

# Victim of LA police beating suing county

## Incident by sheriff's deputies evokes Rodney King deja vu

By Olu Alemoru

Special to Sentinel-Voice

COMPTON - A man who last year suffered severe injuries in an alleged Rodney King-style beating has announced his intention to sue the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

Everett Brumfield, 20, of Paramount claims he was attacked during a November 2005 encounter with sheriff's deputies in Compton.

Under advice from his attorney Ron White, Brumfield has not spoken publicly about the impending lawsuit, but he is being assisted by the Compton-based National Association for Equal Justice in America or NAEJA, of which his mother, Doreen Spottsville, is a member.

NAEJA President and CEO Royce Esters, who has written to Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca and District Attorney Steve Cooley regarding the matter, called for a thorough investigation.

"The random routine brutalizing of Blacks by law departments is as if a plague has gripped this country," Esters said.

According to Spottsville, the incident took place on the evening of November 11 when her son was alerted to the arrest of a friend's brother while visiting friends in the 400 block of Santa Fe Avenue. Spottsville said her son and a friend stepped outside

to a small complex next to the apartment block and saw about 30 officers on the scene — all White and Hispanic, except one.

"My son told me that even though this 14-year-old kid was on the ground in handcuffs, about eight of the cops were beating him up," Spottsville said.

"They asked one of the cops what was going on and he told them to 'get the ... back.' They started to walk away but he said he guessed he didn't jump fast enough because the next second he felt a blow to his head."

Spottsville said her son was then wrestled to the ground and handcuffed and during the next eight to ten minutes suffered numerous blows from nightsticks, billy clubs, flashlights and electrical shock from two Taser gun strikes.

Bleeding and unconscious, Brumfield was transported by ambulance to the emergency room of nearby Lynwood's St. Francis hospital where after being attended to would lie for nearly 10 hours before regaining consciousness.

He was then booked at Lynwood police station on two charges of aggravated assault, attempted lynching and failure to obey an executive order.

He was then taken to Men's Central Jail in downtown Los Angeles.

"I started calling his cell phone that night when he didn't come home," recalls Spottsville.

"Call it mother's intuition, I first called Long Beach Memorial and then St. Francis. I was put through to an officer who told me Everett had been arrested. When I said what for, he wouldn't tell me until I could prove who I was. I couldn't believe it when they said what for. I didn't even know what an attempted lynching charge was"

Spottsville said the officer told her she would not be allowed to see her son at the hospital. She said she was shocked when she eventually bailed him out.

"The whole left side of his face was completely swollen," she said. "The other eye was partially open. He had blood in his ears."

The attempted lynching charge was dropped, along with one of the assault charges when a deputy admitted that he sustained his injury while trying to subdue Brumfield.

He still faces an aggravated assault charge and the failure to obey.

"We knew they would have to make something stick," said an angry Spottsville.

"I'm outraged and disappointed. We pay them to protect us. I want to see all the officers involved written up

and chastised."

Spottsville added that her son is attempting to put his life back together. He's now in barber school, but still faces problems due to his busted ear.

In response, Captain Eric Hamilton, of Compton's Sheriff Station, attacked the media and groups like NAEJA for fermenting tension.

"I suppose this all sounds good for the press," he said.

"According to my deputies they were defending themselves. They said there was a possibility this man was intoxicated. Mr Brumfield claims he's a victim. I understand that. We need to let this play out in court."

However, when it was pointed out there was no mention of intoxication in any of the police reports, Hamilton backtracked.

"Maybe it was mentioned. I can't remember," he added.

"But as I said we're just going have to wait for the courts."

Olu Alemoru writes for WAVE.

# NAACP considers bias lawsuit against FEMA

WASHINGTON— The troubled FEMA may soon face a class action lawsuit accusing it of racial bias.

After getting multiple calls from Black Federal Emergency Management Agency employees alleging racial bias, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is considering bringing a class action lawsuit against the agency, GovExec.com reported Monday.

Some FEMA employees are claiming that qualified Blacks were ignored for a promotion to a vacant GS-14 level position.

According to a Jan. 26 memorandum, FEMA Chief Financial Officer Margaret Young called upon the agency's acting operations director, Kenneth Burris, to recruit outside candidates for the budget analyst position because there "is currently no existing staff that has the level of expertise necessary."

Union officials told GovExec.com that there were 11 Blacks at the GS-13 level who were passed over for a promotion to the vacant spot, as well as four White employees.

FEMA declined to comment, and a spokesman told GovExec.com that Young was unavailable.

The memorandum served as the first "smoking gun" concerning bias at the agency and is the precursor of the potential class action lawsuit, Leo Bosner, president of the American Federation of Government Employees' FEMA headquarters Local 4060 told GovExec.com. "It's like there is a glass ceiling for Blacks" beginning at the GS-13 level, he said.

"We're taking complaints right now," Anson Asaka, assistant general counsel for the NAACP told GovExec.com. Anson was called upon in late March to begin looking into the allegations. "I don't want to make any comments about it. We'll make a determination after we (conclude) an investigation," he said.

# Judge

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bench, motivated Williams to accept the district judge position. "The district court bench [has] over 30 judges, and Lee Gates is the only one that is African-American," Williams said.

Williams felt it was important for him to, "step up to the plate" and create more diversity on the bench.

His interest in this position reaches back to 2004 when he unsuccessfully ran for district judge.

With his foot now in the door, he hopes his temporary seat will aid in his campaign this election season.

"[I'm going to] run an extremely hard campaign. No question that as a sitting judge (you) have an advantage," Williams said.

If Williams wins the November election, he plans on making strong efforts, through his courtroom, to reach out to the community."

"There are a couple of programs I'd like to implement in my courtroom. 'Judgment by Peers,' a program where kids come in and sit in assigned roles and decide what judgment should be on certain offenses," is one of the examples Williams gave.

The youth peers program is sponsored by the judiciary, the juvenile justice system and the Clark County Bar Association, and it is designed to influence students, who receive referrals in school, to improve their behavior.

Selected students, who have taken classes and qualify, are selected to be lawyers and represent their fellow peers.

The jury is also selected from the student body, and whatever verdict is reached (which usually consists of community service hours) is mandatory, so students serve their sentence having been

judged by their peers.

He also plans to implement Kids Court, which is a program designed to allow students from junior high and high school the opportunity to shadow court officials once a month so students are able to learn exactly what their jobs entail.

Williams feels through these programs, children will get a better understanding of what goes on in a courtroom. He also believes that reaching out to the youth is important because as an African-American, especially in the position he holds, he must be a role model.

"It's important for them [children] to see there are options out there. They don't just have to be athletes or rap stars," Williams said.

Back in his courtroom, Williams said he'll work toward keeping it efficient and well respected, now and in the future, if he's elected.

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