

Luncheon honors students in casino outreach project

By Lés Pierres Streater
Sentinel-Voice

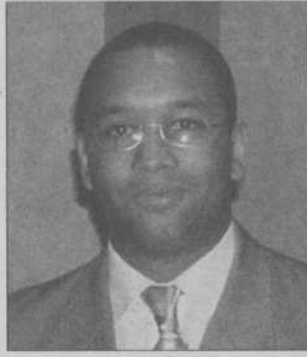
Collaboration is becoming a noticeable trend among the Urban, Latin and Asian chambers of commerce. In May, the chambers held their first annual luncheon at Bally's Hotel and Casino.

On Tuesday, August 17, the three celebrated, during a luncheon, the success of another joint venture in which each chamber partnered with the Mandalay Resort Group to provide youth with academic scholarships and summer work experience.

Twenty-three students were saluted for their participation in the first-time program during the luncheon at Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino.

The three chambers served as the springboard to recruit talented college-bound minority students for both scholarships and gaming internships in purchasing, marketing, entertainment, and human resources.

Through the collaboration, the Las Vegas Urban



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— Reggie Burton

Chamber was able to assist 12 students and the Latin and Asian chambers each helped six students.

Students receiving scholarships through the Urban Chamber were Mario Collins, Gerimar Hicks, Je'Nell Dent, Anika Jones, Piper Overstreet, Peri Richards, Nyla Richards, Kandace Weaver, Daniel Woodie, and Jessica Young. Ashley Mathis and Issac Sawyer were selected for internships.

The Latin Chamber's scholarship recipients were Jennifer Mehner, Lori Pacheco, Shalimar Serrano, Stephanie Lopez, Esmeralda Veloz, and Roxanna Sanchez.

Asian Chamber scholarship winners included Elaine Young, Charisse L. Sy and Zhong Y. Li who also was selected as an intern. Other interns were Young Ran and Violetta Taing.

"We are especially appreciative of the Mandalay Bay Resort Group for their efforts to give some of our deserving students the support to continue their education and employment training," said Hannah Brown, president of the Urban Chamber.

The Mandalay Resort Group designed the program for the direct benefit of minorities to support education and job training in the areas

of purchasing and contracting, company officials said. MRG awarded \$125,000 to the chambers to support their programs and assist each chamber with capital improvement ventures.

"The partnership between the MRG diversity committee and the leadership of each of the minority chambers started over a year ago to focus on minority education, business development and recruiting minority students to the hotel and hospitality industry," said Reggie Burton, director of community affairs and MRG Diversity Committee member.

MRG Senior Vice President Tony Alamo, chairman of the gaming company's diversity committee, expounded on what the collaboration means for students and the industry.

"The students participating in the scholarship and internship program were well-deserving students who exhibited plenty of desire and appreciation of this effort to assist them with their future career development.

"I think that after two to three months of work experi-



Sentinel-Voice photo by Lés Pierres Streater

Urban Chamber of Commerce President Hannah Brown receives an award from Tony Alamo, senior vice president of Mandalay Resort Group, Aug. 17 at Mandalay Bay.

ence in the gaming industry many of the students now realize that this is a challenging field with a lot of complex situations, but I hope that some of them continue to

pursue an interest in the gaming industry. This is a gratifying way of not only earning a living, but there's room for growth and development," Alamo said.

NAACP

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the government. We have the right not to like you and tell you that we don't like you. The real reason that Bush didn't come to our convention was an old reason: There's always been people in America who prefer two kinds of colored people... George Bush made a choice. He said that he would not come to us because basically we're unbought and unbossed. "This race is on."

Rivers is the Chief Operating Officer of the NAACP and has been involved with the organization for 26 years. His affiliations include the North Charleston, S.C. branch, serving as its president, director of the Southeast Region of the NAACP, and in September of 2003, appointment to his present COO position.

He applauded the local branch for how far it has come since past days of struggle and strife when it was under the microscope of the national headquarter office. Rivers gave kudos to Las Vegas chapter president W. Dean Ishman who talked about voter education and turnout efforts being done throughout the city.

The local chapter has focused its efforts this year on making sure that all minority citizens have the opportunity to participate in the political process of voter registration, voter education on issues of importance to them, and voter participation at the polls. They have partnered with other community groups to ensure that outreach efforts to increase the voting power of minorities for the upcoming elections are successful.

"We want to do some collaboration with other community-based organizations and activists to make things better here in Las Vegas," Ishman said. "We are presently working on a voter transportation process that will allow us to pick up people and transport them to and from the early polling sites. Also,



Sentinel-Voice photo by Lés Pierres Streater

Dean Ishman addresses a crowd of more than 400 at Saturday night's banquet.

coming out of our reorganization we are working on tightening up our organization, and getting our office and staff coordinated. Within the next three-to-six months we hope to be able to focus on the important issues facing us here in the valley, including the education system of Clark County, the workers of Republic Services who are being discriminated against and further development of our two prison branches to help reduce recidivism and (enhance) re-entry into the community."

Ishman was in good company Saturday night, surrounded by staunch supporters of the 95-year-old civil rights organization. In addition to Rivers, was special guest Alice A. Huffman, president of the California State Conference of the NAACP. Huffman introduced Rivers.

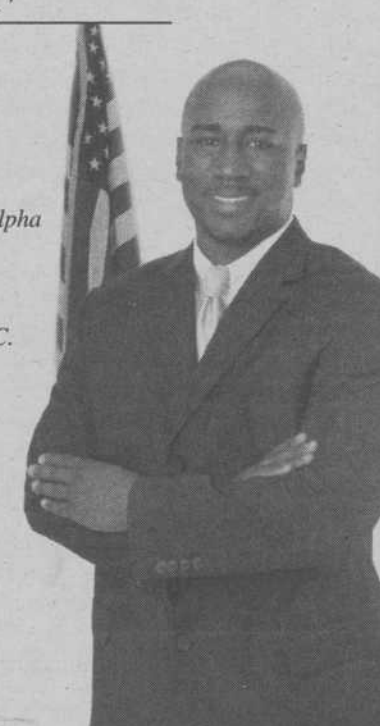
For more information about the Las Vegas NAACP or to join the chapter, you may call 702-638-1300. The office is located at 3340 South Topaz Street, Suite 150; Las Vegas, Nevada, 89121-3970.

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