

The Future Pac aims to mobilize political clout of Black women

By *Lés Pierres Streater*
Sentinel-Voice

Dispelling the myth that only boys should dream of becoming president of the United States, a group of prominent African-American women has established "The Future Pac" to promote equity and representation for Black women pursuing or already elected to political office.

A local fundraising reception for "The Future Pac" Women Building for the Future Political Action Committee is scheduled to take place in Las Vegas on Friday, Dec. 10, 2004, from 5:30 to 9 p.m. at the Summerlin Mountain Trails home of Russell and Betty Curtis, 9833 Glenrock Drive.

The evening reception will feature many of the country's finest African-American women in politics, business, and civic leadership including Susan Taylor, editorial Director of "Essence Magazine;" political strategist and author Donna Brazile; and Dr. Julianne Malveaux, syndicated talk show host and columnist.

A silent auction, entertainment by Calvin Brooks and catering by Eva Paulussen of Wild Truffles will accent the evening.

"The Future Pac" is the first national political network whose main focus is to provide support and funding to progressive African-American women candidates seeking public office at the federal and state levels of government in the United States, and when strategically appropriate, will target and provide funding and technical assistance to local candidates who demonstrate an interest and potential for hold-



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— Yvonne Atkinson Gates
The Future Pac Board Member

ing higher office. The organization stresses that since 1993, African-American women have enjoyed the strongest voting bloc percentage in the nation, yet very few Black women have been elected to national political office.

The organization is chaired by former California assemblywoman Gwen Moore with vice-chairs the Honorable Lois DeBerry, Susan Taylor, Zina Pierre, and Donna Brazile. Celestine Palmer, a founder of the Los Angeles African-American Women Political Action Committee (LAAAWPAC) is president for candidate development; Minyon Moore formerly of the Clinton administration is president for external affairs; Cecelia Huffman is secretary; and Alice Huffman of the Los Angeles NAACP is treasurer.

Clark County Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson Gates serves on the board of directors.

At present, of the 535 members of congress, 11 of them are African-American women.

There are only two African-American women representatives of the 316 state-wide elected executives, and only 189 of the 7,382 state legislators nationwide are

Black women, according to "The Future Pac."

Fundraising is seen as a key component by the organization to increase the number and clout of African-American women in the political arena along with offering young women a vision for the future about becoming mayors, state legislators, governors, congressional leaders and even president. Raising money to support campaign efforts for African-American female candidates across the country has proven to be difficult based on stereotypes and negative images portrayed about them as not being competent to hold office by the media and society.

This organization seeks to dispel this notion as it attempts to re-energize and reinforce the concept that African-American women have held prominent roles in the growth and development of our communities.

One of the goals of the organization during the 2004 elections was to raise \$1 million to support those African-American female candidates whose platforms mirrored those of "The Future Pac."

Previous fundraising and chapter building events have been hosted in Los Angeles, Washington D.C. and Atlanta

diversifying the efforts of the organization to reach as many women as possible throughout the country.

The future development of the African-American community, including the political and economical advancement of African-American women lies in the foundation of representation by people of color at all levels of government.

As such, "The Future Pac" eagerly seeks membership from African-American women who are interested in furthering the political and economic development of Black women.

To become a sustaining member, a person must contribute to the campaign of at least two candidates endorsed by "The Future Pac" with a minimum contribution of \$50.00 to each candidate, along with annual dues of \$500 to the organization.

Associate membership is available with annual dues of \$100 and a contribution to the campaign of at least two candidates endorsed by "The Future Pac" void of a specific dollar amount.

General membership is available with a \$50 annual

dues payment.

All three levels of membership feature notification of events held in members' region, to garner support for the organization.

The event on Dec. 10, will offer "the perfect environment for our local residents to interact with politically savvy women from around the country and talk about politics, civic matters and anything else that is pertinent to them, their families, their children and the communities here and abroad," said Atkinson Gates.

The suggested donation is \$150.00.

For more information on the local event, you may contact Catherine Henry at 702-719-1730, or RSVP by e-mail to JassCat1@aol.com to reserve your invitation.

For more information regarding "The Future Pac", you can contact Joy Atkinson of the Los Angeles chapter at 323-954-3781 or Zina Pierre of the Washington D.C. chapter at 202-383-9103. Additional information is available online at www.futurepac.com.

Boggs McDonald appointed to group's executive board

Special to Sentinel-Voice

County Commissioner Lynette Boggs McDonald was named to the National Association of Counties board of directors last Thursday at the 2004 Annual Conference of the Nevada Association of County Officials on Nov. 16-18 in Sparks, Nevada. As one of two state representatives, McDonald will represent Nevada's 17 counties on the national organization's board during the one-year appointment effective immediately.

"I'm honored by this appointment," said Commissioner McDonald, a past president of the Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities.

Hosted by Washoe County, the conference included educational seminars and vendor exhibits for the more than 450 elected officials, county staff and citizens.

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Church Dedication and Installation

Dr. Steven Thomas, left, founder/CEO of Asah Family & Life Enrichment Center, Inc., and his wife Gillian congratulates Elder Henry Black Jr. and his wife Angela on his installation and church dedication services for the House Family Worship Center. The services were recently held at the Greater St. Paul C.O.G.I.C. facility.