

# LAS VEGAS Sentinel Voice



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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

## Juneteenth fete expands

By Chelsi Cheatom  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

The Las Vegas Juneteenth Committee hosts Las Vegas' seventh annual Juneteenth Festival this Friday and Saturday in the Sammy Davis Junior Plaza at Lorenzi Park.

For the first year, this event growing in popularity is extended to two-days and offers an expanded schedule of fun and family entertainment to celebrate an important cultural and historical date marking emancipation for Black Americans. The festival is free to the public and runs 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. both days.

In addition to live music, there will be ethnic food and beverages, dance groups, singers, guest speakers, and a variety of educational and other activities for children and adults. The coordinators welcome the entire community and visitors.

Live entertainment includes stand-up comedian LJ Brown as emcee, and veteran comic George Wallace is scheduled to do a special introduction. Jazz saxophonist Najee will perform both nights.

Featured headline R&B vocalists include recording artist Freddie Jackson and Howard Hewitt, the former lead singer of Shalamar, who recently released his ninth solo album, but is best known for the group's '70s and '80s hits, including "A Night to Remember" and "Second Time Around" recorded with members Jodi Watley and Jeffrey Daniel.

The term Juneteenth refers to the annual celebration of the abolition of slavery in the United States. Juneteenth is also commonly known as Emancipation Day or Freedom Day. This year marks the 142nd anniversary of the event celebrated in various ways across

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## Men: Empower our youth

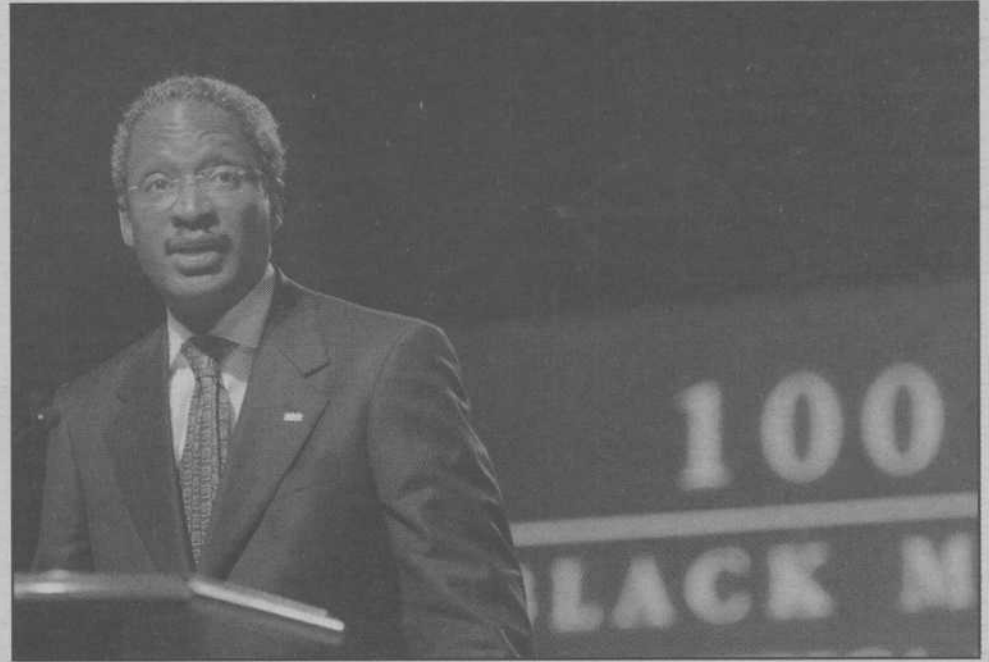
By Hazel Trice Edney  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

LAS VEGAS (NNPA) - Social justice and economic statistics seem to indicate doom for America's Black male, so the theme, "Taking Control of Our Future" appears extremely aggressive.

But Albert E. Dotson Jr., chairman of the 100 Black Men of America Inc., says 21 years after the organization's founding, it is poised to do just that.

"It is time to turn the corner on this conference, to turn the corner on this organization and to truly Take Control of Our Future," said Dotson in his annual "State of the 100 Address" before the more than 2,700 registrants of the annual convention held here last week.

