

BUSINESS

FedEx gift helps black pilots

Special to Sentinel-Voice

FedEx Express, one of the world's largest express transportation companies, has made a \$100,000 donation to the Organization of Black Airline Pilots (OBAP) for its Professional Pilot Development Program. Founded in 1976, OBAP has 2,500 members and is committed to encouraging minority participation in the aviation industry.

Through exposure, training, mentoring and scholarships, the black pilots hope to boost youths' interest in aeronautics.

The pilot development program provides training and testing for African-American pilots, making them more competitive for jobs in the airline industry.

"At FedEx, diversity is an important part of our cultural fabric and we are committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce," said David F. Rebholz, executive vice president of FedEx.

"The challenge to the aviation industry is to bring together interested and committed people of diverse backgrounds, and make opportunities in aviation available to them."

In addition to the \$100,000 donation, FedEx Express was a corporate sponsor for the August convention of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. and OBAP held in Memphis. The express delivery company has an annual revenue of \$20 billion and is a global provider of transportation, e-commerce and supply chain management services.



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

STUFFED

Gene Harris Jr., acting general manager of Power 88 KCEP-FM, and L.A.C.E. executive director, Joyce Eatman, look over the thousands of pounds of food delivered to L.A.C.E. from Power 88's Stuff-A-Bus holiday food and toy drive, Wednesday.

Bio-tech may help win war against terrorism

By Sidney Morse

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Bio-terrorism, a term most often associated with forecasts extending our imagination in the past is actually piercing daily existence now as anthrax contamination makes its way up and down the Eastern seaboard.

More than 45 cases of exposure have been identified so far, with at least 15 infections and 4 known deaths, although autopsies are now being performed on other deceased to re-evaluate if there is a connection to this deadly germ.

Government authorities believe more is on the way and major urban centers appear to be particularly ripe as targets.

In addition to all the members of the Supreme Court taking precautionary measures, the postal system has been hit hard with some 8,000 workers currently being treated with antibiotics. Much attention is being given to the controversy surrounding the response time to introduction of Anthrax to postal workers and the subsequent decision to provide treatment as compared to those exposed on Capital Hill.

But Anthrax, it is thought, is only the beginning.

There are other threats that could potentially contaminate us in the days and weeks ahead.

Tampering with our water, the food supply, poisonous gas attacks or an outbreak of smallpox are all among the horrific contingencies being considered by public health officials and federal crimefighters.

Smallpox would be a difficult enemy to face in part because of its high rate of contagiousness and its taking about two weeks to show symptoms.

An outbreak in a large urban area could spread fast and have a devastating effect. The last known case of smallpox in the U.S. was identified in 1977. According to the Centers for Disease Control and other government sources, there are about 15 million smallpox vaccines available, with the biotech firm Acambis in Cambridge, Mass., contracted to produce up to 40 million doses.

However, additional sourcing is rapidly being reviewed to up that amount to more than 100 million to counter any terrorist attack using this deadly weapon.

Firms like Orchid Bio-Sciences, Vital Living Products and Brio-Reliance are among those linking to the immediate increase in government spending for contamination test kits, bacterial vaccines or both.

Bio-port is believed to be the only firm manufacturing a vaccine for Anthrax and will reap the lion's share of an estimated \$1.5 billion stockpile envisioned by federal authorities to deal with any potential threat.

The bio-tech industry has long been in the shadows of other, more visible forms of technology when it comes to investment and market awareness because of its notoriously long gestation period in research and development (R&D) and the tricky game of winning patent protection for the products it delivers.

Up to now, only the most

sophisticated investors have put their money into this near stealth industry. However, now, with total federal R&D expenditures topping \$100 billion likely to shift emphasis to bio-tech for a good while or at least until the threat is greatly reduced and with venture capital funds coming in with another \$2 billion or more, the industry is poised for accelerated growth.

Across the board, firms report that in this segment of the technology sector, hiring has not stopped and is on the increase, even though the high-skills needed to fill the gap, mostly scientists and trained technicians, are and will remain hard to find.

In the past, announcements of huge profits and controversy surrounding drug prices, especially involving senior citizens, have given a central component of the biotech industry, namely, pharmaceutical companies, a tainted image.

Aware of the potential for that image to surface again, some major drug companies recently made public that they will donate scientists and free antibiotics to the national stockpile on a weekly basis to help stem the tide of further bio-terror. This move will help to overcome any suspicion of the industry attempting to exploit opportu-

nity during this troubling time.

There is little doubt that the threat of bio-terrorism is going to be around for a long time and will certainly challenge biotech firms in an unprecedented way.

We are likely now to become just as familiar with emerging industry stars as we have come to know the likes of Microsoft, Sun Microsystems, Cisco, Oracle and others. Except in this case, more than bottom-line performance and stock values are at stake.

Public health and survival could just be one of the added dividends included in this portfolio as well.

Let's hope that the entrepreneurial spirit being pressed in the biotech sector responds to a call by the nation for help.

In this instance, it may turn out innovation and heroism are likely to go hand-in-hand.

Professor Morse is president and CEO of The Institute For Strategic Thinking And Technology Development (ISTTD) and is also an adjunct professor at both Pepperdine University's George L. Graziadio School of Business and Management and National University's School of Business and Technology teaching Global Leadership.

Bull? Bear? Who cares?

By Jesse B. Brown

Special to Sentinel-Voice

African-Americans watch more television than anyone else in America. We always hear the information first. Sometimes we hear it too often. If you watch the news, read financial publications or listen to the radio, I'm sure you have heard analysts predicting a fall in the market. I'm also sure you have heard others saying the long-term market outlook is positive and nothing to be concerned about.

One thing important to understand when investing is that you should pay attention to the long-term view and ignore the speculation about the market's next move. This is where an annual portfolio review can really help. When we review your portfolio, we will make sure your goals, time frame, and risk tolerance are the same as when we originally created your portfolio.

We will then discuss your investments and why we chose the allocations we did.

We can also review specifics of the companies you are invested in.

Often, looking at the companies' price/earnings ratios, dividends, earnings, and outlook will help reassure you that you are invested in such a way as to help you meet your goals.

Don't be afraid of corrections in the market. They will come and go.

However, if you have a carefully designed portfolio in place, you can wait out the downturns and maybe even use them to purchase more stocks for your portfolio.

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