

Annual parade honors activist

By Tanya Flanagan
Sentinel-Voice

As the city of Las Vegas gears up to celebrate its 100 year anniversary, the Martin L. King Jr. Committee also is gearing up to celebrate a mile-marker occasion — its 24th annual MLK Day Parade.

Parade entrants numbering more than 75 will make their way through the streets of downtown Las Vegas on Saturday, Jan. 15, beginning at 10 a.m. The procession will start at Fourth Street and Hoover Avenue, head north on Fourth to Ogden Avenue and west on Ogden to Third Street where it will conclude.

Eddie Taylor, immediate past chair of the MLK Committee is excited about the longevity of the event that started in 1980 and said his commitment comes from "trying to keep Dr. King's dream alive and because the community has always acted like they really wanted the parade to happen every year. We have a very diverse community so it is an opportunity for all of the different cultures and ethnicities to put on a function together that works to build camaraderie between all the schools, organizations and private sector as well."

Las Vegas Urban Chamber president Hannah Brown and Sentinel-Voice publisher Ramon Savoy are this year's Grand Marshals. The theme for this year's parade is *Living the Dream: Las Vegas Celebrating 100 Years.* (See MLK, Page 5)

Center lauds supporters

By Lés Pierres Streater
Sentinel-Voice

An enthusiastic crowd of patrons and supporters of the West Las Vegas Arts Center at 947 W. Lake Mead Blvd gathered to commemorate its 10 years of programs and services provided for the community.

The celebration commemorated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and celebrated the work of those who give time at the WLVAC, largely through volunteerism. The program was titled "Living the Dream: Celebrating Our Volunteers." Through the work of the volunteers, the center is able to provide culturally-sensitive performing and visual arts training and other programs targeting its area's underserved, underdeveloped and ethnically diverse communities.

Rochelle Hooks and Keith Brantley hosted the program. They recognized friends of



Sentinel-Voice photo by Lés Pierre Streater

Supporters of the West Las Vegas Arts Center gather Saturday for the facility's 10-year anniversary. (Left to right) Alice Key, Roosevelt and Patricia Davis, Helen Murphy, Aurelia Mason, Helen Toland, Collette Lundy, Sarann Knight-Preddy and Paul Meacham.

the arts center, its volunteers and donors who all contributed to the excellence of the cultural arts facility.

Reminding the audience that January is National

Mentoring Month, Hooks and Brantley said "relish this moment and pass on its significance to the next generation of supporters" of the center. Brantley recited words of

inspiration in "I Dream a World" as a way to give thanks to the friends of the arts center and to share a collective thought of purpose.

(See Center, Page 2)

Williams' payola part of covert propaganda campaign

By George E. Curry
Special to Sentinel-Voice
WASHINGTON (NNPA)

— The disclosure that conser-

vative pundit Armstrong Williams was paid \$240,000 while serving as a media "talking head" to help per-

suaude African-Americans to back President Bush's No Child Left Behind law is part of larger government scheme

to blur the line between legitimate news reporting and political propaganda, elected officials and watchdog groups say.

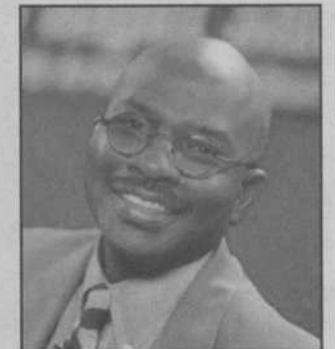
"I am appalled to learn that the U.S. Department of Education has apparently used taxpayers dollars to influence public opinion," Rep. Elijah E. Cummings (D-Md.), immediate past chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, said in a statement. "... Covert propaganda to influence public opinion is illegal, unethical and dangerous. It violates fundamental principles of open government. It distorts the free press and the public's right to know."

