

# Blige denies steroids claims of Albany paper

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — A representative for R&B superstar Mary J. Blige has denied a report the singer has taken illegal steroids.

Blige was one of a number of entertainers named by *The Times Union of Albany* on the weekend in connection with a steroid investigation.

The newspaper cited unidentified law enforcement officials in reporting in a recent edition that Blige, rap musicians 50 Cent, Timbaland, Wyclef Jean and award-winning author and producer Tyler Perry may have received or used performance-enhancing drugs.

The newspaper said that Blige received the human growth hormone Jentropin and Oxandrolone, an anabolic steroid, in orders sent to her at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Her representative denounced the report.

"Mary J. Blige has never taken any performance enhancing illegal steroids, or any anti-aging steroids," Karyne Tencer said.

Law enforcement officials said evidence did not indicate the celebrities broke the law but that investigators were focusing on doctors, pharmacists and clinics that provide the drugs.

Albany district attorney P. David Soares launched the investigation into steroid trafficking last year.

Soares is "not confirming, denying or discussing any of the names" involved in the investigation, said representative Heather Streeter Orth.

Ken Sunshine, a representative for Tyler Perry, declined to comment and representatives of the other celebrities named could not be reached. Soares' multi-state investigation has focused on Signature Pharmacy of Orlando, Fla. So far, 10 defendants have pleaded guilty, and news reports have linked some professional athletes to Soares' probe.



R&B superstar Mary J. Blige

Soares has said Signature was at the center of a web of businesses and doctors who illegally wrote prescriptions for steroids. Authorities raided the company almost a year ago and its owners and operators are awaiting trial in Albany on related charges.

Records shared with the news outlet and information from several co-operating witnesses on Long Island allege that the celebrities received prescribed human growth hormone or steroids, the newspaper said.

Former Senator George Mitchell released a report last month on performance-enhancing drugs in baseball. That report said former Mets clubhouse attendant Kirk Radomski provided steroids and human growth hormone linked to several prominent players. Radomski pleaded guilty last year to charges that he dealt steroids to players for a decade.

Congressional hearings are to begin this month on the Mitchell report.

# Patronize Black business to spur parallel economy

## Why African-Americans Can't Get Ahead: And How We Can Solve It with Group Economics

By Gwen Richardson; Cushcity Communications; Paperback; \$14.95; 174 pages; illustrated

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By Kam Williams  
Sentinel-Voice

"Unemployment rates for African-Americans have historically been twice as high as for White Americans... and the plight of young Black males is even worse, especially in the country's inner cities... An even more telling statistic shows that less than 1 per cent of jobs held by African-Americans are created by African-Americans. In other words, we are literally dependent upon other groups for our very livelihoods.

Further, the problems facing the African-American community are no longer on the political radar screen... Political leaders have made appeals to the federal government to solve these problems, but after 40 years of persistently high unemployment rates and repeated studies showing little improvement, it is incumbent upon African-Americans to identify solutions and reverse this trend ourselves.

*If African-Americans are to be treated as a group, we might as well act as one where economics is concerned. Practicing group economics, making a conscious decision to spend a significant percentage of our dollars within our community so long-term jobs can be created for our children and grandchildren is the only way to reverse this disastrous trend.* —Excerpted from the Introduction (pages xx-xxi)

Why is it that Blacks have lagged behind most other American ethnic groups in terms of economic progress? According to Gwen Richardson, the key to financial success might lie in unity, a willingness to patronize Black-owned businesses. As proof, she points to the success of Jews, Asians, Haitians, West Indians, Arabs and even gays, all minorities much smaller in population than the 40 million who comprise the African-American segment of the population.

Each of those other groups has, nonetheless, flourished by maintaining a cultural identity, rather than exercising the option "to fully assimilate into American society." Consequently, not only are they able to take a measure of "pride in being a closed society," but they are simultaneously able to keep capi-

(See Economics, Page 15)

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