

Lending

(Continued from Page 2)

"A lot of people think that because they are a great cook, they should open up a restaurant," Odom said, "...There's more to it than just cooking; there is the management of the business." He cautions aspiring businesses to be realistic and get the right information about what lenders are looking for.

He cites one of the biggest barriers in the loan process for prospective new businesses is their misunderstanding about their repayment potential and probability of success, which the bank is assessing in terms of risk. One of the barriers to getting a loan for existing businesses is "not keeping good records," Odom said.

The workshop will in-

clude information about primary and secondary sources of repayment from the banks' perspective.

All income for a non-existent business "are projections," Odom said. He said the workshop will explain how other sources of revenues other than those from the proposed business are taken into account as part of the loan qualification process.

In a broadcast program earlier this week, Merritt and Gourrier encouraged women and men to evaluate their resources and repayment potential, but to be open-minded about ways borrowers can show their ability to repay the loan.

"Businesses, normally, in their first year cannot dem-

onstrate the ability to repay the loan, according to Gourrier. "Primary support" to repay the loan would be from the new business' own revenues.

He said that "repayment is a prime concern" for banks; however, they can consider income from an applicant's spouse, an outside job or other source during the start-up phase.

Merritt said, for example, "Sometimes a woman can get started faster because of the support of [her husband or significant other]," mainly because that "secondary support" could be considered in the loan application.

Ed Brown, a featured speaker from the Nevada district office of the U.S. Small Business Administration said

he sees the workshop as an opportunity for his agency to clear up misperceptions and to show new and existing business owners the advantages of using the SBA's resources.

"Basically our doors are open. I prefer you see us before you see the bank. ...You will know how the game is played," Brown said. He encourages anyone thinking about starting any type of business or getting a start-up loan or capital for business expansion "to make the SBA a first stop... We have resource partners. They can all guide you."

Brown said the public is not fully aware that the SBA locally has authority from his office to approve loan packages — and the turnaround

time is much shorter than many would think.

"In Nevada it could be about eight working days," Brown said, for loan packages that are presented properly, without missing information.

"You don't want to just take [a loan] from the first bank that comes along [either]... That's a long relationship," Brown cautions. "You interview that bank just like that bank is interviewing you."

Along with the lending and loan administration organizations, other host organizations include the Urban Chamber of Commerce, the NAACP and N.A.R.E.B, the National Association of Real Estate Brokers. None are lenders, but they are involved

for the educational benefits to the business community and their respective memberships.

Las Vegas chapter President Cynthia Pitts of N.A.R.E.B. has personal experience in acquiring a start-up business loan. "If this type of workshop was around when I started [my own business], it would have given me a better foundation and starting point. I would have been less apprehensive."

Fountain suggests calling to R.S.V.P. and to get additional information on what financial and other documents should be brought to the workshop for those interested in loan pre-qualification.

For more information, call (702) 382-9522.

Constitution

(Continued from Page 12)

Congress to reclaim authority that they say the president has usurped as he has expanded the power of the executive branch.

Bush claims that the constitution gives the executive branch of government "inherent power" to do "whatever it takes" to protect the people of the United States.

Testifying at the Judiciary Committee hearing on behalf of the Bush administration, Michelle Boardman, deputy assistant attorney general in the Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice, said that signing statements serve a "legitimate and important function" and are not an abuse of power.

"Congress should not fear signing statements, but welcome the openness they provide," she said. "The president must execute the law faithfully, but the Constitution is the highest law of the land. If the Constitution and the law conflict, the president must choose," she said.

But many constitutional scholars disagree.

Among them is Barbara Olshansky, director of the Global Justice Initiative at the Center for Constitutional Rights, a prominent advocacy group. She said in a news interview, "I think it is hard evidence of (Bush's) continued aggressive arrogation of power. It is a blatant attempt to expand power by pulling the rug out from under Congress each time it passes a bill that he dislikes."

She added, "Many of the laws that Bush has decided to bypass or overwrite by this method involve the military, where he once again invokes the idea that as commander-in-chief he can ignore any law that seeks to regulate the military."

Another opposition view came from Professor Edward Herman of the University of Pennsylvania, who told said, "The brazenness of Bush's use of this practice is remarkable. But even more remarkable is the fact that this de facto further nullification of congressional authority fails to elicit sustained criticism and outrage. It is part of a step-by-step abrogation of constitutional government, and it is swallowed by the flag-wavers and normalized."

"We are in deep trouble," he added.

Signing statements are not new — their use started with the fifth U.S. president, James Monroe (1817-1825) — but they were used sparingly and mostly for rhetorical purposes. Only 75 statements had been issued before Ronald Reagan became president in 1980. Reagan and his successors, George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton, made 247 signing

statements between them.

But President Bush has taken the practice to a new level, attracting criticism both for the number of statements he has issued, as well as for his apparent attempts to nullify any legal restrictions on his actions.

Democratic members of both the House of Representatives and the Senate are viewing President Bush's signing statements as a dangerous over-reach of presidential power — and a campaign issue for the congressional elections in November.

Last week House Democrats introduced a resolution requiring the president to notify Congress if the president "makes a determination to ignore a duly enacted provision of law."

And Democratic Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, known as the "lion" of the Senate, declared this week, "For far too long, Congress has stood by and watched while President Bush has slowly expanded the unilateral powers of the presidency at the expense of the rest of the government and the people."

The U.S. legal community is also concerned. Earlier this month, the American Bar Association's board of directors formed a Task Force on Presidential Signing Statements and the Separation of Powers Doctrine to review the use of signing statements and whether this use is consistent with the U.S. Constitution.

Bush's signing statements have covered a wide variety of subjects, ranging from the ability of military lawyers to give independent legal advice to their commanders, to timely transmission of government-funded scientific information to Congress, to rules for firing a government employee whistleblower who tells Congress about possible wrongdoing.

But until President Bush's signing statement on the anti-torture legislation, the subject went virtually unreported by the U.S. press. Phillip Cooper, a Portland State University public administration professor who is an authority on signing statements, says "one of the important things here is for reporters to apply their journalistic instincts to this story."

Cooper concludes that the Bush White House "has very effectively expanded the scope and character of the signing statement not only to address specific provisions of legislation that the White House wishes to nullify, but also in an effort to significantly reposition and strengthen the powers of the presidency relative to the Congress."

NNPA

(Continued from Page 6)

vertising placement firm, Amalgamated Publishers Inc, becoming the group's first female chief executive in more than 40 years.


Leavell succeeds Brian Townsend, publisher, the *Precinct Reporter* in San Bernardino, Calif., as chair of the NNPA Foundation. Clint C. Wilson II, professor of journalism in the Howard University School of Communications, was elected secretary-treasurer of the Foundation.

Other members of the NNPA Foundation's board are: John B. Smith, chairman of the National Newspaper Publishers Association

and publisher of the *Atlanta Inquirer*; Mollie Belt, secretary of the NNPA and publisher of the *Dallas Examiner*; Lenora Carter, treasurer of NNPA and publisher of the *Houston Forward Times*; Cloves Campbell, first vice president of NNPA and publisher of the *Arizona Informant*; Chris B. Bennett, second vice president and co-publisher and editor of the *Seattle Medium*; James Belt Jr. of the *Dallas Examiner*; former chair Brian Townsend; Ofield Dukes, president of Ofield Dukes & Associates; and Melvin P. Foote, president and CEO of the Constituency for Africa.


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