

# Agency will not use fund broadly

**American Red Cross backs down from idea to use funds earmarked for families of Sept. 11 victims for other programs**

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD  
THE CHRONICLE

America has watched the American Red Cross (ARC) in the past weeks since the organization made a controversial decision to use its Liberty Disaster Fund, which was designed specifically for relatives of victims of the attacks, for Red Cross projects unrelated to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. But how have the events of September affected local chapters such as the Northwest North Carolina Chapter of the ARC?



Crandol

Kerenda T. Crandol, director of public relations for the Northwest Chapter, said that in the days after Sept. 11 the Red Cross received an extraordinary number of blood donations — nearly 200 people. Although the local chapter was faced with questions concerning the Liberty Fund, Crandol said the influx of volunteers and donors was the main focus of the local Red Cross after the attacks.

Commenting on the problems concerning the Liberty Fund, Crandol said that it was the largest disaster and largest fund-raiser in the history of the ARC. Crandol believes the controversy over the fund stems from confusion.

"People want all of the money to go to the fund," Cran-



A Chicago grade student participates in "Wash America" last month to raise money for the American Red Cross. Recently, the hundreds of millions of dollars raised by the organization for Sept. 11 relief efforts has come under scrutiny.

dol said. "There were other costs and they didn't realize that if the money didn't go directly to the families, it was going toward other relief efforts related to Sept. 11."

Food, medical aid and counseling for the thousands of relief workers are just a few of the related areas to which Crandol was referring.

The American Red Cross has been under intense scrutiny concerning the allocation of relief funds to the families of victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. In an effort to iron out the kinks, executive officers pledged during a news conference last week to distribute more money to families immediately. Apologies were extended by Red Cross officials who regretted that their activities over the past eight weeks were not as sharply focused as the country and victims expected.

David McLaughlin, chairman of the board of the American Red Cross, said he hopes to restore the faith and trust of the country by making a "course correction" for the Liberty Dis-

aster Fund so that 100 percent of it will go directly to the Sept. 11 victims and their families. McLaughlin also said that although "disaster relief is difficult work, it is something the ARC does and does well every day of the year."

According to ARC chief executive officer Harold Decker, in spite of confusion over the American Red Cross Liberty Fund, the victims have been and will continue to be a priority of the ARC.

As a result, swift changes to the Liberty Fund will involve narrowing the focus of it so that it is a separate and segregated fund used exclusively for victims and not toward future events. Officials also announced that the Family Gift Program (which provides tax-free cash gifts to families of victims) has been extended up to one year to cover victims' living expenses. Checks to cover the next six months of expenses will be sent out before the year ends.

The Liberty Fund is projected to spend 50 percent of donations received so far by the end

of this year. Plans for the distribution of the rest of the fund will be decided in January. A common database of victims will be created along with various relief agencies and public officials to assist families of victims of the terrorist attacks in affected cities.

Decker concluded his statement on the Liberty Fund by saying that although the ARC has received much criticism, none should be aimed at the thousands of volunteers who have worked at all of the disaster sights across the affected cities. "...They've done a remarkable job," Decker said.

Active solicitation for the Liberty Fund has been stopped because the ARC believes it has enough money to assist all of the victims of September's attacks. By the end of the year, the American Red Cross predicts that \$275 million out of the \$543 million in relief donations will have been spent overall to help people affected by the disasters. Twenty-five thousand victims have already been assisted to date, according to the Red Cross.

# A&T's student newspaper staff wins several awards

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

**GREENSBORO** — N.C. A&T's student newspaper staff recently garnered top awards in the Black College Communication Association's (BCCA) 2001 Student Newspaper Awards competition.

The awards were presented during the association's annual meeting at the Hilton-Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla. Students who work on A&T's stu-

dent newspaper, the A&T Register, received eight awards. The editor is Randy St. Clair and the adviser is Valerie Nieman. Awards included: first place, Best Commentary; first place, Best Layout; second place, Best Bi-weekly Newspaper; second place, Best Sports Coverage; third place, Best News Coverage; third place, Best Sports Story; third place, Best Feature Story; honorable mention, Best Feature Story.

## Petree

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"Our children are in a position where they can succeed," Rutledge said. "They're realizing that they are smart and that they can do well."

The student body, which consists of pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, gathered in the gymnasium for a mini pep rally with some help from Glenn High School cheerleaders and the Carver High School Drum Majors.

Parents and teachers joined the festivities as well, beaming with pride and extending kudos to the students. The Drum Majors then led the large pack of achievers in a parade around the school building and completed the celebration with ice cream to end the school day.

Rutledge wanted the children to realize how far they have all come in the past couple years in their studies. He also figured a parade would be a wonderful way to build the self-esteem of the student body and motivate students to continue their success in the classroom.

"Success breeds success," Rutledge said. The idea for the parade was suggested to Rutledge by Assistant Superintendent Angela Friar, who knew it would be a great reward that parents could attend and enjoy along with their children.

"You only have a parade on a special occasion, and this is a very special occasion," Rutledge said.

Petree Elementary prides itself on a strong retention program, which keeps parents sending their children to the school year after year. Rutledge is certain that community support and parental involvement, coupled with a steady retention rate, will continue to push the school even higher.

"It takes a community, a staff and children who want to do well. That whole combination of things leads to success," Rutledge proclaimed.



Many of the students wore self-made hats during the parade.

## Gregory

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Gregory finds time to do what he calls "giving back."

