

C O M M E N T A R Y

NCAA putting athletics in front of academics

By George E. Curry
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Two years ago, the Baltimore Sun filed a federal Freedom of Information request with the University of Maryland to obtain a copy of the contracts of the school's football and basketball coaches. The university, a tax-supported institution, fought the request.

Last week, the Maryland Court of Appeals ordered the school to release the documents. Now, we know why the University of Maryland tried to keep them secret.

Both basketball coach Gary Williams and football coach Ralph Friedgen are guaranteed annual salaries of more than \$1 million. Various incentive clauses allow them to earn at least another \$400,000 each year.

To put these salaries in perspective, consider this: Clayton D. Mote, the president of the University of Maryland's flagship campus at College Park, earns \$337,999 per year. William E. Kirwan, the chancellor of the University of Maryland system, earns \$375,000. And Robert L. Ehrlich Jr., the poverty-stricken governor of Maryland, earns \$140,000.

Something is wrong with this picture.

Why should football and basketball coaches earn three times more than the university president? Why should they earn



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10 times more than long-serving full professors? Equally important, what message does this send to the students who are under the illusion that the role of a university in a democratic society is to educate its populace, not to serve as a farm system for the National Football League and the National Basketball Association?

In defending the high salaries, Athletic Director Debbie Yow told the Baltimore Sun, "We want Ralph to be competitive with the other ACC coaches who are doing great things, and we want Gary to be competitive with the other basketball coaches who are achieving at high levels."

In fairness to Williams and Friedgen, they are not even the highest paid coaches in their conference. Williams trails Duke's Mike Krzyzewski and Friedgen earns less than Florida State's Bobby Bowden and Virginia Tech's Frank Beamer. In football, LSU's Nick Saban, after leading his team to a shared national championship (with USC) last season, is guaranteed at least \$2.3 million annually. Both Bowden of Florida State and Bob Stoops of Oklahoma earn more than \$2 million a year.

In basketball, Kentucky's Tubby Smith has an eight-year, \$20 million contract, and Louisville's Rick Pitino has a six-year, (See Curry, Page 12)

Kerry should choose a Black as vice president

By Ron Walters
Special to Sentinel-Voice

I have watched with considerable interest while the media has bandied about the names of those who John Kerry should pick to run with him on the presidential ticket and no one is Black. There is something wrong with that, but as usual, if we don't raise it, it appears that it won't be raised.

Geraldine Ferraro, a member of House of Representatives from New York, was selected by Walter Mondale in 1984 to run with him. Although they were defeated, he took a gamble at winning and established the right for women having the right to run. In 1984, Jesse Jackson was not given a look, even though he had won 384 delegates. In 1988, even though Jackson had won more than 1,200 delegates — with 5 million Black votes and nearly 2 million White votes, making him a true cross over candidate — he he was still snubbed by Michael Dukakis for the second spot on the ticket.

In 1992 and 1996, Bill Clinton loved Black people so much that he also snubbed them for consideration because he was running a right-of-center campaign strategy. In 2000, Al Gore chose Joe Lieberman, both a pal from his Senate days and also a centrist member of the Democratic Lead-



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ership Council that had supported class-based affirmative action rather than the use of race. And while this was at first unpalatable to Black politicians, he was finally accepted, both because he altered his view and because Blacks believed that this was another historic first for the party that would put them in line

for consideration.

For the current election, normally, it would be a natural to consider a person who has run for president and this time we have had two Black candidates, Al Sharpton and Carol Moseley Braun. But while either would be a fit candidate, ironically, neither was able to show that they had a national constituency on the basis of votes and delegates won. Nevertheless, running for president is not the only way one comes to be considered for the ticket, as seen with the example of Geraldine Ferraro. So, in my book, neither Sharpton nor Braun is automatically canceled out.

The selection of a running mate depends upon the campaign strategy of the nominee and in this case, it depends upon what Kerry's handlers believe that he needs to win. One of the most coveted constituencies is the "non-voting female" identified by pollster Celinda Lake and others.

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Judging by television, all Blacks can do is chill, grill

By James Clingman
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Just Chillin' and Grillin'. Commanding millions and probably billions of dollars, our young people, especially men, have brought a whole new meaning to those two terms. In the parlance of the past chillin' meant "cooling out" or "relaxing." Grillin', of course, meant "cooking out."

