

NAACP asks ad groups to stop discriminating

By Alan King
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — Following a recent study exposing racial bias in America's advertising industry, the NAACP and Washington, D.C. law firm Mehri & Skalet has launched a national campaign to reverse widespread discrimination against African-American professionals employed in that field.

In letters dated March 23, the civil rights organization called on the nation's top 25 largest-spending advertisers to hold their advertising agencies accountable.

For more than 40 years, government agencies have charged the advertising industry with discriminatory employment practices that resulted in a deficiency of African-American hires and promotions.

According to "Research Perspectives on Race and Employment in the Advertis-

ing Industry," a study conducted by leading research firm Bendick and Egan Economic Consultants, Black advertising employees are under-hired, under-paid and under-utilized.

The study found that about 16 percent of large advertising firms employ no Black managers or professionals, a rate 60 percent higher than in the overall labor market.

Also, Black college graduates working in advertising earn \$.80 for every dollar earned by their equally-qualified White counterparts, according to the study.

After receiving complaints of discrimination from African-American advertising professionals, Mehri & Skalet started a preliminary investigation.

In January, the firm launched the Madison Avenue Project in partnership with the NAACP, aimed at

redressing historical discrimination and changing the culture, policies and practices of advertising agencies to promote diversity and equality.

"African-Americans have worked in advertising since the modern American advertising industry emerged more than 100 years ago. Yet, as employment discrimination has sharply diminished across the American labor market over recent decades, systemic barriers to equal opportunity in this \$31 billion a year industry have remained largely intact," NAACP Interim General Counsel Angela Ciccolo wrote in a letter to A.G. Lafley, chairman and CEO of Procter & Gamble Co., one of the companies targeted by the effort.

In the letter, the NAACP asked the company to require that their advertising agencies use diverse teams in cre- (See *Discrimination*, Page 9)



This video frame grab taken from a police dashboard camera shows NFL player Ryan Moats outside Baylor Regional Medical Center in Plano, Texas early March 18, 2009.

Cop who stopped NFL player in hospital lot resigns force

Special to Sentinel-Voice

DALLAS — The police officer who pulled out his gun and threatened an NFL player with jail instead of allowing him inside a hospital where his mother-in-law was dying resigned Wednesday.

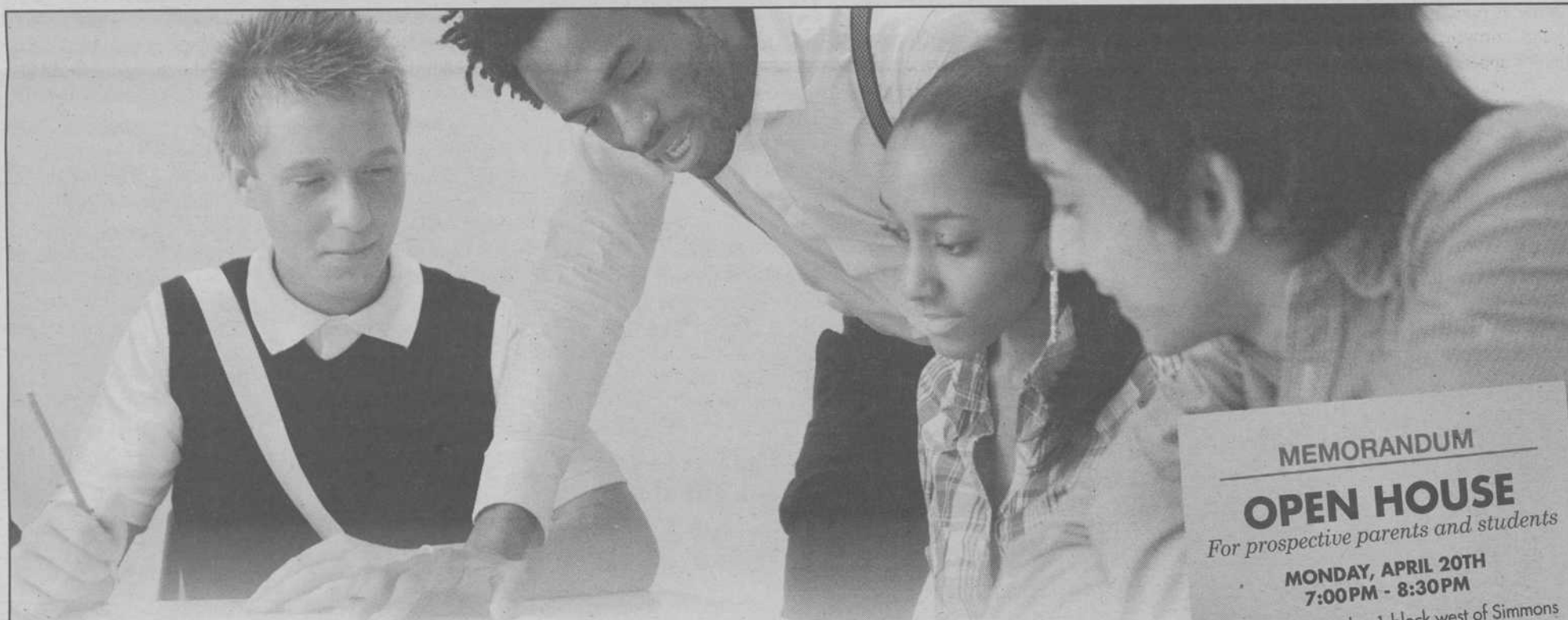
Officer Robert Powell had been placed on leave for the March 18 incident when he stopped Houston Texans run-

ning back Ryan Moats' SUV outside Baylor Regional Medical Center in suburban Plano after the vehicle rolled through a red light. Moats' wife, Tamishia, and other relatives were also in the car.

"I made this decision in the hope that my resignation will allow the Dallas Police Department, my fellow officers and the citizens of Dallas

to better reflect on this experience, learn from the mistakes made, and move forward," Powell said in a statement issued through his attorneys.

During the incident, caught on the officer's dashboard camera, Moats pleaded for several minutes to be allowed inside the hospital for (See *NFL*, Page 11)



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