

Black and Hispanic museums fight tougher fund-raising battle

By VICKI BROWN
Associated Press Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — At the edge of Fisk University's campus sits an aging brick building that holds works by Degas, Cezanne and primitive African sculptures of which the Fisk community is very proud.

The problem is that the African art works are seldom seen by the black community Fisk historically has served. There's no room.

Works by such renowned American artists as Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence and Aaron Douglas are seldom displayed due to limited gallery space and are in danger of deteriorating due to poor storage.

The new director of Fisk's Carl Van Vechten Gallery needs \$1 million to get the museum and its collections ready.

"I don't even have any clerical assistants. I'm talking about salaries for an administrative assistant, money for a registrar, a

curator," says Minnie Marianne Miles.

That's not to mention a planned restoration of a gallery for the African-American works or publicity costs to advertise The Alfred Stieglitz Collection donated by artist Georgia O'Keeffe. That collection is on permanent display and contains works by O'Keeffe, Degas, Cezanne, Diego Rivera and Stieglitz, and was valued at \$8.7 million in 1984.

The museum has an annual budget of about \$90,000 a year, mostly from the state. It received a \$100,000 grant from AT&T to renovate a gallery for permanent display of African-American works and a \$50,000 grant from The Ford Foundation for conservation and gallery management.

The museum, on the campus of a traditionally black college which has itself struggled to survive, shares many handicaps endured by other black and Hispanic institutions.

The Ford Foundation found in a 1989 study that museums with

collections focusing on the art of particular ethnic or minority groups faced worse problems than general museums.

The study found most were established in the last 30 years and had a high level of government support and a low level of individual contributions.

"The most significant difference with minority arts organizations is that the availability of private, individual and patron support is less," said Ruth Mayleas, program officer for the Education and Culture Program of the Ford Foundation.

The philanthropic organization is in the final year of a three-year grant program aimed at helping black and Hispanic museums upgrade collections, acquire new works and strengthen museum management.

"One finds often in black and Hispanic communities that the habit of giving to the arts is less developed and also, the resources are less," Mayleas said.

On the other hand, she said many of the museums are good at serving their own cultural communities, but have more difficulty attracting general viewers.

"We tend to be institutions rooted in a community and become part of stabilization in an economic sense, an oasis for a broad community of school children, senior citizens and families," said Kinshasha Conwill, the director of the Studio Museum in Harlem, one of the nation's oldest and most well-known black muse-

ums. She said many minority museums are younger, less visible and don't have endowments or major private donors. They were formed because major institutions gave little attention to the works of Hispanic, black, Asian or American Indian artists.

Marie Acosta-Colon, director of the Mexican Museum in San Francisco, says the art and culture of people of color was considered second class, a reflection of the overall status of the community.

But she and Conwill believe minority museums and the growth in ethnic populations are changing that.

"Our own efforts to bring to light the work of African-American and Latino artists have vastly increased the knowledge and interest in that work," Conwill said. The experience of the Mexican Museum suggests location can be a problem, too.

A move in 1985 from the Mission District of the city, basically a Hispanic community, to the more white, suburban Fort Mason area, and aggressive fund-raising efforts turned around the finances of the museum of Mexican and Hispanic art.

"We went from operating at a deficit and having a staff of two people to operating in the black with a staff of 14," said Diane Robey, publicist for the museum.

Acosta-Colon said the budget is now about \$1.5 million a year. And she was startled by a recent survey which found membership

isn't Hispanic.

She attributes that to the move and San Francisco's close proximity to Mexico, which makes residents more aware of the art of

Mexican and Hispanic artists.

The drawback, she said, is that the museum is no longer easily accessible to the community it was formed to serve.

