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The Carolina Times

THE TRUTH UNBRIDLED

VOLUME 94 - NUMBER 22

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA - SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 2015

TELEPHONE (919) 682-2913 PRICE: 30 CENTS

Missouri police stopped blacks more than whites in 2014

By Jim Suhr

ST. LOUIS (AP) - The disparity in the rate at which Missouri authorities pulled over black drivers compared with whites last year surged to its highest level since the state began compiling data 15 years ago, the state's top law enforcer said June 1. Attorney General Chris Koster's annual report analyzing traffic stops by race found that African-American drivers were 75 percent more likely than white motorists to be stopped on Missouri's roads based on their proportionate share of the driving-age population. That's nine percentage points higher than last year. In 2000, blacks were 31 percent more likely than whites to be pulled over.

The report is Missouri's first since the racial unrest that followed the shooting death last August in Ferguson of Michael Brown, a black, unarmed 18-year-old, by a white police officer. Koster's report shows that black drivers in the predominantly black St. Louis suburb were stopped last year at a disparity rate lower than the statewide average.

Koster cautioned that with 622 law enforcement agencies, there is no single explanation as to why the disparities exist and that the statistics don't prove law officers are making vehicle stops based on the driver's race. But Koster said in a statement that his office's analysis of nearly 1.7 million 2014 traffic stops "provides law enforcement, legislators and the public a starting point as they consider improvements to process and changes to policy to address these issues."

Law enforcement officers say racial disparities in traffic stops may appear higher in some predominantly white cities because of interstate highways or retail and tourist destinations that attract minority drivers who are not part of the local population.

The report shows that Hispanic drivers were stopped at a lower rate than white or black drivers. Law officers searched Hispanic and black drivers at a higher rate than white drivers. But of those who were searched, whites were found with contraband at a higher rate than black and Hispanic drivers.

Roughly five dozen law enforcement agencies indicated they made no traffic stops last year, Koster said.

Even though Ferguson fared better than the statewide average, that city's policing and municipal courts were widely scrutinized after Brown's shooting death touched off angry, sometimes violent protests. The case also led to demonstrations in other cities and spawned a national "Black Lives Matter" movement seeking changes in how police deal with minorities.

A grand jury and the Justice Department cleared the white officer in Brown's death, but the federal agency did release a scathing report that cited racial bias and profiling in Ferguson policing and in a profit-driven municipal court system that frequently targeted blacks. Ferguson's police chief, municipal court judge and city manager resigned following the Justice Department's probe.



Dr. Tashni Dubroy

Shaw University Introduces Dr. Tashni Dubroy as President

RALEIGH— Shaw University's Board of Trustees Chairman Dr. Joseph N. Bell introduced at a press conference Dr. Tashni (TASH-KNEE) Dubroy (DO-BROY) as Shaw's 17th president. Dubroy, a Shaw graduate, is the third alumnus, third female and the second youngest person to serve as Shaw's president. Her appointment is effective August 1, 2015.

"We wanted a proven leader, a seasoned academic, but most importantly, we sought an individual with business acumen who could merge the qualities of excellence in higher education with the professionalism of the board room," said Shaw University Board of Trustees Chairman Dr. Joseph N. Bell, Jr. "These qualities were more than evident in Dr. Dubroy, and we are delighted and excited to witness what Dr. Dubroy will not only do for our University, but for our students, faculty, staff, alumni and community."

Dubroy, 34, began her career as a research scientist at BASF, the world's leading chemical company. She quickly ascended the ranks, receiving two promotions in two years. She served as a global technology analyst and procurement manager at the company, where she managed a strategic sourcing budget of \$35 million. Following her tenure at BASF, Dubroy was hired by her alma mater in 2011, where she served as an associate professor of chemistry and later the department chair of Shaw's department of natural sciences and mathematics. As a professor and department chair, Dubroy managed the department's \$1.2 million budget, supervised 25 faculty members and mentored 22 undergraduate students as part of the Shaw in Jamaica international research project funded by the National Institutes of Health. In 2014, Dubroy was promoted and became a member of Shaw's administrative team as the special assistant to the president for process optimization. In this role, she was responsible for increasing efficiency and reducing cost through a detailed analysis of the University's operations to achieve quantifiable improvement and growth across all campus departments.