"Dr. Calvin Mackie opened this conference with an honest, no-holes-barred assessment of where we stand as a people — pleading for us as a group of leaders and as a group of Black men that care to somehow intervene. Dr. Cornel West, Tavis Smiley, Ed Gordon, Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu and others have implored us. And, if I may borrow from the great philosophers Harold Melvin



100 Black Men of America Chairman Albert Dotson Jr. speaks to a crowd of 2,700 during State of the 100 Address. His speech at Bally's touched on empowering youth to leadership.

and the Blue Notes to capture their collective message: "Wake up everybody, no more sleeping in bed. No more backward thinking, time for thinking ahead."

To the applause of the enthusiastic Las Vegas audience, Dotson committed to working like never before to turn around the horrid statistics that have bemoaned and embarrassed the Black community for decades.

And if the attendance by

youth at the conference was any indicator, the plan is already working.

Hundreds of youth turned out to participate in a string of events, including the receiving of awards, speaking on the programs alongside adults, enjoying socials and even participating in an "African-American History Challenge Championship."

Dotson says the statistics alone are enough to inspire action.

According to the National Urban League's State of Black America 2007, at 4th grade, Blacks perform at a level that is 87 percent of Whites.

By the time they reach 12th grade, their scores are at 74 percent of Whites. And after they reach adulthood, they're the most likely to have dropped out of school — 15 percent compared to 12 percent of Whites.

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## Biden: Some in Congress ignore Black enterprise

By Hazel Trice Edney  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

LAS VEGAS (NNPA) - U.S. Sen. Joe Biden, D-Del., the only presidential candidate to attend the 100 Black Men of America's 21st Annual Conference last week, said in a meeting with the organization's executive committee that most members of Congress who have few Blacks in their districts "don't know that there is a decent stream of accomplished business men and women in the Black community."

Fielding questions from the executives and several members of the 100 about the inability or unwillingness of Congress to pass key legislation for the progress of African-Americans, Biden said, "Look guys, most of the guys and women in the United States Congress who don't come from communities with broader Black populations, they don't know that there is a decent stream of accomplished business men and women in the Black community out there. They don't know it. Y'all are a secret.

The only White boy that figured it out was Clinton," he said to jovial laughter from the group. "I'm not joking! I'm not joking!" he said.

Biden, who lives in the 58 percent Black city of Wilmington, Del., was addressing the informal, small group session on mostly issues of education and health-care during the group's convention. Speaking more candidly than normal — because apparently, he thought there was "no press" in the room — he was encouraging the

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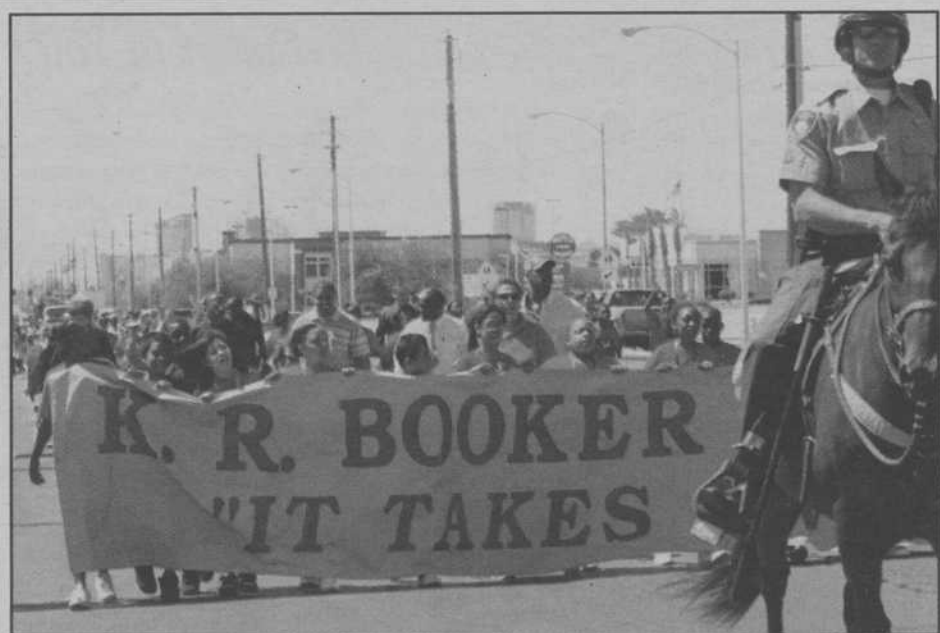


Photo special to the Sentinel-Voice

### WALK THE TALK

Students and administrators at Kermit R. Booker Elementary walked last Thursday from the school's temporary site on Madison Street (near Washington Avenue and J Street) to the newly rebuilt campus located at 2277 Martin Luther King Boulevard.