Last Friday, *USA Today* published a front-page story that began: "Seeking to build support among Black families for its education reform law, the Bush administration paid a prominent Black pundit \$240,000 to promote the law on his nationally syndicated television show and to urge other Black journalists to do the same."

The newspaper, citing copies of documents it obtained under the federal Freedom of Information Act, disclosed that Williams received a subcontract from the Ketchum public relations firm "to regularly comment on NCLB [No Child Left Behind] during the course of

contacts with the program to "encourage the producers to periodically address" NCLB and was to interview Secretary of Education Rod Paige for paid TV and radio spots. In addition, he was to contact comedian Steve Harvey to arrange appearances for Paige. *USAToday* said

"I regret what I did [not disclosing a conflict of interest] ... Before, it was not even a consideration because I wasn't familiar with journalism guidelines. But I am willing to adhere to journalism standards."
— Armstrong Williams

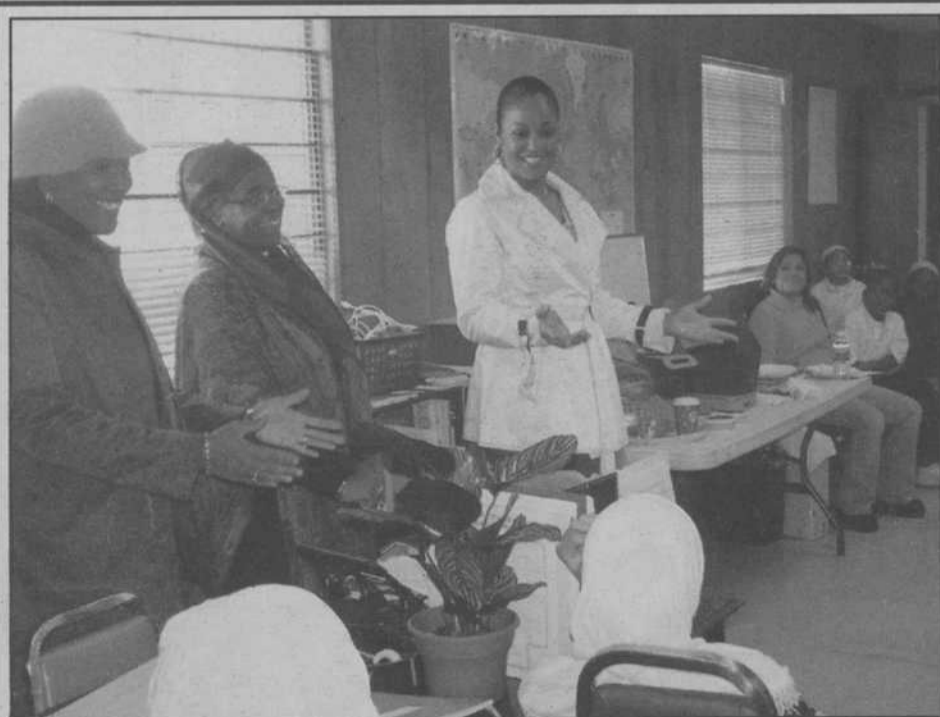


his broadcasts." The PR agency's contract was for \$1 million.

Williams, who hosts his own radio and TV programs, is a regular panelist on "America's Black Forum," a syndicated television program. According to the contract, Williams was to use his

Harvey's manager, Rushion McDonald, confirmed that Paige had appeared twice on the comedian's radio show.

"There is no defense for using taxpayer dollars to pay journalists for 'fake news' and favorable coverage of a federal program. It's a scandal." (See Payola, Page 12)



OLD-SCHOOL (BOXER), NEW SCHOOL

Female boxing superstar Laila Ali, standing and third from the left, visits with children at the new Fajr Al-Islam Learning Center on Tuesday. The school is adjacent to the Masjid As-Sabur on "H" Street and Washington Avenue. Picture with Ali are, from left to right, Sandra Owens and principal Nisaa Seifullah. Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy