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North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance President James Speed, left, is shown with Chris Gardner, right, entrepreneur, investor, stockbroker, motivational speaker, author and philanthropist. Gardner was the speaker for founder's day at N.C. Mutual Oct. 7. Gardner's story was the inspiration of the Will Smith movie, "The Pursuit of Happiness." Below are some of the people on hand for founder's Day activities.



Rights groups urge Justice probe of 1985 bombing

By Stacy A. Anderson
WASHINGTON (AP) - Civil rights groups and members of Congress are pressing the Justice Department to renew its investigation of a 1985 office bombing that killed Palestinian-American civil rights leader Alex Odeh and injured seven people.
The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Jewish Voice for Peace and others have launched a petition campaign asking Justice to further investigate the explosion, which demolished the committee's office in Santa Ana, Calif. The petition has about 10,000 signatures.
California Democratic Rep. Loretta Sanchez sent a letter to the department in June and is seeking other lawmakers to sign a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder. The FBI identified suspects after the attack, but none were ever named or indicted.
Whenever a leader for a civil rights organization is killed, it is the responsibility of our country as a whole - and a civil rights community as a whole - to stand up and demand that their killers be brought to justice and to insure that the U.S. Department of Justice does everything in its power to close the case," NAACP President Ben Jealous told reporters in a conference call Oct. 14.
The DOJ, which has furloughed workers due to the government shutdown, did not respond immediately to a request for comment on Oct. 14, which also was the federal Columbus Day holiday. In 2010, the FBI described Odeh's killing in an agency news blog as "an active, ongoing priority investigation" and offered a \$1 million reward.
Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., said Oct. 14 that he wants the House Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations to convene a hearing on the bombing.
"We're going to pursue it vigorously and we're not going to let any more time lapse," Conyers said. "We're going to continue to help all of the organizations that are involved build up more and more support for us getting to where we ought to be in terms of a horrific, violent crime that has, I think, been put off for far too long."
At the time of the attack, the FBI said they believed the bombing was the responsibility of the militant Black Defense League. An attorney for the group denied the allegations and asked for a retraction from the agency. The FBI also linked Odeh's killing to two other acts of domestic terrorism in Brentwood, N.Y. and Paterson, N.J. that same year.
Odeh, the West Coast regional director for the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, was killed as he opened the door to his office on Oct. 11, 1985. The bombing occurred the morning after Odeh was on a Los Angeles television news broadcast that Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat was a "man of peace" because of his role in securing the release of passengers from the hijacked cruise ship Achille Lauro in Egypt.
Odeh, who came to the U.S. from Palestine, was described by both Jews and Arabs as a nonviolent leader who advocated compromise. According to the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, Odeh immigrated to the United States in 1972 and became a U.S. citizen in 1977. He was a poet and lecturer.
The Justice Department had no immediate comment.

Supreme Court likely to uphold Michigan measure on race

By Mark Sherman
WASHINGTON (AP) - The Supreme Court seemed prepared Oct. 15 to uphold a voter-approved ban on taking account of race in college admissions.
The court heard arguments over a 2006 change to the state constitution to prohibit the University of Michigan and other state schools from any consideration of race when they decide whom to admit.
The justices' focus was more on whether they could craft a narrow ruling to uphold Michigan Proposal 2 or would have to overrule earlier cases that protect minorities' rights to participate in the political process.
Affirmative action supporters say the amendment itself is a form of discrimination because of the burden they face to repeal the constitutional provision.
That argument did not appear to make much headway with the conservative justices, who have been hostile to considerations of race in education and politics in a series of cases in recent years.
Among the skeptics, Chief Justice John Roberts wondered how there could be a problem with voters saying: "We want to take race off the table and achieve diversity without racial preferences."
Mark Rosenbaum, a lawyer for the American Civil Liberties Union who argued to strike down the Michigan amendment, said that other groups seeking preferential treatment in admissions could lobby policymakers at the schools - only race may not be discussed.
"I want the same rule book. I want the same playing field. The problem with Proposal 2 is that it creates two playing fields," he said.
Shanta Driver, a Detroit-based lawyer also arguing in support of affirmative action, called on the court to bring the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution's 14th Amendment "back to its original purpose and meaning, which is to protect minority rights against a white majority, which did not occur in this case."
Driver's statement provoked a challenge about the amendment's purpose from Justice Antonin Scalia. "My goodness, I thought we've held that the 14th Amendment protects all races. I mean, that was the argument in the early years, that it protected only the blacks. But I thought we rejected that. You say now that we have to proceed as though its purpose is not to protect whites, only to protect minorities?" Scalia said.
The case is the court's second involving affirmative action in as many years. In June, the justices ordered lower courts to take another look at the University of Texas admissions plan in a ruling that could make it harder for public colleges to justify any use of race in admissions.
Affirmative action itself is not before the court in the current dispute, although the case does have its roots in the court's decision in 2003 that said in a case from Michigan that race could be a factor in college admissions.
Opponents of that decision organized a ballot proposal that passed three years later. The justices heard differing accounts Oct. 15 of the effects of the ban on diversity on the Michigan campus in Ann Arbor and at other colleges. Supporters of racial

preferences say there has been a decline in minority enrollment.
Defending the provision, Michigan Solicitor General John Bursch said the picture is "muddy," but told the court that the numbers don't really matter. Bursch acknowledged that affirmative action in education "is one of the most hotly contested issues of our time" and said the democratic process had worked.
Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who has said she benefited from affirmative action at Princeton University and Yale Law School, repeatedly challenged Bursch (Continued On Page 15)



T.D. Jakes Rebukes 'Preachers of L.A.'

BISHOP T.D. JAKES
Special to the NNPA from the St. Louis American
1.1 million viewers tuned in for Oxygen's new docu-series "Preachers of L.A." making it the biggest Wednesday night season premiere on Oxygen to date and the network's second highest rated series ever.
But one person who wasn't tuning in was T.D. Jakes. The mega church pastor took a moment to denounce the show during his Sunday sermon at The Potter's House.
"Now, I know you been watching that junk on TV. I want to tell you right now, not one dime of what you're sowing right now will buy my suit. I want you to know my car is paid for. I want you to know I got my house on my own. I want you to know I'm not bling-bling. I am not shake and bake. I had money when I came to Dallas and I plan to have some when I leave."
"You did not buy what I got. I had it when I came here. You know I had it when I came here. The devil is a lie! I have sold enough books and produced enough movies. I don't need your offering to pay for this little slimy suit. So I rebuke that spirit in the name of Jesus Christ."
If there was any question about exactly who or what Jakes was referencing he told his congregation, "I'm not from L.A. I'm from Dallas!"

Durham Branch Freedom Fund Banquet Set
The Durham Branch NAACP's 39th Freedom Fund Banquet will be held, Nov. 1 at p.m. at the Durham Armory, 220 Foster St.
The Honorees are: Mrs. Margaret Keller and John C. "Skeepie" Scarborough, III. Special Recognition to: Dr. Robert J. Lefkowitz.
Keynote Speaker: Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, president, NC NAACP. Master of Ceremonies Rev. Curtis Gatewood, HKonJ Coalition Leader, NC NAACP.
For ticket information call 919- 682-4930