

King project nets \$1.5 million

WASHINGTON (AP) - Media conglomerate Viacom Inc., which owns BET and MTV, announced a donation recently valued at \$1.5 million to help build a memorial to Martin Luther King Jr. on the National Mall.

Viacom pledged \$1 million in cash plus promotions for the memorial that will include public service announcements across the company's networks and its billboards in New York's Times Square, Chief Executive Officer Philippe Dauman said.

In response, the foundation working to build the memorial named Viacom the title sponsor for the musical benefit Dream Concert scheduled for Sept. 18 at New York's Radio City Music Hall.

"We are very keen to have our company, our entire employee population really live the messages of diversity, in-

clusion and justice that Dr. King stood for," Dauman said.

The benefit concert will feature such headliners as Garth Brooks, Aretha Franklin, Queen Latifah, Kenny "Babyface" Edmonds and Stevie Wonder. Tickets range from \$250 to \$1,000.

The memorial will be built near the Tidal Basin between the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials. It will include a sculpture of King and 14 quotations from the slain civil rights leader and Nobel recipient.

The project had been scheduled for completion in late 2008 but likely will be pushed back until 2009 because of delays with the design process, said Harry Johnson, president and CEO of the Martin Luther King National Memorial Project Foundation Inc.

The foundation has raised \$82 million of the \$100 mil-

lion needed to complete and maintain the memorial, Johnson said.

The Houston attorney has been fending off criticism recently over the group's selection of a Chinese sculptor for the statue of King. Some have said a Black artist should have been chosen to sculpt the first monument to a Black leader on the National Mall.

In February, the memorial foundation announced Lei Yixin, one of nine sculptors considered national treasures in China, would carve King's likeness in the memorial's 28-foot granite "Stone of Hope."

Since then, one group has drafted a petition and started a website called "King Is Ours," calling the selection a "travesty of justice."

"For us, with an African-American driven project, for us to then say we shouldn't use somebody because of the

color of their skin and not the content of their character... to me that's a very bigoted thought, which really goes against, in my viewpoint, what Dr. King stood for," Johnson said.

Bronze sculptor Ed Dwight, who also was the first Black astronaut, told the Los Angeles Times he was pushed aside from the King project because the foundation hoped the selection of a Chinese sculptor would result in a \$25 million donation. Johnson said that wasn't true, noting that Dwight doesn't sculpt granite.

"We have never, never contacted the embassy of China, anybody in China or any companies in China asking for a dime," Johnson said.

President

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Missouri City and later lavishly furnished a \$1.2 million, 6,000-square-foot Mediterranean-style house she had custom built in 2005.

As jurors filled out questionnaires Monday in another room, state District Judge Brock Thomas heard testimony about how prosecutors

were mistakenly given privileged attorney-client communications between DeGeurin and Slade that were part of records found on two computers seized from the ex-TSU president's home.

Thomas had previously said prosecutors could have access to all the information

on the computers except the privileged communications.

Investigators with the Harris County District Attorney's Office said they only saw two e-mails and couldn't recall what was in them.

Thomas did not immediately take any action on the mistakenly released records.

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PHYSICAL ABILITY TEST: Spring 2008

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