

BUSINESS FOCUS

Briefs

Wortham becomes second woman deputy treasurer

State Treasurer Richard Moore has announced that Pam Wortham has accepted the position of deputy state treasurer and director of the Financial Operations Division for the Department of State Treasurer. Wortham is only the second woman to be named a deputy treasurer in the history of the Department of the State Treasurer.

As chief financial officer for the department, Wortham will oversee the state's banking operations as well as departmental accounting and fiscal operations.

"After an exhaustive search, I could not be more pleased to elevate one of our own, Pam Wortham," Moore said. "We have officially broken the glass ceiling in a department historically dominated by men."

Moore appointed Janice Burke the first female deputy treasurer in 2003.

WSJS wins awards

WSJS has again been recognized as having the "best newscast" in North and South Carolina, by the Electronic News Association of the Carolinas (ENAC).

In the awards handed out June 12 in Charlotte, WSJS News swept the Radio Division 1 "best newscast" category, winning both first place and silver awards. The winning newscasts showcased coverage of breaking news, for an ice storm on Feb. 17, 2003; and the Dec. 24, 2003, release of Darryl Hunt from prison after the Winston-Salem man served 18 years for a murder he did not commit.

WSJS News also won first place in the "spot news" category, for its Christmas Eve coverage of Hunt's release.

In addition, WSJS News won first place in the "political/election" category, for its Nov. 4, 2003, coverage of area municipal elections.

WSJS News also won two other silver awards at the annual ENAC Convention. One was in the "general news" category, for coverage of President Bush's visit to Winston-Salem on Nov. 7, 2003. The other was in the "feature" category, for a story produced on a December snowstorm.

ENAC is one of the nation's largest regional news organizations. The contest was open to broadcasters in both North and South Carolina.

Women's conference is June 26

On Saturday, June 26, at 8 a.m., Carolina Pinnacle Studios will host "The Spirit-Filled Woman...Renewed in Body, Soul and Spirit" Women's Conference. The event, sponsored by Pinnacle Ministries of Yanceyville Inc., will take place on stage B, 336 W. Main Street in Yanceyville, and all women are encouraged to attend.

"We are so blessed to have the anointed women of God who are speakers and roundtable facilitators for this year's conference," said event co-chair Dale Blackwell-Coons.

Other co-chairs for this event include Minister Helen Styles of Burlington, N.C.

There will be a precious time for fellowship with worship and praise before the opening session at 9 a.m. Prophetess Kimberly Turner from Dallas, Texas; Minister Gloria Irving from Durham, N.C.; and Dr. Mildred Thompson of Collinsville, Va., will be ministering as well as others. The roundtable facilitators are Anne Watlington, Alecia Walker and Minister Latasha Blackwell. Patti Currie and the Belview Praise & Worship Team will minister in music.

Registration will begin at 8 a.m. Praise and worship will take place at 8:30 a.m. with the program running from 9 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Registration is \$15, which includes lunch. For more information, call (336) 694-4767 or go to www.carolinapinnaclestudios.com.

Radio executive Launa Thompson dies at 52

CHICAGO (AP) - Launa Thompson, station and sales manager of WGCI-AM, Chicago's top-rated music station, died Sunday at age 52 after a brief illness.

Thompson, who was hailed by the Chicago Sun-Times as one of the most powerful women in Chicago media, was also manager of WVAZ-FM and the gospel station WGRB, the former WGCI-FM. All three are Clear Channel stations.

"This is a sad day for all of us in the Clear Channel family," said John Gehron, regional vice president of Clear Channel Radio.

The three stations grossed more than \$38 million in 1999, and Clear Channel estimated that Thompson and her staff had generated more than \$200 million in sales revenue in the eight years since she became general sales manager of WGCI in 1996.

The trade publication Radio Ink recently named Thompson as one of the most influential African-Americans in radio.

Woman sues over credit score firing

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEWARK, N.J. - Pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson has been accused of racial discrimination by a black woman who said she was denied a position as a paralegal because of her credit rating.

Brenda Matthews filed a complaint recently with the federal Equal Opportunity Employment Commission in Newark. In it, she says she was offered a job as a legal assistant in the company's patent office in October 2003, only to have the offer rescinded after a credit check.

Lawyers for Matthews, 27, of Newark, assert that blacks historically have had fewer opportunities to obtain credit and that using credit among hiring criteria amounts to racial discrimination. Matthews' lawyers, who include Bill Lan Lee, a former assistant U.S. attorney general for civil rights, say there are no data linking credit ratings to job performance.

Johnson & Johnson issued a statement in which it declined to comment on the allegations.

The statement did say that "Johnson & Johnson has entered into an arrangement with the EEOC

for the prompt resolution of such employment issues and looks forward to resolving this matter to the satisfaction of all involved."

The statement also said Matthews had applied for a job it described as a "tax specialist" position involving the timely payment of fees necessary to maintain Johnson & Johnson's global patent estate.

A separate lawsuit pending against Johnson & Johnson in U.S.

District Court in New Jersey charges that the company's policies and practices have kept black and Hispanic employees out of executive positions. Compared with white workers, the suit alleges, blacks and Hispanics receive lower salaries and fewer merit increases, cash bonuses, stock awards and stock options.

The suit involves three plaintiffs and seeks designation as a class action. The company has denied the allegations in the lawsuit.



