

### NAACP wants action in case of officers

Kweisi Mfume, president and CEO of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), said Feb. 28 that a federal circuit court decision to overturn the convictions of three New York City police officers in the brutal torture case of a Haitian immigrant should be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.



Mfume

The victim, Abner Louima, was tortured with a broomstick after he was arrested outside a Brooklyn nightclub in 1997.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit said there was insufficient evidence in the convictions of the trio — Charles Schwarz, Thomas Wiese and Thomas Bruder — on obstruction of justice charges. The court also said Schwarz's conviction for civil rights violations had to be thrown out because he was denied effective counsel, and the jury was exposed to prejudicial information during his trial. Mfume said the federal government should aggressively retry the civil rights violations case against Schwarz.

Schwarz, who allegedly held down Louima as he was being attacked, was given a 15-year prison term. Wiese and Bruder were sentenced to five-year terms. The ruling does not affect the conviction of the chief attacker, police officer Justin Volpe, who pleaded guilty and is currently serving a 30-year sentence. Volpe pleaded guilty to ramming the broomstick into Louima's rectum, causing severe internal injuries.

Mfume said that by acquitting both Wiese and Bruder, the court rejected the decision of the jury and substituted its own judgment, finding there was insufficient evidence to support the conspiracy to obstruct justice conviction. Mfume said, "This action sends a dangerously encouraging message to all those who would lie to conceal the misconduct of fellow officers."

Louima, who now lives in Florida, sued New York City and settled for close to \$9 million.

### Less air time for black TV reporters

Black reporters are not receiving an equal amount of air time on network television, says a study by the Center for Media and Public Affairs.

The annual report reveals that no black reporters were among the top 25 evening news reporters in 2001. The numbers are the lowest since 1996, the report says.

In 2000, three black reporters were in the top 10, but in 2001, there was none. In 2001, Pierre Thomas and Byron Pitts of ABC and Randall Pinkston of CBS were the only black journalists in the top 50. Pitts and Thomas were 28th on the list for 2001, with 72 appearances each.

White reporters delivered 88 percent of all stories last year, with white men delivering 77 percent.



Thomas

### AG says border patrols are illegal

COLUMBIA, S.C. — South Carolina's attorney general said Monday that it is illegal to use interstate welcome centers for picketing, and he again threatened to sue the NAACP over its "border patrol" tourism protests.

Members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People began protesting at welcome centers over the weekend, urging travelers not to spend money in South Carolina until the Confederate flag is removed from Statehouse grounds.

"Federal law makes it clear that interstate welcome centers and rest stops are designed solely for the purpose of giving motorists a place of rest, hospitality and recovery from road fatigue. Use of those tax-funded facilities for other purposes is strictly prohibited," Attorney General Charlie Condon wrote in a letter Monday to Gov. Jim Hodges.

Condon, who is seeking the Republican gubernatorial nomination to challenge the Democrat Hodges, called on the governor to "join me publicly in condemning this so-called 'border patrol' operation as an illegal use of public facilities."

NAACP state director Dwight James said he doesn't know where Condon got his information. James said his organization simply told government agencies — including the state Transportation Department — of its plans.

### Foundations led by Gates giving Baltimore high schools \$20 million

BALTIMORE — Bill Gates' charitable foundation is leading a group of organizations that have agreed to give the city's nine worst high schools \$20 million over five years.



Gates

Foundation leaders say they want to improve the lives of the 14,000 students at the schools, more than 60 percent of whom drop out.

The Gates Foundation has agreed to donate \$12 million, and \$8 million will be provided by other groups, including the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

The school system's chief executive officer, Carmen Russo, and foundation leaders said they share the belief that the system should break down its large high schools into smaller schools of no more than 850 students. The schools also should be more academically rigorous and give students a sense of belonging.

The announcement could pressure state lawmakers to provide more money to the city school system, which has asked the state for a large increase in funding to improve the system.

The Chronicle (USPS 067-910) was established by Ernest H. Pitt and Ndubis Egemonye in 1974 and is published every Thursday by Winston-Salem Chronicle Publishing Co., Inc., 617 N. Liberty Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27101. Periodicals postage paid at Winston-Salem, N.C. Annual subscription price is \$30.72.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Chronicle, P.O. Box 1636 Winston-Salem, NC 27102-1636

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# Additional honorees

The following group and individual also will be honored at The Chronicle Community Service Awards March 14. Below are bios for the honorees, who will be feted with dozens more at the annual banquet.

## Lexington NAACP for special recognition

COMPILED BY THE CHRONICLE STAFF

This year's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Parade in Lexington was a little more special than past ones. The crowd was a little livelier. The music and marching were more festive.

The passage of the MLK holiday a few days earlier by the Davidson County Board of Commissioners probably had something to do with the festive atmosphere.

The Lexington branch of the NAACP sponsors the annual parade. The same group was instrumental in pushing through the passage of the MLK holiday, which elected officials had refused to push through for more than a decade.