As a respected attorney in Richmond, Va., where the 4th Circuit is located, Gregory argued cases before the court, but he never thought or aspired to be on the other side.

He said he has always loved law and the idea of being an "advocate for clients."

He now sits on a bench that is one judicial rung down from the U.S. Supreme Court.

"This opportunity is very humbling," he said. "It's not an easy job. It's been amazing and a wonderful opportunity to work with some great jurists and to see some of the best lawyers in the country come before you."

The opportunity to serve was extended to Gregory in late December of last year, a month before the end of Clinton's presidency. The 4th Circuit serves a region inhabited by millions of African Americans, but the court never had an African-American judge until Gregory.

Clinton had nominated several African-American judges to the court, including Judge Jim Wynn of the N.C. Court of Appeals and Judge James A. Beaty Jr., of the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina, but the then-Republican controlled Senate refused to even consider the nominees, causing many civil rights groups and Democrats to go ballistic.

Clinton appointed Gregory while Congress was in recess, filling a slot on the court that had been vacant for nearly 10 years. A recess appointment, which would have allowed Gregory to serve on the court for only a year without Senate confirmation, is well within a president's power, but that did not prevent Gregory's appointment from coming under fire.

Republican lawmakers complained that Clinton willfully bypassed the confirmation process and when President Bush took office he yanked Gregory's nomination, only to renominate him a short time later after Gregory received a groundswell of support from lawmakers in both parties. He was confirmed



Beaty

overwhelmingly by the Senate in July.

Gregory is thankful for all the bipartisan support he received. Even Sen. Jesse Helms voted to confirm Gregory. He also received enthusiastic support from Virginia's two Republican senators. Gregory said he believes the support was partly a result of his efforts to show lawmakers that he harbored no ulterior motives.

"I tried to show them that I was not part of any partisan strife or had any agenda but to do my very best to interpret the law, not to make the law but to interpret it."

Support and encouragement also came from the African-American judges who were nominated for the post but did not make it. Judge Beaty, for example, attended Gregory's investiture, a swearing-in ceremony.

A husband and the father of three daughters (who range in age from 7 to 19), Gregory said he did not have a lot of time to ring his hands while some of the most powerful people in the nation considered his fate. The world did not stop, he said, and home life kept him grounded.

"It's nothing more humbling than your family because no matter what's going on, it's still about whether the trash has been taken out or 'Dad I need this or I need that.' That keeps you firmly anchored and on the ground," he said.

Gregory takes very seriously the immense responsibility he now has. He and his colleagues on the court will be charged in the next few years with making important deci-

sions concerning school integration, affirmative action and a number of other hot button issues.

Though he strongly thinks that all judges, regardless of their race, "try to look at the law and the facts and apply them as best they can," Gregory said he believes in racial diversity on courts such as the 4th Circuit.

"We are not a monolithic country...We are many people and that is our strength, and that strength certainly ought to be at one of our higher institutions of law and justice. We are always richer from a broader perspective," he said.

The judge gave up a storied career as a private attorney. In fact, Gregory tried a jury case the day before he took his seat on the court. A member of the bar in Virginia — where he was raised and still lives — since 1980, Gregory worked at Hunter & Williams, one of the state's most respected law firms, before co-founding his own firm with former Virginia Gov. Doug Wilder in 1982.

Becoming the first black judge on the 4th Circuit bench was just the latest in a long list of firsts for Gregory. He was the first person in his family to graduate from high school and, logically, the first to finish college and attend a professional school.

His parents, both of whom died before they could see their

son sworn in, worked at a Brown & Williamson tobacco factory to support the family. They doled out equal helpings of love, discipline and God-fearing values, Gregory said.

"Being a lawyer doesn't make you honest and give you integrity. I learned that from my parents at the supper table....They worked hard so that I could dream longer. I stand on broad shoulders."

Gregory said his mother was the main disciplinarian. One of her rules prohibited Gregory and his siblings from loitering in the living room. Like many African-American women, Gregory's mother kept her living room furniture wrapped in plastic.

"You did not eat on it; you did not hardly look at it," Gregory said, recalling the mandates imposed by his mother in terms of that living room.

Gregory has peeled away the plastic and now uses his mother's 40-year-old living room furniture in his chamber at the 4th Circuit. People who visit him marvel at the age of the furniture because of its pristine condition. He likes to believe that his mother was preserving the furniture for him.

"(The furniture) reminds me every day in terms of what dreams and prayers can do," he said. "I think maybe she was saving that for something that I didn't have any idea about."

## Hitchcock

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starting forward on the Carolina basketball team that won the 1993 national championship.

Activism by football and basketball players was unusual and attracted national media attention. Hitchcock was interviewed on the ABC news show "Nightline," and he and other students spoke on university campuses, including Vanderbilt, Harvard and Columbia.

In July 1993, UNC trustees voted in favor of a free-standing building. It would be an academic building to house both the Sonja Haynes Stone Black Cultural Center and the Institute of African American Research. It would contain classrooms, a library, an art gallery and a performance space, and it would be paid for solely with private gifts.

Hitchcock's gift is among the largest to the building fund by a living person, and a multipurpose meeting room in the new building will be named for him.

Hitchcock said that at first he did not want to have the room named for him because he thought "it was too much." But he said he reconsidered after the

death in training camp this year of his former Minnesota Vikings teammate, Kory Stringer.

"It leaves a legacy for my kids," Hitchcock said. "If anything happened to me, they could see what was important to me and what I did."

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