

Black lawyers providing scholarships

By Debbie Hall
Sentinel-Voice

The Honorable Mablean Ephriam, media celebrity of television's syndicated show, "Divorce Court," and "Celebrity Fit Club One," will be the keynote speaker for the 17th annual scholarship banquet for the Las Vegas Chapter of the National Bar Association. The event will be held on Saturday, October 7, at the Monte Carlo Resort and Casino on the Las Vegas South Strip.

Ephriam was an executive committee member of the Los Angeles County Bar Association and State Bar of California Family Law Sections, and she is recognized for her contributions to the Los Angeles legal community. Her commitment and dedication to community service in the area of family law has earned her many prestigious awards throughout her career.

Jason Frierson, president of the local chapter of the NBA and an attorney for the Public Defender's Office in

Clark County, has been a member of the host organization for the past six years.

"This banquet is an opportunity for attorneys to network and for attorneys to reach out to people in the community. It is also an opportunity for people to meet the attorneys in the NBA," he said.

Freirson also emphasized that "the most important thing about this banquet is giving scholarships, especially with a local law school available, even though it is not limited to those attending the local law school."

The NBA was formally organized in Des Moines, Iowa, on August 1, 1925. Then, there were fewer than 1,000 African-American lawyers in the nation. Today, the NBA is the nation's oldest and largest national association of predominately African-American lawyers and judges.

It has 84 affiliate chapters throughout the United States and affiliations in Canada, the United Kingdom, Africa



Mablean Ephriam will keynote an upcoming NBA address.

and the Caribbean. It represents a professional network of over 20,000 lawyers, judges, educators and law students.

From the 1920s through the 1950s, African-American

lawyers, such as the Honorable James A. Cobb, T. Gillis Nutter and Ashbie Hawkins, fought the famous segregation case of Louisville, and the Covenants case of The District of Columbia. Early NBA pioneers S.D. McGill, R.P. Crawford and J.L. Lewis fought to have sentences of

execution stayed in the Florida case popularly referred to as the "Four Pompano Boys."

When the Supreme Court outlawed school segregation in Brown v. Board of Education, the decision culminated a long struggle by African-American lawyers. These lawyers included Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American United States Supreme Court Justice, and United States District court Judge Constance Baker Motley, the first African-American female federal judge.

Through continuing service, the NBA is known as America's legal conscience. Some of the objectives of the NBA are "to promote legislation that will improve the economic condition of all American citizens, regardless of race, sex, or creed, in their efforts to secure a free and untrammelled use of the franchise and to protect the civil and political rights of the citizens and residents of the United States."

Frierson stated why the NBA is important to him: "Issues that are important to this organization, I hold dear to

my heart. These are issues that affect attorneys of color and public at large particular. It helps with people of color who are dealing with the judicial system and dealing with attorneys. This includes criminal, but also mentors, community service, leadership and so many areas that is important to this community."

He added, "[The NBA] has helped in my ability to network and develop as an attorney."

The honoree this year is Bryan K. Scott, Esq., a current board member of the Nevada State Bar Board of Governors and Immediate Past President of the Clark County Bar Association.

Over the last twenty years, the NBA has provided scholarships to several African-American law students, many of whom have become attorneys practicing law in Nevada. The scholarships are funded through the annual banquet and corporate sponsorships.

For more information or to purchase individual or group tickets, call (702) 991-9980.

Event pushes health

Special to Sentinel Voice

The third annual Victory Missionary Baptist Church "V" Community Jubilee celebration takes place this Saturday along the streets of historic West Las Vegas.

More than 75 vendors and service providers will line the streets surrounding the church at 500 W. Monroe Ave. from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. for the event that is free to the public. The day will include special giveaways, all-day entertainment, including a special performance by the award-winning Mohave High School marching band and drum line.

"The Jubilee is a special

event presented for the purpose of giving back to the community by enriching the lives of the families and people who live here," said Victory Pastor Robert E. Fowler Sr.

Free health screenings for diabetes, glaucoma and HIV will be available. Additionally, there will be vendors featuring designer accessories and the latest in stylish fashions. There will be a special Kidz Zone for children of all ages.

"This day is a wonderful opportunity for the community to come out and enjoy a variety of services and entertainment," said Clark County

Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson Gates. "Each year the event grows and the county is always excited to see our citizens working together in their communities for the common good."

Jubilee is sponsored by Shack Findlay Honda, Mario's Westside Market, Clark County Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson Gates, Nevada Partners, North Las Vegas police Capt. Victor Dunn, Attorney Lizzie Hatcher and Inez Staten. Food will be available for purchase. For more information about the event or to reserve a vendor booth, contact Carman Burney at 210-5417.

U.S. crime hits 32-year low

WASHINGTON (AP) - Americans were robbed and victimized by gun violence at greater rates last year than the year before, even though overall violent and property crime reached a 32-year low, the Justice Department said Sunday.

Experts said these increases buttress reports from the FBI and many mayors and police chiefs that violent crime is beginning to rise after a long decline. Bush administration officials expressed concern but stressed that it was too soon to tell if

a new upward trend in violence had begun.

Last year, there were two violent gun crimes for every 1,000 individuals, compared with 1.4 in 2004, according to the department's Bureau of Justice Statistics. There were 2.6 robberies for every 1,000 persons, compared with 2.1 the year before.

"This report tells us more the serious events — robbery and gun crimes — increased, and the FBI already told us homicides increased," said criminal justice professor James Alan Fox of North-

eastern University.

"So while the report shows the more numerous but least serious violence — simple assaults, which is pushing and shoving — went down, the mix got worse in terms of severity. That wasn't a very good trade-off," Fox said.

A preliminary FBI report in June on crimes reported to police showed a 4.8 percent increase in the number of murders and 4.5 percent increase in the number of robberies in 2005.

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