The fact that Davidson County was only one of a handful of counties in North Carolina that did not recognize the King holiday did not sit well with the Lexington NAACP, which has a long history of standing up and speaking out for what's right.

The group lobbied hard for years for the holiday, taking its argument for a King holiday to the commissioners, the residents of Davidson County and eventually the people of the state.



From left, Benny Miller, Nettie Hargrave, Rosa Terry and Leon Hargrave

Although business owners upset about economic losses have often been cited as the group that pushed the commissioners to pass the King holiday, many observers applaud Leon Hargrave, the president of Lexington NAACP, and other members of the chapter as the true warriors in the battle for a Martin Luther King Jr. holiday in Davidson County.

## Rev. Henry Lewis for lifetime achievement

COMPILED BY THE CHRONICLE STAFF



The Rev. Henry Lewis

For more than 45 years, the Rev. Henry Lewis has been a minister and so much more in Winston-Salem. Lewis began his career at Winston-Salem State University, where he earned his B.S. degree, serving as the university's chaplain and the James A. Gray Professor of Religion for 17 years.

Lewis also led Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church during much of that time. Under his leadership, that church's membership skyrocketed and members said goodbye to their old sanctuary and relocated to a modern building.

Lewis has also made local history. In 1970, he was the first African American to teach a course in the department of religion at Wake Forest University. The course was called Black Religion and Black Churches in America.

In 1977, Lewis was the first African American on the pastoral counseling staff at R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. He worked at RJR for more than 20 years, retiring as a senior employee counselor.

Although his schedule has always been tight, Lewis has been there for this city when its residents have needed him. When city-county schools were forced to desegregate in the late 1960s, Lewis led racial dialogue sessions with integrated groups of teachers and school administrators.

Lewis' life of service continues today. He is the pastor of Wentz Memorial Congregational Church and devotes his time to a number of worthy organizations, such as the Society for the Study of Afro-American History. While Lewis was president of the group, SSAH released its popular book of local black history, "African Americans in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County: A Pictorial History."

## Company putting history into quilts

BY S.I. LYNCH THE CHRONICLE

So many hidden treasures are lying dormant, waiting for their unveiling. What surrounds the mystique of these treasures is they are jewels that can introduce the masses to historical and even cultural awareness — at a time very different from the present. Brown Toes, a new company, has unleashed jewels



Young

called baby quilts. These are not just any old quilts. Here we have family heirlooms

that are based on events relating to the Underground Railroad.

Brown Toes is the brainchild of an extremely vibrant, passionate, community-focused and faith-led man named Anthony Young, who is the president. He showed his indomitable spirit in his years of working on the John Edwards and Mike Easley campaigns in various capacities. Young said that for many years he has been a proponent for economic empowerment. He believes in the importance of educating African Americans. According to Young, quilts are one of the mediums that can be used to infuse African Americans' rich heritage into households in a very special and personal way.

As Brown Toes is a small company choosing to do something positive for the whole community, it can't survive without the assistance of people who believe and support its efforts.

Young graduated with honors from St. Augustine's in



The Brown Toes Family Heritage Quilt

Raleigh with a degree in organizational management and is en route to Wake Forest University for its graduate program.

Young is determined to make inroads with this present venture. "I am not anybody special, just a man who believes, that's all. I'm trying to say to people, 'Don't just look at what my accomplishments are. My measure of who I am, as it is, is the manifestation of where I am in this life and what I choose to do in my standards of faith.'"

Young recalls his thesis

with an energy that is indicative of one who truly has convictions for a cause. He said it was titled "The Creation of Economic Wealth in Poor Wealth Communities." Young believes that his desire to enlighten African Americans came from what he had experienced and thus, Brown Toes was born.

Young believes, "Brown Toes is a testimonial of faith and what God has done for me. I am reminded of where I came from, and I know where I've been. And I've been in the belly, and I've been at the top. Right now I'm at the top,

because God has allowed these feet of mine to bring me a long way. I don't know where they are going to lead me, but I'm going in faith. Because these feet are what lead us to where we're going. Brown Toes is a representation of my testimony to where God has brought me and is taking me. Using it as an example to people everywhere, look what you can do if you only believe and step out on faith."

Brown Toes is an offshoot of Ebony Eyes (Young's other company), which addressed the lack of African-American dolls and toys.

People should realize, that quality isn't sacrificed simply because an item comes from an African-American establishment.

When you purchase a Brown Toes quilt you are able to keep history within your reach. Brown Toes offers quilts with various themes. The family series celebrates the many different types of families. Brown Toes quilts also tell the story of the Underground Railroad, a system of cooperation among active-antislavery people in the United States before 1863 by which fugitive slaves were secretly helped to reach the North or Canada.

Each of the quilts in the Brown Toes crib quilt series symbolizes hope, passion and determination despite deplorable circumstances that African Americans experienced.

These quilts also can be used as tapestries or they can be personalized (by embroidering information about the baby) and given as gifts.

Each quilt is delivered gift wrapped with a small symbol in the quilt and its historical meaning for America. After all, black history is American history.

For more information, go to [www.browntoes.com](http://www.browntoes.com).