From what I saw on two television stations owned by media giant, Viacom, and mostly watched by Black teens and even younger children, those terms have moved to a much higher level. They have taken on a connotation that would have our youth thinking about and reaching for an endless, meaningless, and senseless level of economic empowerment. It's what Amos Wilson calls, "Dreams without Means." It's what I call, "Means without Ends."

The two TV shows, running simultaneously, lionized so-called "thugs" by introducing us to their "ice" and their "grills" (As if Crips and How I'm Livin' aren't enough).

On one show a beautiful, well endowed, young sister was interviewing several "thugs" about their medallions, bracelets, rings, and those diamond-ensconced, clock-sized watches they wear on their wrists. I think it was titled Bling-Bling. It should have been titled, Cha-Ching.

One by one these young brothers flaunted their diamond-studded medallions, large enough to be hubcaps, and probably weighing enough to cause serious neck damage.

They call it "ice," and they have lots of it. Their rings made those you see worn by professional athletes who win championships look like something from a Cracker Jack box. Their bracelets looked large enough to serve as weights; maybe that's why their arms are so big. And, man, those things around their necks. One was not only huge but it was spinning, just like those wheel rims we see; it had so many diamonds in it the brother didn't even know how many there were.

The sister was impressed though; boy was she impressed. One of the guys, who happened to be White, gave her one of those necklaces as a gift. He just happened to have an extra one in his pocket.

One enthusiastic brother bragged about how much one of his medallions cost. That's right; he had several around his neck, as if one just wouldn't do the trick. He said, "Dis one is five figures." Then he reached down and lifted up another one and said, "Dis one is in da high five-figures." I wondered if he really knew how high. As he displayed his "ice," he was definitely proud of the things he had spent his money on, and the sister was just speechless, obviously blinded by the light of all that "ice" and all the Bling-Bling on display next to her.

It was a sight to behold, especially those necklaces. Is what we are seeing from these



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young brothers the result of that guy who wore the clock around his neck in the rap group, Public Enemy. Flava Flav is his name. Look at the trend you started, brother Flav. They ought to be paying you royalties.

On the other channel, just when I thought I had seen it all, I got a lesson in oral surgery and dental prosthetics. I also got a lesson in economic em-

powerment and economic enslavement as I watched brother after brother strut their stuff by letting the camera go right into their mouths to check out their "grills."

This was really amazing. Some of the brothers had front teeth missing, but they still had gold on the ones they had left. They had diamonds in white gold settings, designs that would make one of those New York fashion designers quiver, and they moved well beyond the one gold tooth fad of their father's generation. They did their entire mouth. Oh yeah, I'm sorry, their entire "grill."

One brother even said, "I got so much money, I can put it in my mouth." But then came the dénouement, the coup de grace, the final solution.

They introduced the dentist who creates all of those "grill" masterpieces. I guess we could call him the "Grill Master." Quite appropriately, his name is Dr. Cuning. As one brother hugged his "master" dentist, Dr. Cuning

told the viewers how he was just pleased as punch to a "homey" and that if his boyz wanted their grills done at 2 o'clock in the morning he would get up and go take care of business. After all, he is an artist, y'all. Did I mention Dr. Cuning is White?

Claud Anderson has a saying, "Black people can't even do wrong right," which is certainly the case with our chillin' and grillin' generation. If they have to get their grills and their ice-covered bling-bling on, at least they could let a Black dentist or sales person hook 'em up and make that outrageous commission and profit from their ridiculous purchasing habits. If we are going to be economic slaves, we should at least be economically enslaved to one another. You know what I'm sayin'?

I was saddened as I watched those two shows. I saw our young people being sucked into the abyss of economic enslavement, finding their value in baubles, gold teeth, and obligatory tattoos. I also saw a generation, neglected by many of its elders and by some of its leaders, earning untold sums of money only to give it right back to the very people who hold them in disdain. How misguided they are. How misguided we have allowed them to be. Could it be that "chillin'" really means we are cold, even dead? And, could "grillin'" really mean we are burning? You draw your own conclusions.

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