

Milwaukee Brewers baseball team picks an African-American as team president

MILWAUKEE — Ulice Payne has been named president of the Milwaukee Brewers, the first black team president in the franchise's 34 years and a first in the major leagues.



Payne

Although the team is having its worst season ever, Payne so far seems to like his chances.

"Sure we're in last place," Payne said recently after taking over the team. "You might as well take a picture because that's probably the last time you are going to see that."

Payne is a former state securities commissioner and is a member of the Greater Milwaukee Committee — a civic organization that lobbied for the construction of Miller Park — and the board of directors of Journal Communications Inc., which publishes the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

Payne replaces Wendy Selig-Prieb, the daughter of baseball commissioner Bud Selig.

The one-time Detroit Pistons draft pick lives in Milwaukee with his wife and two children.

Grambling University will hold on to its accreditation, according to auditor

Grambling University, one of the nation's best-known historically black universities, will keep its accreditation, according to a Louisiana auditor who said the school earned a satisfactory audit review.

Financial management troubles for the school began in 1997 when its finance department installed a new computer program. The few staff members trained on the system left the school, and a 1998 and 1999 audit revealed a problem in financial record keeping.

State auditor Dan Kyle said that the state had not been able to issue an opinion on Grambling since 1997.

The school was facing a deadline for passing an audit of its most recent fiscal year, or it would lose accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

The organization put Grambling on probation in December 2001. Accreditation is an important factor in attracting public funds, students and faculty.

Already, the financial problems may have contributed to a decline in enrollment. In the mid-1990s, the school had about 7,800 students, but the number has dropped to 4,462 students this year.

Grambling was founded by black farmers in 1901 as a teachers' school and has become famous for its marching band, and for the 57-year sports leadership of Eddie Robinson, known as the nation's winningest football coach.

Grambling was one of 11 schools on probation with SACS, including six other HBCUs.

Black colleges urged to establish law schools to help produce more lawyers

HOUSTON — The best way to get more blacks into the legal profession is for historically black colleges to create more law schools, said the head of a national group that promotes diversity in higher education.

Top universities typically have medical, law, engineering and business schools, and steps should be taken to establish such programs at historically black universities, Frederick Humphries told an audience of black federal judges Friday during a discussion about the role of black colleges in diversifying the legal bar.

Humphries, president and CEO of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, said only six of the nation's 100 historically black colleges have law schools, including Texas Southern University's Thurgood Marshall College of Law.



Humphries

"What I'm going to work on is to try to establish at least seven new law schools in historically black colleges or universities," he said in Saturday's edition of the Houston Chronicle.

The discussion was part of the fifth biennial conference of the Just Beginning Foundation, a national association of federal black judges. About 80 black judges attended the conference, organizers said.

The conference hosted a series of public lectures and panel discussions held at Texas Southern University, a historically black college in Houston.

Humphries, past president of Florida A&M University, said black colleges must do a better job of encouraging blacks to enter graduate programs, and help them gain the skills to be successful.

TSU law professor John Brittain, former dean of the law school, said the percent of black federal judges is higher than that of black lawyers in the nation. About 3 percent of all lawyers are black, and about 7 percent of all students in law school are black.

Houston federal District Judge Vanessa Gilmore, who hosted the conference, said 110 of the nation's 795 federal judges are black, or about 14 percent of the total.

— Compiled from staff and wire reports

Poverty up, income down in 2000

Rates increase more for whites and Asians than for African-Americans

BY GENARO C. ARMAS
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Income declined while poverty levels rose last year, the Census Bureau reported last week, a double dose of bad economic news that coincided with the first recession in a decade.

After nearly a decade of decline, the U.S. poverty rate stood at 11.7 percent last year, up from 11.3 percent the previous year, which was the lowest level since 1974. More than 32.9 million people lived in poverty last year, 1.3 million more than in 2000.

The median household income declined 2.2 percent to \$42,228 after remaining flat the previous year. It was the first statistically significant decline in a decade. Median income refers to the point at which half of households earn more and half earn less.

Income levels fell for every group except the very richest and very poorest. All racial groups experienced a decline, although Asians and blacks experienced the most substantial drops.

Joel Naroff, an economist and president of Naroff Economic Advisers of Holland, Pa., said the declines are cyclical and were to be expected after a decade of unprecedented growth.



File Photo

For the first time in 10 years the poverty level in the United States is on the upswing.

He said the economy will continue to struggle and incomes will be depressed until managers feel more comfortable about hiring.

Asians saw the biggest drop in income — more than 6 percent — followed by blacks at about 3 percent and whites and Hispanics at around 1 percent.

Some analysts were baffled that poverty rates increased more for whites and Asians than blacks, while a slight decrease was recorded for Hispanics. That is counter to trends in previous recessions, said Gary Burtless of the liberal-leaning Brookings Institution.

He suggested a possible explanation: Since incomes declined among all races, poverty trends may be an indication that middle-income black and Hispanic earners, who may be more educated, suffered more economically, whereas more people on the low wage end kept their jobs.

"What's interesting about this recession is that the drop in employment seems to have hurt well-educated people more than less-educated people," said Burtless, referring to job losses in areas such as technology.

The poverty rate for all children under 18, regardless

of race, rose from 16.2 to 16.3 percent. It declined for blacks, Hispanics and Asians but increased for whites, though the bureau said the changes weren't statistically significant.

There was good news for women in the report. Those 15 and older working full-time and year-round earned 76 cents for every dollar a man earned, the highest ratio in history.

The figures in the report come from a survey of 78,000 households taken in March. Census officials say all the figures are estimates that could vary slightly from actual values.

Black Republican group is organizing

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RICHMOND, Va. — About 45 black Republicans gathered in a church basement to form a Virginia chapter of the Southern Coalition of Black Republican Advocates.



Spaulding

Gary R. Thomson, the state GOP chairman, welcomed the group to the Republican fold Saturday but acknowledged making it grow would take time. In 1995, the last time the state GOP made a major push to recruit blacks, only seven showed up for a rally in Richmond's cavernous Arthur Ashe Center.

Using a baseball analogy, Thomson said he expected "a single at a time" rather than a home run as the GOP tries again to recruit blacks, who form one of the largest voting blocs in

the Democratic Party.

"Generation after generation thinks the cool thing to do is to be a Democrat," Thomson said.

In fact, said Clarence L. Townes Jr., a Richmond civic leader who was appointed to a high-level post with the Republican National Commit-

tee in Washington in 1966, the party has regressed in its relations with blacks since then.

"We do not have the power we had two decades ago or three decades ago," he said.

Today, blacks in the GOP can count on "a few miraculous symbols," Townes said, an apparent reference to the

election last year of a black Republican woman, Winsome Sears, to the House of Delegates in a black district in Norfolk.

Despite long-standing efforts to reach out to blacks, including membership in the NAACP, Republican gubern-

See Republicans on A9

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John M. Davenport Jr.

John DAVENPORT
Commissioner
www.Davenport2002.org

Campaign headquarters: (336) 705-3362
Email: johndavenport@wave3online.com
Website: www.Davenport2002.org - John Direct: (336) 705-3300

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jones@wssu.edu

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