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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

Report mixed on Black boys

By Lorinda M. Bullock
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Amid all of the gloomy news about the plight of Black males, there are some bright spots, according to a recent study, "The Truth About Boys and Girls."

Although the statistics from the Department of Education's National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP scores, used in the study show Black boys are still disproportionately behind their White counterparts and Black girls. The report notes that there is some improvement among Black males in reading, math and geography.

"While academic performance for minority boys is often shockingly low, it's not getting worse. The average fourth-grade NAEP reading scores of Black boys improved more from 1995 to 2005 than those of White and Hispanic boys or girls of any race," the study said.

In math, the study presented a similar picture. "As in reading, White boys score much better on the main NAEP in math than do Black and Hispanic boys, but all three groups of boys are improving their math performance in the elementary and middle school grades."

Even those bright spots almost get lost under a pile of more staggering statistics.

"There's no doubt that some groups of boys — particularly Hispanic and Black boys and boys from low-income homes — are in real trouble," wrote the study's lead researcher Sara Mead.

Rosa Smith, president of the Schott Foundation for Public Education in Cambridge, Mass., said "trouble" barely captures what's happening with Black boys academically.

"There is no other group of students as vulnerable as the Black male students," Smith said. She said one key indicator of this is the national Black male graduation rate of only 52 percent from high-schools.

The Schott Foundation's 2006 State Report Card on America's Public Education Results for Black Male Students shows graduation rates are even worse in America's major cities with large Black populations. The foundation reported that Baltimore and New York City schools had a Black male graduation rate of 31 percent and 26 percent, respectively.

Add to the mix the fact that Black boys are more likely to be expelled, sent to jail or placed in special education and Smith said, "Nobody has that combination like our Black male students."

The Schott Foundation, citing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights 2002 Survey, said nationally, "There are as many as 20,000 Black male students who are inappropriately classified as mentally retarded."

Researcher Walter S. Gilliam from the Yale University Child Study Center revealed in his study, "Pre-Kindergartners Left Behind: Expulsion Rates in State Pre-Kindergarten Systems," that Black boys accounted for 91 percent of expulsions.

None of this comes as news to Jawanza Kunjufu, an educational consultant with Chicago-based African-American Images.

"All is definitely not well as it relates to African-American males, and the authors just kind of glossed over that but at least they mentioned it," he said.

Kunjufu has been consulting with school districts since
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Blacks support Titus bid

By Debbie Hall
Sentinel-Voice

On Monday, several leaders in the African-American community, including clergy, business owners and elected officials, announced their endorsement of State Senator Dina Titus for governor. The announcement was made in front of the Martin Luther King statue located at the Clark County Community Resource Center at the corner of Martin Luther King Boulevard and Carey Avenue.

Titus participated in a press conference attended by about 100, including Cordell Stokes, Dr. Robert E. Fowler, former Senator Joe Neal, Assemblyman Harvey Mumford (Dem) and Clark County Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson Gates.

Titus represents District 7 in Clark County and has served in the State Senate since 1989. She has served as the Democratic Leader since 1993. She was accompanied by her husband, Tom Wright;



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

Gubernatorial candidate Dina Titus, left, chats with former State Sen. Joe Neal, middle, and Rev. Jesse Scott, former president of the local chapter of the NAACP on Monday.

mother, Betty Titus; sister, Rho Hudson; supporters and campaign workers.

Stokes, community activist and CEO of a political action group called W.I.N.G.S, Inc., made the opening statement:

"Black people now have the opportunity to select the

most well-rounded candidate for governor, who is prepared to address the need for diversifying our economic base; address the need for affordable housing; the problems of teacher and nursing shortages and relocation; and environmental and energy enhancement.

"...But, more importantly, addressing something we all want to see in a candidate and that is constituent accessibility," Stokes continued.

"This is a prime opportunity to go to the polls and vote your conscience. With no incumbent running, we
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Lil' Kim released from prison

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - Lil' Kim celebrated Independence Day one day early with her release from a federal detention center Monday morning after nearly 10 months behind bars.

The rapper, who was sent to prison for lying about a shootout outside a New York radio station, walked out of the jail looking glamorous in sunglasses and an all-white, cleavage-baring outfit.

Carrying a balloon and a bouquet of white roses, she waved to dozens of cheering onlookers — some carrying signs that said, "Welcome Home, Queen Bee" — before getting into a silver Rolls-Royce. The car pulled into a nearby parking lot where she re-emerged to greet the throng.

"I love you," she said, blowing kisses.

Some fans stayed up all night to ensure they made it downtown in time for her



Rapper Lil' Kim waves to fans after being released from the Federal Detention Center in Philadelphia on Monday.

6:00 a.m. release.

"It was worth it," said Shakiyla Williams, 16. "She was the same Queen Bee — fabulous."

The 4-foot-11 entertainer, whose real name is Kimberly Jones, began serving her time in the detention center Sept. 19. She was sentenced to a year and a day in prison but was released early for good behavior. "She has accepted responsibility and handled

herself in an exemplary manner," her attorney, L. Londell McMillan, said in a statement released by Lil' Kim's publicist.

Though several high-profile rappers — including Beanie Sigel and Tupac Shakur — have done jail time, Lil' Kim is the first prominent female artist to serve a prison sentence.

She will remain under house arrest for 30 days and

be under supervised release for three years.

Her conviction for lying to a federal grand jury and in the subsequent trial stemmed from a gun battle in 2001 that erupted outside WQHT-FM, known as Hot 97. Lil' Kim's entourage had crossed paths with a rival rap group, Capone-N-Noreaga, whose song "Bang, Bang" contains an insult to her from rival Foxy Brown. One man was hurt in the shootout.

Lil' Kim, who won a Grammy in 2001 for her part in the hit remake of "Lady Marmalade," maintained she hadn't noticed two of her close friends — who later pleaded guilty to gun charges — at the scene of the shootout.

Jurors at her trial saw radio station security photos of one of the two friends opening a door for her, and witnesses said they saw her at the station with both.