

## Deval

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chance... I think that he has shown, and I think others are showing, that African-Americans can be competitive if they are given the same opportunities."

But Wilder, who said he intends to contact Patrick, said he would give him a key warning: Do not believe the recent Zogby Poll that gave him a lead of 22 percent over Republican Lt. Gov. Kerry Healey, who is trying to become the first woman governor of Massachusetts. Former Republican Christy Mihos, running as an Independent is considered a spoiler for Healey. A Green-Rainbow Party candidate Grace Ross is not considered a major factor in the race to succeed first-term Republican Gov. Willard Mitt Romney, who will is not seeking re-election and is also considering a presidential bid.

"My advice is to act like you're behind because, in reality, you may be," Wilder said. "And deal with trying to get every voter out there, every languishing vote and every possible vote and say, 'Look, I'm not running for history. I'm not running to break the color line. I'm running to give the best possible guidance to the state of Massachusetts as can be.'"

The former governor has good reasons for urging caution. A *Washington Post* poll showed him with a healthy 9 percent lead over his Republican opponent J. Marshall Coleman just two days before his 1989 election. On the day of the election, a poll of voters exiting the voting booth by Mason-Dixon Opinion Research declared Wilder the winner by 10 percentage points. But when the final votes were tallied, Wilder won by less than one-tenth of a percentage point.

But Massachusetts political insiders say the Wilder scenario is highly unlikely with Patrick.

"As we get closer and closer to Election Day, the feeling in the state, I think, is one of excitement about the possibility of having an African-American governor, and it's going to propel him to an even bigger victory," said Marty Linsky, a professor of

leadership, politics and public management at the Harvard University John Kennedy School of Government.

"This is not only not surprising, but I think it would be surprising if he weren't successful in an overwhelmingly Democratic state."

Although the last four governors of Massachusetts have been Republicans, Linsky said the state's predominately Democratic voters have elected them because of their moderate stances.

"Most of the Republican governors have been to the left of many of the Democratic legislators," Linsky explains. "And, most importantly, it's the state that in 1966, elected an African-American to the United States Senate."

That was Edward W. Brooke III, who served from 1967 to 1979. Prior to that, he was Massachusetts' first Black Attorney General.

Linsky said a win for Patrick may not mean very much for other Black gubernatorial candidates because of Massachusetts' strong Democratic base.

"It's easy for people to say, 'Oh well, it was Massachusetts,'" Linsky said.

Appointed Clinton's assistant attorney general for civil rights in 1994, Patrick held the highest civil rights post in the country for three years. Also a former lawyer for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, he said his background in dealing with the substantive issues of the nation like hate crimes, abortion clinic violence, employment discrimination, affirmative action and Black church burnings helps him to bring a fresh variety of issues to an audience that is also looking for answers to its bread-and-butter issues like taxes, crime, and healthcare.

"I think people are really hungry," Patrick said. "I think it's true all over the country — people are hungry for leadership that's more powerful and candid and not about gimmicks and slogans and photo ops. I think that's something that they've grown tired of, not just in Republicans, but in Democrats as well."

## Education

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University of North Carolina Center for Civil Rights in Chapel Hill. He has been monitoring how, ever since the federal courts began lifting their previous desegregation orders, Black children have been relegated to crumbling inner city schools with poor teachers and administrators, while White children have been given the choice of attending newly constructed suburban schools in their neighborhoods, complete with the top teachers, administrations, and plenty of state-of-the-art facilities.

"The [public] schools have re-segregated to the great disadvantage of the Black community," Chambers said.

He recalled a discussion he had with N.C. Rep. Bernard Allen several weeks ear-

lier about joining with the NC NAACP at its state convention, and bringing all of its branches together to adopt a program to promote taking advantage of the Leandro decision now so that Black parents can be assured that their children are getting a good education.

Ironically, Allen died the night before the very community meeting he suggested.

Chambers said he was disturbed that "flagship" traditionally Black high schools once known for academic achievement and excellence now have student bodies where the majority are failing standardized tests and are literally the worst in the state.

"I was appalled, though I should have known that this kind of performance was taking place all over the state,"

Chambers said.

"I wondered what happened to the Black parents. How could anybody in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, or Durham or Greensboro, stand back and watch their Black children perform so poorly on these standardized exams. And we go on as if nothing has happened?"

