

Tennessee State alumni protecting embattled chief

Special to Sentinel-Voice

NASHVILLE (Special to the NNPA), -Local Nashville lawyers, who are alumni of Tennessee State University, (TSU), have formed a committee to review past, present and future actions of the Tennessee Board of Regents, (TBR), toward University President James A. Hefner. The lawyers are examining, in particular, whether the TBR is applying fair standards in its governance of Hefner and TSU when compared with other TBR institutions.

Attorney David Danner, a 1991 alumnus of TSU said, "We want to make sure that this matter is handled in an environment of fairness and



JAMES A. HEFNER

that this audit is not a pretext for the removal of Dr. Hefner."

Attorney Terry Clayton said, "The issue surrounding Dr. Hefner's funding of some scholarships does not reflect

his ability to run the University. We are confident that Dr. Hefner can lead TSU effectively, given fairness and time. This 'cloud of doubt' cast over the University is a distraction to the mission that Dr. Hefner holds dear, which is to make sure students get a quality education."

The lawyers are also concerned about the TBR's actions toward Hefner and TSU, the state's only historically Black university. The 18-member governing body includes only one African-

American and no Tennessee State University alumnus. In a state that has a considerable percentage of African-Americans, the lawyers believe this inadequate representation on a state governing body for public higher education is unacceptable and could negatively affect TSU's future.

"In present day circumstances, where young Americans of different hues and ethnic backgrounds are giving their lives on battlefields for our nation, it is discon-

cerning that a board which is charged with the education of our youth does not reflect diversity, which is the heart and soul of our nation," said Attorney, Robert Smith, immediate past president of the TSU National Alumni Chapter.

The lawyers are calling on Gov. Phil Bredesen to take a two-pronged approach to resolving the TBR's racial breakdown: examine the makeup of the Tennessee Board of Regents and push for equal representation and

diversity, in order to maintain public trust.

The lawyers plan to review the TBR's actions toward Dr. Hefner and Tennessee State University and produce an initial review, which will be completed in June. A summation with recommendations will also be made available to officers of the TSU Alumni Association, Interdenominational Ministers Fellowship and the NAACP. For more information, contact David Danner at (615) 254-4686.

Journalists worried about news quality

WASHINGTON (AP) - Journalists are growing more concerned that bottom-line financial pressures are "seriously hurting" the quality of news coverage, according to a survey taken at a time when news organizations face increased competition for readers and viewers.

A majority of national and local journalists say they think financial pressures are hurting coverage, said the survey released Sunday by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

"Journalists are in a glummer mood than we've found them in the past," said Andrew Kohut, director of the Pew Research Center. "That view is much more prevalent where cutbacks have happened."

The number of national journalists who think bottom-line financial pressures are hurting coverage was 66 percent this year, compared with about 40 percent in a Pew survey from 1995.

Just under six in 10 local journalists were more worried about financial pressures hurting quality, compared with one-third in 1995.

More than half of the executives at national news organizations said increased business pressures are "just changing the way news organizations do things."

Tom Rosenstiel, director of the Project for Excellence in Journalism, said a news media study earlier this year found many news organizations have cut staff.

"We found that most sectors of the news media, other than online and ethnic media, are losing audience because there is so much more competition," Rosenstiel said.

About half of those whom Pew surveyed from newspapers and magazines said they have seen reductions in the size of their newsroom staff in the past three years.

Despite these concerns about cut, about seven in 10 news professionals say the management in their news operation is excellent or good.

National journalists were more likely than a decade ago to say there are too many factual errors in coverage, while local reporters were less inclined to say that was a problem.

A majority of journalists of all backgrounds and different type of operations said they do not think plagiarism is more widespread now, despite widely publicized cases in the past year.

The survey found a reduction in the number of journalists who think news reporters are too cynical and many now think they are too timid.

More than half of the national journalists say the press has not been critical enough of President Bush. Local journalists were about evenly split between thinking the press is not critical enough or is fair in its treatment of the president.

Nearly eight in 10 in both the national and local news media say that not enough attention is paid to complex issues, similar to Pew's findings on this question in 1995 and 1999.

A majority of news professionals say the emergence of the Internet has made journalism better, especially because it has improved research methods.

TRANSPORTATION NOTICE LOCATION/DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

Purpose of Hearing

The Nevada Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the Clark County Department of Public Works, the Federal Highway Administration and the City of Henderson, has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) addressing the potential environmental impacts of improving the operational characteristics of existing and future traffic flows along three miles of the Southern Las Vegas Beltway between Pecos Road and Stephanie Street. Copies of the EA have been distributed to and are available for public review and copying at the following locations:

- ▶ Paseo Verde Library, 280 S. Green Valley Parkway, Henderson, Nevada
- ▶ NDOT District 1, 123 E. Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada
- ▶ NDOT Headquarters, Environmental Services Division, 1263 S. Stewart Street, Room 104, Carson City, Nevada

When and Where

The meeting will be held on June 1, 2004, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., at the Paseo Verde Library, 280 S. Green Valley Parkway, Henderson, Nevada.

Why

The purpose of the project is to serve the projected, future traffic volumes in the Southern Beltway corridor.

Where You Come In

Members of the public are invited to attend the meeting at their convenience any time during the meeting hours (4 p.m. to 7 p.m.) and submit their comments in writing on a comment sheet provided at the meeting or in person to a public stenographer who will be available throughout the meeting.

IF RIGHT-OF-WAY IS NEEDED It is anticipated that no right-of-way will be needed for improvements in this area. If, however, right-of-way is needed, the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970 would govern the acquisition of any right-of-way necessary for this project. More detailed information on right-of-way acquisition and relocation assistance can be obtained by calling or visiting the Nevada Department of Transportation, Right-of-Way Office, 123 East Washington, Las Vegas, Nevada, telephone (702) 385-6540.

In addition to any comments received at the meeting, written comments also will be accepted until 5 p.m., Friday, June 18, 2004. Please submit your comments to: Daryl N. James, P.E., Chief, Environmental Services Division, Nevada Department of Transportation, 1263 South Stewart Street, Carson City, NV 89712.

General information about the meeting can be obtained from Daniel Nollsch, Environmental Services Supervisor, Nevada Department of Transportation, 1263 South Stewart Street, Carson City, Nevada 89712, telephone (775) 888-7687.

Certain project materials are available on alternative formats upon request. A sign language interpreter will be available upon request. Contact Daniel Nollsch, Environmental Services Supervisor, Nevada Department of Transportation, 1263 South Stewart Street, Carson City, Nevada 89712, telephone (775) 888-7687 no later than May 27, 2004.

The meeting location is accessible from Citizens Area Transit routes. Telephone CAT-RIDE (228-7433) for scheduling information or to inquire about paratransit services.

