

Wal-Mart

(Continued from Page 1)
iversity.

This year alone, the contributions include a \$1 million grant to the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation for scholarships and internships for Black students; a \$5 million grant to the National Urban League to support its workforce development initiatives; \$1.5 Million to the United Negro College Fund for emergency assistance to UNCF institutions; and a total of \$500,000 to minority journalism scholarship programs at 10 universities including Hampton and Howard universities.

Not all civil rights leaders feel pressed by Wal-Mart.

"Wal-Mart has in no [way] tried to persuade me with money. In fact, I've had [Wal-Mart Chief Executive Officer] Lee Scott on my radio show," says the Rev. Al Sharpton. "There's where I held him accountable, right there, face to face. And callers really took him to task."

As the head of Operation Breadbasket, the SCLC's economic arm under Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Jackson pioneered making corporations responsive to Blacks. But, he has sometimes been accused of "shaking

"Wal-Mart needs to get a goal of being the champion of diversity. It needs to be the best at everything."

— Marc H. Morial

like having our cake and eating it too."

Rather than refusing Wal-Mart's money, Morial said civil rights groups should be insisting on more.

"I think it's about time that Wal-Mart expands its philanthropy into the African-American community. I welcome it. The grant that we have will help people get better jobs."

Nu Wexler, spokesman for Wal-Mart Watch, a group critical of the retailer, agrees that Wal-Mart is doing the right thing by making the contributions.

"But Wal-Mart's political contributions can't make up for their record of discrimination law suits, EEOC violations, and other race issues," Wexler said. "These organizations have an obligation to continue to hold Wal-Mart accountable."

Few Black organizations receiving money have done so publicly.

Wal-Mart, with 3,500 stores across the nation and a total of 6,500 in 15 countries, has an extensive record of charitable giving

but also an extensive record of rights violations.

Wal-Mart, has a total workforce of 1.3 million and boasts of being the leading employer of African-Americans and



Latinos in the U.S.; however, the corporation's 225,000 African-Americans (17 percent) and 139,000 Latinos (11 percent) are among the leading advocates for labor unions that the company refuses and the leading complainants in cases alleging non-payment for overtime and lack of health care and unaffordable health care. Currently there are 50 wage and hour class action lawsuits pending against Wal-Mart, according to Wal-Mart Watch.

Wal-Mart spokesman John Simley adds that the lawsuits and settlements are not as they appear.

"When you look at some of the judgments that have come down, you have to know that a good number of them are under appeal for good reason," Simley says.

Concerning complaints about low wages, Simley said many Wal-Mart jobs are not intended to support whole families, but rather for supplemental income. Simley concedes, however, that Wal-Mart is working on wages.

"The way that the allegation has been framed is that we are a minimum wage employer. We are clearly not. We have just raised the starting minimums for 1,200 of our stores in order to remain competitive in labor markets across the country," said Simley. He says the starting wages were raised an average of 6 percent, affecting 120,000 workers. The average wage, he said, is \$10.11 an hour, \$4.96 higher than the current federal minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour.

While NAACP President and CEO Bruce Gordon could not be reached for comment, the NAACP's latest annual corporate report card gave Wal-Mart a C+, the highest of all 45 stores in the retail category. The report ranked in areas of employment, marketing, procurement, community reinvestment and charitable donations.

But Jackson plans to continue rejecting money from Wal-Mart. He said, "I believe that we must be a voice of conscience."

School snacks switched

NEW YORK (AP) - Snacks sold in schools will have less fat, sugar and salt under the latest crackdown on junk food won by former President Clinton.

Just five months after a similar agreement targeting the sale of sodas in schools, Clinton and the American Heart Association announced a deal Friday with several major food companies to make school snacks healthier — the latest assault on the nation's childhood obesity epidemic.

"This is voluntary," Clinton said. "They don't have to do it. But they recognize the challenge we face, and they are helping us face the first step."

Clinton said the obesity problem is hurting the American economy by contributing to high healthcare costs.

The agreement with Kraft Foods Inc., Mars Inc., Campbell Soup Co., Groupe Danone SA and PepsiCo Inc. sets guidelines for fat, sugar, sodium and calories for snack foods sold in school vending machines, stores and snack bars. Those companies make everything from M&M's, yogurt and granola bars to Frito-Lay potato chips, Snickers bars and canned soups.

Under the guidelines, most foods won't be permitted to derive more than 35 percent of their calories from fat and more than 10 percent from saturated fat. There will be a limit of 35 percent for sugar content by weight.

An example of a snack that would be banned is a Snickers bar, which has 280 calories, 130 of them from fat. The candy bar has 30 grams of sugar out of 58.7 total grams.

"By working with schools and industry to implement these guidelines, we are helping to give parents peace of mind that their

kids will be able to make healthier choices at school," said Dr. Raymond Gibbons, president of the heart association.

Gibbons said the guidelines are based on the recommendations of leading scientists "as to what we should be doing to provide more nutritious foods for our kids."

Charles Nicolas, a spokesman for PepsiCo, which owns Frito-Lay and Quaker, said Frito-Lay already has products that meet the guidelines, such as baked potato chips and reduced-sugar chewy bars.

"We're going to change a few recipes so that more snacks meet those guidelines as well," he said.

Kraft said in a statement that it would add the sodium and calorie caps to its nutrition guidelines "and extend these guidelines to include all of our competitive foods sold in schools."

The William J. Clinton Foundation teamed up with the heart association to form the Alliance for a Healthier Generation in 2005. The alliance was formed to combat childhood obesity, which has been blamed for an increase in early-onset diabetes and other ills.

In May, the alliance announced an agreement with beverage industry leaders to sell only water, unsweetened juice and low-fat and nonfat milk in elementary and middle schools. Diet sodas and sports drinks are still being sold in high schools.

Officials said that agreement covered 87 percent of the soft drink market in public and private schools.

Bob Harrison, executive director of the alliance, said the snack-food industry is not as concentrated as the beverage industry, so the reach of this agreement will not be as wide as the earlier one.

RE-ELECT

Morse

ARBERRY, JR.

NEVADA STATE ASSEMBLY CLARK COUNTY DISTRICT 7

Progress - Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow!

Paid Political Advertisement by Morse Arberry, Jr.