

AC PHOENIX NEWS BRIEFS

Obesity rates skyrocket

Last year in 31 states, obesity rates continued to rise with no sign of decline. Mississippi was the first state to cross the 30 percent barrier for adults categorized as obese. According to a research report by the Trust for America's Health, a research group that specializes in disease prevention, Alabama and West Virginia states were trailing behind. The leanest state in the nation was Colorado with an obesity rate of 17.6 percent.

According to health officials, the recent statistics reveal that the nation is facing a public health crisis. "Unfortunately, we're treating it like a mere inconvenience instead of the emergency that it is," said Dr. James Marks, senior vice president at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a philanthropy devoted to improving health care.

SAT scores dropping

The College Board recently reported that the Class of 2007 averaged the lowest math and reading scores since 1999. Out of approximately 800 points, last spring's high school seniors had an average score of 502 on the critical reading section. The math scores took a three-point dive from an average score of 518 to 515.

Latinos and Blacks have lagged behind producing a continuous gap between SAT scores registered by White students.

There was a 6 percent increase in the number of Black students taking the ACT, while students identified as "Other Hispanic, Latino, or Mexican Americans or Puerto Ricans" rose more than 25 percent.

National Black Pages extends reach

BlackFind, Inc. has produced its first historic National Black Pages Directory. BlackFind.com, an internet search engine online since 2001, has partnered with Black Pages, Inc. to produce the first national Black Pages directory of this magnitude. According to Aaron Rollins, founder of BlackFind, Inc., the Black Pages directories have been produced in over 61 markets nationwide. Dr. Maya Angelou, Danny Glover, and the Hon. Desmond Tutu, said that they would be honored to be associated with this publication. The front cover will consist of great personalities—the likes of the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan, Tavis Smiley, Earl Graves, Congressman John Conyers and others. Mr. Rollins added, "The Black Pages Directories have served us with a local means of advertising within our communities; but in order for our people to grow, we must push past the boundaries of the local cities and counties. We have to extend our reach to include the state, the nation, and the world at large."

The internet search engine will assist in publishing an annual international *Black Pages Minority Business Directory*, consisting of over 70,000 Black businesses, with a projected distribution of 1.5 million copies.



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