimination lawsuit against the Secret Service last week, adding new claims that they frequently endure racial slurs.

The 19, who include some former agents, join 38 others in a lawsuit first filed last February. They claim their white colleagues and supervisors regularly use a racial epithet to refer to criminal suspects and black leaders of other countries.

Secret Service spokesman Jim Mackin said "any allegation of racial insensitivity, whether 20 years ago or 20 days ago, is troubling to the Secret Service." Blacks hold 233 of the agency's 2,700 agent positions. Mackin said seven of the Secret Service's 11 largest field offices are headed by minorities.

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David Shaffer, an attorney for the plaintiffs, said the Secret Service has not improved working conditions for blacks in the past year.

"There have been some cosmetic changes, token promotions," he said.

One black agent, Eldridge Armstrong, said he was insulted this month while protecting former President Clinton during a trip to Asia.

He said a special agent assigned him to keep reporters in a secured area then told someone else, "Don't worry about the press pen, we have King Kong over there to watch over it."

"I was stunned," Armstrong, who is 6 feet 2 inches tall, wrote in papers filed Thursday in federal court in Washington.

Armstrong said he received an apology but was told he was too sensitive.

"It shows that racism is tolerated to this day," Shaffer said. Mackin said the incident was being investigated.

Also filed in the lawsuit were pictures allegedly showing a stripper performing at a birthday party for a top officer in the Ohio Secret Service office in 1989. The suit claims the stripper was allowed in the office at a time

when a black agent had been told his parents could not visit him because of security.

Shaffer is seeking class-action status for the lawsuit, which claims blacks are subjected to discrimination in promotions, performance evaluations, assignments, training and transfers.

The Secret Service, whose officers investigate counterfeiting cases and protect presidents, vice presidents, their family members and other dignitaries, is not the only federal law enforcement agency accused of discrimination.

In April, a federal judge approved a settlement between the FBI and black agents who complained of racial discrimination in promotions. The FBI agreed to establish a new promotions system by 2003.

## Gospel group sues Waffle House over seating

MONROE, N.C. (AP) — Five members of a black gospel group sued a Waffle House restaurant, saying they were told to give up their seats to white customers.

In a federal lawsuit filed Tuesday in Charlotte, the singers said the restaurant's operator, Hillcrest Foods, violated their civil rights.

The suit is the second this month claiming discrimination by Hillcrest Foods at its North Carolina restaurants.

Hillcrest Foods declined to comment.

The Heavenly Sons said they stopped for a meal in

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Monroe, about 25 miles southeast of Charlotte, on Feb. 11 and placed takeout orders.

While seated at the counter, the men changed their minds and told their waitress they would be eating inside, the lawsuit said.

A few moments later, a security guard told them to stand up to make room for white patrons who had just

arrived, the suit said.

As they left the restaurant, the security guard taunted them, they said. Singer Jerome Monk said he felt as if "I had been stripped of everything I had been taught."

The group's lawsuit seeks more than \$10,000.

The singers have obtained the services of a Washington, D.C.-based group called the Washington Lawyers Com-

mittee, which specializes in civil rights law. In 1994, the committee won a \$17.5 million settlement against Denny's restaurants in a case alleging discrimination against more than 100,000 black patrons.

Hillcrest was also sued May 14 by two black women who said they were denied service at a Waffle House in Charlotte in 1998.

"I never thought I would have to encounter this," plaintiff Lisa Lea said. "I thought this battle had been fought, but obviously it needs attention."

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