

Black state senator makes history in Oklahoma by filling leadership role

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) - Angela Monson will become the first woman and the first black to fill a leadership role in the Oklahoma Senate when the Legislature convenes in February.

Monson, an Oklahoma City Democrat, has been named one of three assistant majority floor leaders by Senate President Pro Tem Cal Hobson.



Monson

"I'm very excited about the opportunity," Monson said. "But it's not surprising that I'm the first, since so few women and so few African-Americans have served in the Senate."

She is one of two black senators and one of five women in the Senate.

"More significant is not what this means for me, but what it means to others," Monson said. "People of color will know that there is room for them in state

public service."

Monson said the session will be difficult as lawmakers try to get the state through a financial crisis.

"Legislators are going to have to make some difficult decisions," she said. "But I also see it as an opportunity to make some changes to the budget. It's not all gloom and doom."

Survey: Average lottery player is white with household income less than \$50K

COLUMBIA, S.C. - The final draft of a report analyzing lottery players finds that the majority of lottery players are white, have at least some college education and have household incomes less than \$50,000.

The draft report, which was released to the media last week, looks at players who purchase instant tickets, Pick 3, Carolina 5 and Powerball. Recently, the commission released an earlier version of the draft report.

"Any rush of judgment is premature," said Tim Madden, vice chairman of the lottery commission. "Until we have a full complement of games, it won't be accurate."

Madden said he expected the household income to be less than \$50,000, but didn't forecast that more whites than blacks are playing the lottery.

"It's not surprising or alarming," Madden said. "My initial impression is that the report indicates the people who are playing the lottery are the ones expected to be playing."

State law requires the lottery commission to submit reports on the demographics of lottery players to the Education Lottery Oversight Committee. The report must include the income, age, gender, education and frequency of participation of players.

The report was conducted by MarketSearch, in consultation with Franks and Associates Inc. A total of 1,245 people were interviewed between Nov. 8-12 on the telephone, with 587 identifying themselves as players of the S.C. Education Lottery.

It's a big difference from the first phase of a draft survey, which looked at S.C. players who purchased instant tickets and Pick 3 tickets in the first six months of the lottery. That average player is a black woman between the ages of 25 and 54, according to the report.

The final draft report shows that 52 percent of players are men. About 23 percent of the players are 35 to 44 years old, and 9 percent of players don't have a high school diploma. The people who play the lottery the most are employed full time. Fifty-one percent of players are married, 31 percent are single, and 17 percent are widowed or divorced.

Coastal county residents play the lottery more than people in the Upstate and Midlands, the final draft report shows.

The final report will be given to the oversight committee, lottery spokeswoman Tara Robertson said.

Group has chosen to remove its name from lawsuit against Jesse Jackson

LOS ANGELES (AP) - A civil rights group has been removed as a plaintiff in a lawsuit against the Rev. Jesse Jackson that accuses him of representing black people without permission, legal documents show.

Patrick Rooney, director of special projects for the Brotherhood Organization of a New Destiny, said last week his group never agreed to be part of the suit.

The group was listed as a plaintiff in legal documents filed Nov. 12 in Los Angeles Superior Court. An amended complaint filed Nov. 14 does not list the group.

The suit was filed by African Americans Against Exploitation, accusing Jackson of fraud and demanding that he stop pretending to represent them.

Tracy Rice, a lawyer for Jackson's Rainbow/Push Coalition, called the suit a publicity stunt and said she would try to have the case thrown out of court.

James Stern, co-chairman of AAAE, said the Brotherhood Organization of a New Destiny initially asked to be a part of the suit but then withdrew.

- Compiled from staff and wire reports



Jackson

Crimes targeting Muslims up

BY CURT ANDERSON THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON - Although a backlash of hate crimes last year against Muslims and people who appear Middle Eastern seems to have waned, Imad-ad-Dean Ahmad says people of the Islamic faith remain worried about the future.

"There are a lot of accusations against Muslims and suspicions against Muslims being perpetrated," said Ahmad, president of the Bethesda, Md.-based Minaret of Freedom, a think tank espousing free market philosophies. "There are many people who are behaving more cautiously."

The FBI reported recently that hate crimes against Muslims and people who appear to be of Middle East ethnicity surged in 2001. "presumably as a result of the heinous incidents that occurred on Sept. 11" of that year.

The report found that incidents targeting people, institutions and businesses identified with the Islamic faith increased from 28 in 2000 to 481 in 2001. Muslims previously had been among the least-targeted religious groups. The report did not say how many occurred after Sept. 11.

Hate crimes against people because of their ethnicity or national origin - those not Hispanic, not black and not Asian

or American Indian - more than quadrupled from 354 in 2000 to 1,501 in 2001. This category includes people of Middle Eastern origin or descent.