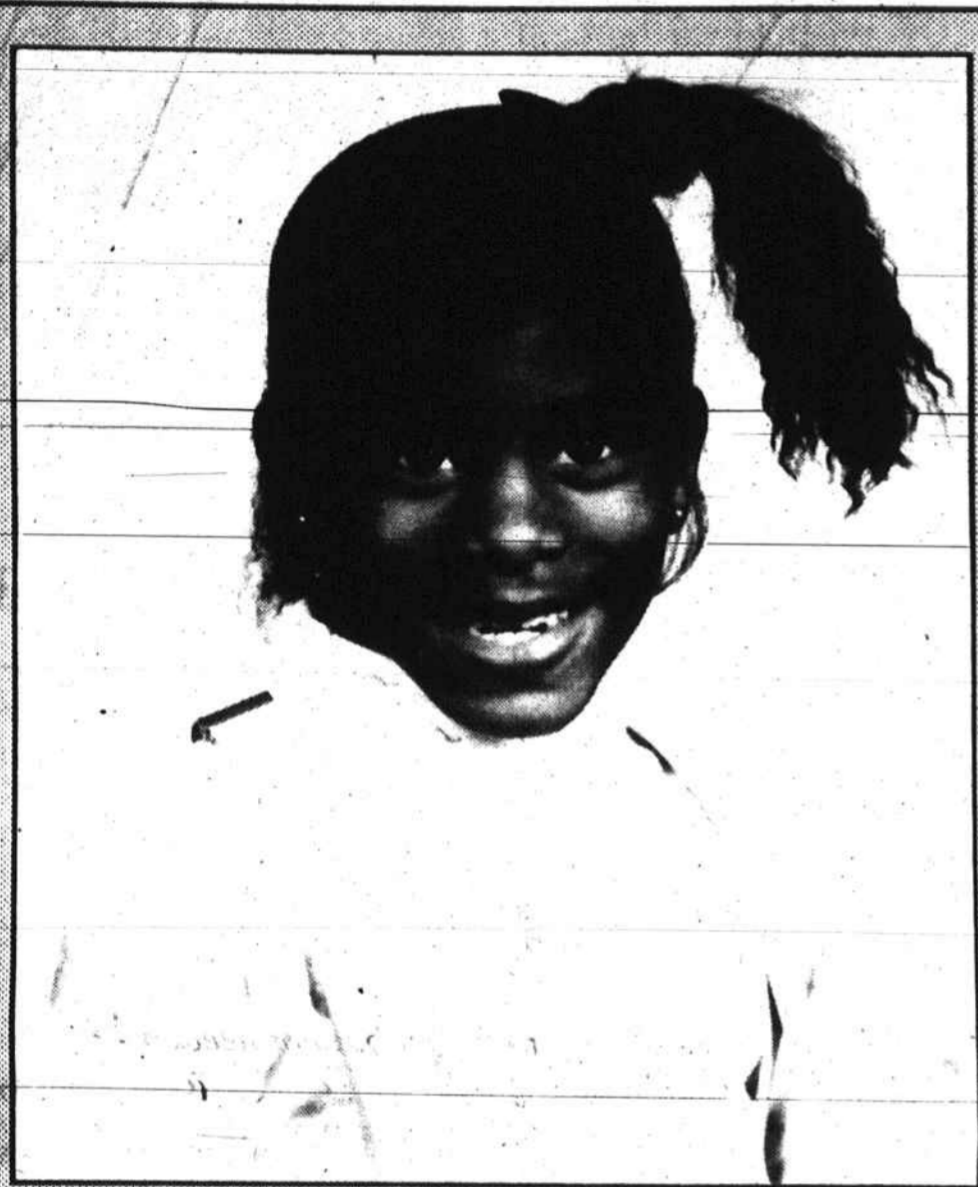


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Citizen of the Month

D'Antwanette Felder, a first grader at Forest Park Elementary School was recently selected as "Good Citizen of the Month." She is the daughter of Dr. Dennis and Dr. Pam Felder. The selection was based on good behavior, good manners, strong effort to make good grades, taking initiative, being helpful, following class and school rules and respecting others. Her picture will appear on the school's "Hall of Fame Wall", she will also receive a certificate and be recognized at a special luncheon to be hosted at Forest Park.

Club to help city clean-up

The Flower Niche Garden Club met at noon, Saturday, May 18 at the home of Mrs. Carolyn Boyd, 2510 Wallingford Road. President Edythe Williams called the meeting to order by repeating the collect. Secretary Bessye Dobson read the minutes of the previous meeting. The Fourth District Garden Council report followed.

The club plans to take part in the Clean and Green Campus Contest with the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School system by acting as judges. This is part of the Keep Winston-Salem Beautiful Incorporated program.

Plans were made for the club's June 7 picnic at Winston Lake. Assignments were made for the June 1 Standard Flower Show and the August North Carolina Federation of Gardens Convention. Flower Niche Garden Club member Ms. Louise Smith, is the chairperson.

Members who attended were: Mrs. Leola Sadler, Mrs. Grace Lowery, Mrs. Mozella Williams, Mrs. Savannah Lewis, Mrs. Vivienne Conley, Mrs. Gwendolyn Greene, Mrs. Louise McGhee, Mrs. Elsie McKay, Mrs. Marian Wooten, Mrs. Eunice Smith and Mrs. Bernice Davenport.

UNC found innocent of racial/sexual bias

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP) — The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was innocent of racial and sexual bias, a spokesman for the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Education says.

Spokesman Roger Murphy said Monday there was a problem in the UNC-CH School of Dentistry, but investigators did not label the trouble between a male and female worker as sexual harassment. He did not elaborate on the incident.

UNC-CH officials said they would respond to the investigation in a statement today.

Federal investigators spent several months going through records and talking with school officials

about some workers' complaints of bias in employment at the state's flagship public university.

The employees had said the university was guilty of sexual bias by not hiring and promoting females in the campus police department; not giving equal pay to women in the purchasing department; and retaliating against female workers in housekeeping.

There were also claims that the school didn't hire black instructors in biochemistry and biophysics on the basis of race.

Murphy said UNC-CH did fail to adhere to requirements of university policies and procedures by not reporting the alleged harassment in a timely manner.

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