Desiring to pursue her dream as a business owner, Dubroy co-founded Tea and Honey Blends in 2009, a hair care company that manufactures and retails natural hair care products. She later opened the Element Beauty Bar, a hair salon located in downtown Raleigh. Passionate about the community, science and education, Dubroy founded the Brilliant and Beautiful Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to mentoring women in science. Each summer, the foundation hosts a SMART Scholars workshop at North Carolina State University's Friday Institute for Educational Innovation, where middle school girls make personal care products and market them to a team of judges.

"I have built my reputation on my ability to do, to listen, to lead and to create diverse and inclusive teams," said Dr. Dubroy. "Our strategy will be non-traditional, innovative and dynamic and I look forward to leading my alma mater in the next phase of our journey."

Dubroy is the recipient of numerous awards and accolades. In 2012, the United Negro College Fund's (UNCF) National Alumni Council presented her with an "Outstanding Young Alumni" award for her service to Shaw. In 2014, she was awarded the "Distinguished Alumni in Science Diversity" Award by North Carolina State University. Last year, The National Organization of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers honored Dubroy and her business partner for their work in science and Entrepreneurship, calling them "21st century visionary, entrepreneurial leaders, who are the New Chemists on the Block." Dubroy has received fellowship awards from the United Negro College Fund, National Science Foundation and the National Organization of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers, and is published in various scientific journals including the Journal of Physical Organic Chemistry. Cosmopolitan magazine recognized her as a "fun, fearless female," and she has been featured in both Money magazine and Bloomberg's BusinessWeek.

Dubroy graduated summa cum laude from Shaw University in 2002, and earned a Bachelor of Science in chemistry. She earned a Ph.D. in physical organic chemistry from North Carolina State University in 2007 and in 2010 she graduated with an MBA in marketing from Rutgers University in New Jersey. Dubroy is a member of the American Chemical Society and was nominated for membership in Sigma Xi, the Distinguished Chemical Society.

Christopher G. Smith Joins Board of M&F Bank

M&F Bancorp, Inc. today announced that Christopher G. Smith has been elected to the Board of Directors of its wholly owned subsidiary, Mechanics and Farmers Bank (M&F Bank). Mr. Smith is a partner with the law firm of Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan, L.L.P. ("Smith Anderson"), located in Raleigh, NC.

"Mr. Smith brings considerable expertise in business as well as a fresh perspective to his position as Director. We are very pleased and honored to have a new Board member of his caliber supporting the mission of this historic institution particularly as we move forward with future growth and rebranding plans," said James A. Stewart, Chairman of the M&F Bancorp, Inc. and M&F Bank Boards of Directors.

At Smith Anderson, Smith, a Partner, is a trial and appellate lawyer who counsels clients on business strategy matters. He manages large multi-party and multi-jurisdiction litigation projects and mission-critical projects for clients. Smith currently serves on the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Chamber of Commerce and last year was statewide Immediate Past-President of the North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys. He works with business groups and government officials on initiatives to improve the quality and efficiency of the administration of justice in North Carolina and on policy and legislative matters affecting the business legal climate in the state.

Smith serves in various leadership positions at Smith Anderson including Business Litigation Team Leader, and as a member of the firm's Policy and Planning Committee. Prior to joining Smith Anderson in 1995, he was an associate with Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen and Hamilton in Washington, D.C. "I look forward to working with the Bank and serving as an ambassador in the business community and am honored to help direct this historic institution," said Smith.



Christopher G. Smith

Smith received his B.A. in Political Science/American Government from the University of Pennsylvania where he graduated summa cum laude and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. He received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Pennsylvania where he graduated cum laude.



President Obama addresses fellows from the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) prior to a group photo in the State Dining Room of the White House, June .(Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)