

# Financial seminar teaches in, outs of money

By *Lés Pierres Streater*  
*Sentinel-Voice*

To say money matters can be viewed in several ways, but for a group of high school students taught by members of Greek organizations, it was down to specifics.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., Theta Theta Omega Chapter, and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc., Kappa Xi Chapter sponsored their fifth-annual "Money Matters Financial Seminar" for high-schoolers on Saturday, at the Community College of Southern Nevada, West Charleston Campus.

"I was so pleased about the turnout with all the young people," said Billie Rayford, president of AKA Sorority Inc.

"I think that this is an excellent opportunity to get

them to become aware and informed consumers and future wealth builders, putting them on the right track to making good financial decisions," Rayford said.

The program featured a series of workshops, including credit and debt management; employment skills; scholarships and financial aid; and understanding the tax system.

Leon Pearson, a State Farm Insurance agent, greeted each individual entering the seminar and handed them a grain of mustard seed.

"You are trailblazers today," Pearson said. "If you look around, many of the things we are going to talk about, we are establishing a foundation for things that you won't get involved with for some time. As you go to



*Sentinel-Voice photo by Lés Pierres Streater*

Young participants listen intently during a forum at Saturday's Economic Summit put on by the Las Vegas chapters of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority and Omega Psi Phi fraternity.

work, remember that half of the people 18 to 65 never save any money. It's important that you learn to save and invest your money for the

future. No matter what your income bracket is or the type of job you have."

A story came with the mustard seed.

"We are asking each individual to look at the mustard seed and compare it to your brain," Pearson said. "The brain weighs approximately

three pounds. The mustard seed is miniscule in weight. The mustard seed, however, can grow up to be a large life-producing plant. The brain power that you have should be able to be an incredible resource, remembering that the brain stops growing around the age of 15, but the learning capacity continues to grow."

Pearson challenged students to allow their brains to be raised to the next level, not accepting the minimal standards.

"If we use the faith of a mustard seed as we apply that to our financial future, then we have opportunity to be successful economically."

Citibank Corp.'s LaSonya Maxie led the workshop on credit and debt management. (See Greeks, Page 13)

# McCurdy promoted to deputy chief of Las Vegas police

By *John T. Stephens III*  
*Sentinel-Voice*

Capt. Greg McCurdy of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department was promoted to deputy chief of the Investigative Services Division.

## Toy Story

(Continued from Page 1) children have toys for Christmas," Destini said.

Destini's exposure to KCEP's holiday food & toy drive came last year when she accompanied her grandmother Mary Johnson to one of the toy collection locations. "Destini is smart and has a very kind spirit. When we dropped off the toys, I had last year, she asked me why I was giving the toys away. I explained that they were going to children who needed toys for Christmas. She looked at me and said she wanted to stuff the whole bus for the children next year, and from that point on as toys went on sale she purchased them for this year's drive," Johnson said.

Destini earned allowance from her grandmother by reading books, and on Saturdays the two would go out in search of the right toys to add to the growing collection. Destini insisted on personally picking the toys for the children. "She would say to me, this is a good one, a child would like this one," or "no that one is not good enough," Johnson said.

Born with a heart defect, and having undergone two major heart surgeries since birth, Johnson is convinced

"It's been a 20-year road to get here," McCurdy said, admitting his police journey has not been a "cake walk." "It feels like an awesome honor for the sheriff (Bill Young) to believe in me. I grew up in West Las Vegas,

right near that Vons (on Owens across from the Nucleus Plaza)."

His current position is commander of the financial property crime bureau.

After the outgoing official retires at the end of De-

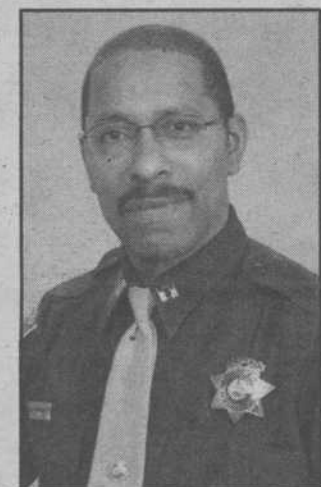
cember, McCurdy will move into his new assignment. His career began in 1983. He rapidly climbed the leadership ladder of the biggest police force in Nevada.

Duties have included recruiting, gang intelligence,

patrol, public information officer, employment diversity, personnel and criminal analysis.

"I'm now a member of the command staff," said McCurdy, who becomes one of two assistant sheriffs. There are eight deputy chiefs in the Metro hierarchy.

McCurdy, an inner-city success story, holds a leadership role in NOBLE (National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives) and is a graduate of the University of Nevada Las Vegas with a bachelor's degree in communications and the FBI National Academy for Police Executives.



**GREG McCURDY**

"I look forward to serving this community at the highest level," McCurdy said. "It's been a great career."



*Sentinel-Voice photo by Kathi Overstreet*

(Left to Right) KCEP FM 88.1 Membership Director James Embree smiles while KCEP promotions representative LaJuana Johnson grasps a toy, Destini Johnson sits in a toy-stuffed van and her grandmother Mary Johnson and U-Haul official Ed Biondo stand by.

that her granddaughter is a special child preordained to be here. "The Lord has really blessed our family with Destini. She is so totally unselfish. If I wanted to buy her something, she immediately asks if I will buy one for the children too. When I take snacks to her daycare, she reminds me to bring enough for all the children. It's a humbling experience for me as her grandmother to witness such an unselfish, caring spirit coming from someone so young."

"Although she's an only child, Destini does not act spoiled and is really concerned about the happiness of other children. She is a

creative, fun-loving girl who likes to draw and color. She never takes anything for granted," said Destini's mother, Eloisa Johnson.

Destini began storing the toys in her grandmother's office, however, the collection became too large and was moved to her grandparents' home. "The blue and white bunny rabbit is my favorite, it's going to be hard to let it go but I will for the children," Destini said. "Other's who can should give too."

After learning about Destini's effort, one of this year's sponsors, Ed Biondo of the U-Haul Moving Center, 2001 W. Bonanza Road,

donated a truck and drove to pick up Destini's toys yesterday. KCEP Membership Director, James Embree, and Promotions Representative, LaJuana Johnson, was at the pick-up to personally acknowledge Destini for her thoughtfulness and helped in loading the U-Haul.

This is the third year KCEP has collected toys and food through the Stuff-A-Bus program. All items will be donated to various local agencies including the Economic Opportunity Board's Community Action Partnership's Senior Center, and Child & Family Services Division and local sponsored families in need.

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