Chambers challenged every NAACP branch in the state to attend local school board meetings, and ask officials why Black children are not doing better in their schools.

"You cannot afford to stand back in this day and age and watch that kind of performance," Chambers said. "You can't afford to stand back, and do nothing. You don't have a choice."

Cash Michaels writes for the *Wilmington Journal*.

## Asthma

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getting asthma and other lung diseases, along with getting free medical advice from physicians on how to manage asthma.

It is important for the public, especially people of color, to come to this event, said Novelette Chambers, a walk coordinator. There will be a company there that specializes in providing asthma equipment, such as nebulizers, a medical device used for clearer breathing. The medical representatives will help participants locate affordable asthma medication and equipment.

Many minority and low-income families have difficulty adequately managing asthma and lack the right equipment and medication since it can be expensive, Chambers said.

Often, people with asthma ignore the symptoms and don't get checked because of the expenses that follow the treatment.

Perhaps this socioeconomic factor contributes to the high rates of Blacks with asthma, according to the American Lung Association's website. Access to affordable medication is vital since asthma will become life threatening when it is managed poorly. Improper management of the disease in 2003 contributed to 4,009

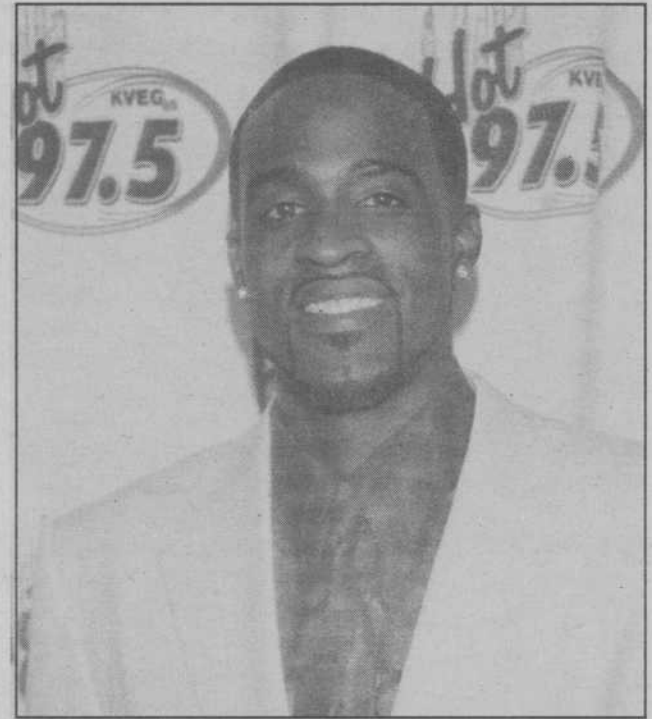


Photo special to the Sentinel-Voice by Marty Frierson

Mike P is a radio host on Hot 97.5's "Morning Madhouse."

deaths from asthma, according to the ALA's website [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org).

"The walk isn't only to benefit asthma research; it's to promote lung health and prevent lung disease through building community awareness," Chambers said. "We want to let people know how passionate we are about people suffering from lung disease."

Along with sharing information and prevention tactics, there will be music, entertainment, games and prizes.

Hot 97.5 radio personali-

ties Mike P. and Juicy Lo will be giving away prizes to walkers. There will be free food, play facilities for kids and face painting booths. Disneyland tickets, Jet Blue plane tickets and other prizes will be raffled following the walk.

Organizers say participants can simply come to UNLV's North Field on the main campus the morning of the walk. For more information on participation or about health resources, contact Chambers at 702-431-6333, or go to their website, [www.asthmawalk.org](http://www.asthmawalk.org).

## Alzheimers

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healthcare access is a major problem for Black America's seniors and said in 2005, the ratio of uninsured African-Americans 65 and older to insured White Americans of the same age was 30 to 1.

"A lot of (elderly) African-Americans didn't have good health plans when they were working and now that they're older don't have any coverage or their coverage lapsed," she said.

Jack said local chapters are reaching out to churches to spread the word about the support programs the organization provides. But

she said more work must be done and more African-Americans must take part in studies like Griffith's.

"The response in the African-American community is building. It has a lot of possibilities, (but) it's not where we want it to be," she said.

Lackland started working for the Alzheimer's Association's Illinois chapter as a public policy director.

His personal experiences with his grandmother made him leave a lengthy career as a lobbyist to join the Alzheimer's Association staff.



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