Bill Lan Lee



The burgeoning skyline of the city of Charlotte.

N.C. Division of Tourism

Grant supports black college news service

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

NEW YORK - The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation has awarded a \$200,000 grant to NABJ to support Black College Wire, an online news service for and about students at historically black colleges and universities. NABJ President Herbert Lowe announced recently.

The one-year award will enable Black College Wire to continue its current operation and add new features to its Web site (<http://www.blackcollegewire.org/>), including audio streaming and First Amendment Watch, a new student project that will monitor and report on censorship at black colleges. Lowe said. The grant also will fund summer internships at black-owned community newspapers, he said.

The Web site was launched in September 2002 with a previous grant from Knight Foundation.

"NABJ is happy to support Black College Wire and link prominently to it from our association's Web site," said Lowe, a courts reporter at Newsday in New York. "Anything NABJ can do to augment its own services and programs for aspiring black journalists, we must and will do. My thanks to Knight Foundation and Black College Wire for helping us do more for students."

Black College Wire was founded by Pearl Stewart, former chairperson of the Black College Communication Association (BCCA), an organization of journalism faculty members at historically black institutions. The grant represents a partnership between NABJ and BCCA and is designed to increase the number of African-Americans being hired as jour-

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BRIGHT LIGHTS, BEST CITIES

Magazine names Charlotte one of best towns for blacks

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Black Enterprise recently revealed its 2004 list of the Top Cities for African-Americans to Live, Work and Play.

The top picks were culled from more than 4,000 interactive surveys completed on www.blackenterprise.com and by editorial staff evaluations. Survey respondents placed a high priority on income earnings potential, cost of living, housing prices and entrepreneurial opportunities.

When BE first published the list in 2001, four of the top 10 cities were in the South. This year seven out of 10 are below the Mason-Dixon Line. Five out of 10 have a black mayor, and all have a black population of at least 25 percent. Eight of 10 have a cost-of-living index that is less than the national average.

Seven cities have returned to the list in 2004, while Philadelphia, Chicago and Detroit have fallen off the list. Newcomers are Nashville, Tenn.; Birmingham, Ala.; and Columbus, Ohio.

Atlanta, Ga., ranks as the No.

1 city for African-Americans, driven primarily by entrepreneurial opportunities, earnings potential and cultural activities. Future job growth is strong at 23 percent, and Atlanta is home to a high number of black-owned businesses. African-Americans make up 61 percent of Atlanta's population.

Washington, D.C., ranks as the No. 2 city. Sixty percent of African-Americans who constitute the city's total population are among the nation's best educated and highest paid. It has the second lowest black unemployment rate, 7.6 percent, of the top 10 well below the national average of 10.2 percent.

Dallas, Texas, returns to the best cities list at No. 3, up from No. 8 in 2001. Dallas placed third among the top 10 cities in median household income for black families, future job growth and black high school graduation rate.

Nashville, Tenn., ranked No. 4, with a low cost of living as the city's biggest draw. Only Houston and Memphis have lower cost-of-living indices.

Houston, Texas, ranks No. 5 primarily because of residents' high satisfaction with quality of life. Formerly No. 1, Houston's drop is due to its above average median cost index and its higher unemployment and violent crime rates.

Charlotte, N.C., appears again on the top cities list, falling two spots to No. 6. Charlotte earned high marks for cost of living, diversity and economic growth. The city is a youthful, mobile hub for professionals (the median age is 32.8), and future job growth is fairly strong at 18.7 percent.

Birmingham, Ala., ranks at No. 7. Birmingham is the least populous city among the top 10 but has a city population that is nearly 75 percent African-American. While race relations are a concern for residents, the city boasts the highest percentage of African-American homeowners, 58 percent, among the top 10.

Rounding out the top 10 are Memphis, Tenn., ranked at No. 8; Columbus, Ohio, ranked at No. 9; and Baltimore, Md., ranked at No. 10.

Time Warner head honored by A Better Chance group

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

NEW YORK - A Better Chance, the national resource for identifying, recruiting and developing leaders among academically gifted students of color, recently presented the A Better Chance Corporate Award to Richard D. Parsons, chairman and chief executive officer of Time Warner Inc., at its annual awards luncheon.

Ed Bradley, "60 Minutes" co-editor and correspondent, emceed the gala event at the Waldorf-Astoria.

As a testament to his commitment to public service and the community, Parsons was co-chair of President George Herbert Walker Bush's bipartisan Social Security Commission, and he chairs the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corp., which was set up to spur business development and job creation in Harlem. He is also chairman of the Apollo Theater

Foundation and sits on the boards of several companies, including Citigroup, Estee Lauder and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; arts organizations, including the Museum of Modern Art; and Howard University.

Parsons has been affiliated with Time Warner since 1991, when he joined the company's board of directors. He became Time Warner's president in February 1995 and later served as the company's co-chief operating officer. He became CEO in May 2002 and chairman of the board in May 2003.

Parsons said, "I am most honored by this award. A Better Chance plays a growing and increasingly vital role in opening opportunities to the nation's top college preparatory and public high schools. I strongly support this organization's mission and look forward to even more students of color benefiting from the best edu-

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Richard Parsons shakes hand with President Bush during a trip to the White House in 2001.