Ibrahim Hooper, spokesman for the Council on Islamic-American Relations, said the FBI figures probably represent only a small portion of the true number of hate crimes, because many of the estimated 7 million Muslims in the United States do not report such incidents to authorities.

"A lot of us feel that our patriotism is always suspect," Hooper said.

Since Sept. 11 of last year, the Justice Department has prosecuted 11 civil rights cases under its "Backlash Discrimination Initiative" and investigated another 403, with 70 others prosecuted by state and local authorities. A man was sentenced to 51 months in prison for attempting to set fire to a Pakistani-American restaurant in Salt Lake City; another got two months in prison and a \$5,000 fine for leaving a threatening voice mail message on Sept. 12, 2001, for James Zogby, president of the Arab-American Institute in Washington.

The Justice Department has also held 250 community forums around the country in an effort to ease tensions that led to violence against Mus-



Photo Mark Randal/KRT

This woman is among many Muslims who say they have been threatened and harassed since Sept. 11.

See Muslims on A10

Philly mayor prepares for re-election

BY MICHAEL RUBINKAM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHILADELPHIA - Mayor John Street was elected in 1999 by the slimmest of margins, beating his Republican rival by fewer than 10,000 votes in a city dominated by Democrats.

As Street gears up for his re-election campaign, political opponents believe he's no more popular now than he was then and are shopping around for a candidate to oppose him in the May primary.

Though no incumbent Philadelphia mayor has lost re-election under the city's current form of government, some argue that Street has done little to win over the 49 percent of the electorate who didn't vote for him - and has even antagonized some of those who did.

Power lawyer Carl Singley, whose 25-year friendship with Street ended in rancor two years ago, is now leading the charge against his former protégé. Singley, a former Temple University law school dean, commissioned a poll in August that he says showed Street to be vulnerable.

"Just aside from the financial ineptitude of his administration, he has not demonstrated he has the ability to pull Philadelphians together," Singley said.

But Street's chief political aide, George Burrell, said the mayor's record will make him a formidable candidate.

"This is a guy who for the first time has made neighborhoods a real priority," Burrell said. "The mayor will be out there telling his own story, and it's a pretty compelling story."

Slowly but surely, the mayor is girding for battle. His campaign headquarters will open in a few weeks, and his administration spokesman is transferring there from City Hall. Street's fund-raising schedule is intensifying, and he even scheduled a town hall-style appearance on a local cable network Monday night - a rarity for the media-shy mayor and former City Council president known for his prickly, reclusive style.

Street didn't want to talk politics Monday but says he's confident of his chances. "I think I'll be all right," he said. "Believe me, we'll be ready."

Street's administration got off to a fast start. He made good on a campaign pledge by towing 100,000 abandoned cars, appeared on "Oprah" and presided over the Republican National Convention. He completed a deal to build two new sports stadiums and announced an ambitious \$295 million plan to eliminate blight from the city's neglected neighborhoods.

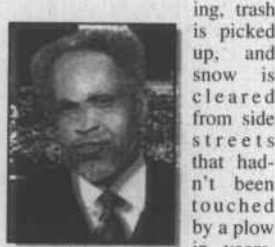
But the pace has slowed considerably over the last two years, and there have been political missteps. Last spring, Street raised eyebrows when he told an NAACP conference that the "brothers and sisters are running the city." Street, who is black,

apologized for the remarks, which were criticized as racially divisive.

Some believe Street's anti-blight program has stalled, and just last week the mayor announced he will cut 2,500 jobs, or 10 percent of the municipal work force, to head off a looming budgetary deficit. Moreover, his relationship with City Council is frosty.

Even so, Democratic political consultant Larry Ceisler said Street will be tough to beat because he has delivered on many of the issues important to

voters. Property values are rising, trash is picked up, and snow is cleared from side streets that hadn't been touched by a plow in years.



Street

Street's anti-crime program, Operation Safe Streets, has eliminated many

open-air drug markets.

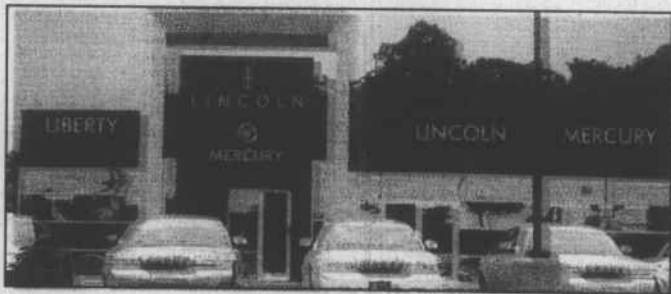
"On all the basics people expected out of government, Street is running a good ship. Is he loved? No, but that's not his way," Ceisler said.

Gov.-elect Ed Rendell - the popular former Philadelphia mayor - said recently that Street's "personality quirks" had prevented him from getting the credit he deserves.

"People come up to me and say, 'Oh we miss you as mayor; we had so much fun when you

See Street on A9

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