

News at a Glance

San Francisco State investigates the arrest of black professor

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The president of San Francisco State University said an independent commission will investigate alleged racial profiling after the arrest of a black professor on campus.

Antwi Akom, 37, an ethnic studies assistant professor, was arrested on Oct. 25 after he allegedly refused to provide identification to a security guard during a late-night visit to his office. Authorities said Akom instigated a scuffle with university police officers.



Akom

Akom was charged with two felony counts of resisting arrest and assaulting a police officer. One officer was treated for minor injuries at a hospital.

Akom was released on his own recognizance and is expected to return to teaching Tuesday.

University President Robert Corrigan said a team led by former San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown and former City Attorney Louise Renne will review the incident and allegations that Akom was the victim of racial profiling.

"We are a campus community that identifies itself by a central commitment to social justice and equity," Corrigan said in a statement. "Did we fully live up to those values on October 25? To answer that question, I believe our best course is a thorough external review of this matter."

Akom denied the allegations Monday.

"I absolutely did have my ID with me, and I was never asked for it," Akom said.

Rupert F. Richardson named NAACP president emeritus

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Board of Directors unanimously voted during the October board meeting to name Rupert F. Richardson, former NAACP president, with the title president emeritus.

From 1992 through 1996 Richardson served as the national president of the association. In 1996 she relinquished the title of president when the board changed the title of the executive director of the association to president and chief executive officer.

Julian Bond, NAACP chairman of the board, said: "Rupert Richardson is more than our longest continuous serving board member; she is our institutional memory, keeping us true to the faith of our forebears."

Richardson joined the board in 1982. She currently serves as chairman of the National Health and National Life Membership Committees and sits on the Audit, Advocacy & Policy, Compensation Reimbursement and Units & Membership Committees. She is also a member of the Special Contribution Fund (SCF) Board of Trustees.

As a representative of the association, Richardson has exemplified illustrious service to the NAACP at the regional, state, and local levels. In 1965 Richardson became education chair of the NAACP Baton Rouge Branch, where she challenged school segregation and served as Louisiana State Conference president from 1981 to 1995. She is president emerita of the State Conference.

Michael Jackson's defense attorney honored by L.A. mayor and police chief

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Gospel music rocked the rafters as the mayor and police chief of Los Angeles joined hundreds of members of a black church to honor Michael Jackson's lawyer, Thomas Mesereau Jr., as "a champion of justice."

Mesereau, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Police Chief Bill Bratton swayed and clapped Sunday as a band played and a choir of young people sang religious songs in a rock tempo. They also presented a medley of upbeat numbers in praise of America.

"We are here to honor a man who is setting an example for all of us," the mayor told the packed chapel at Brookins Community African Methodist Church. He noted that Mesereau is "a white man who has for many years now marched with the mothers of Watts against gang violence. He co-founded a legal clinic for the indigent."

He noted that Mesereau also travels to Alabama every year to defend a death penalty case free of charge.

"Anytime I get the opportunity to acknowledge those among us willing to reach out as Tom has, I'm truly honored," said the mayor, who presented Mesereau with a city proclamation.

Mesereau told the group: "I am so touched, so honored and so privileged. I thank all of you very much."

Jackson State fires James Bell

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Jackson State fired coach James Bell on Monday, two days after the once-proud program clinched its third consecutive losing season.

Athletic director Roy Culberson said Bell's firing was effective immediately.

"While Bell has made significant improvements in the overall football program during the past two and a half years, we believe that this decision is in the best interest of Jackson State, its fans and alumni," Culberson said. "We would like to thank coach Bell for his untiring efforts and sincere love for the players."

Quarterbacks coach Daryl Jones will serve as interim coach for the final three games of the season. School officials are forming a committee to search for Bell's permanent replacement.

Bell, 47, was 8-23 with just two home victories in two-plus seasons at Jackson State. The Tigers are coming off a 64-36 home loss to Arkansas-Pine Bluff, the team's fourth straight defeat.

The historically black school that produced NFL star Walter Payton and won 15 Southwestern Athletic Conference titles had fallen upon hard times.

Jackson State (2-6, 2-4 SWAC) hasn't had a winning season since 2002, and under Bell had only two wins against teams with winning records.

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No one safe on TV 'Boondocks'

BY JANICE RHOSHALLE LITTLEJOHN FOR THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — Aaron McGruder has been called a "genius" and "the angriest black man in America" as he skewered everything from the Bush White House to Black Entertainment Television.

Even Rosa Parks almost took a hit in the new TV version of McGruder's popular comic strip, "The Boondocks." After the civil rights icon died Oct. 24, McGruder deleted references to Parks from a scene that showed her scuffling with fans of alleged child pornographer R. Kelly.

But the fact that Parks was included in the first place demonstrates that McGruder's show, which will premiere Sunday at 11 p.m. EDT on Cartoon Network's "Adult Swim," will retain the edge that has periodically gotten the strip pulled from newspapers.

"The Boondocks" follows the adventures of junior revolutionary Huey Freeman and his hip-hop obsessed younger brother, Riley, who live in a white, middle-class suburb with their cantankerous grandfather. While the series won't tackle current events (the 15-episode order took 18 months to complete), it's certainly not lacking in irreverence. In one show, Granddad starts dating a younger woman, oblivious to the fact that she's



King



Aaron McGruder

a prostitute, which leads to a discussion between Huey and Riley on whether all women are "hoes."

Another episode centers on the resurrection of Martin Luther King Jr., whose nonviolent message is ridiculed in a post-9/11 world by media outlets such as Time Warner's CNN and Time magazine (and yes, Cartoon Network is a division of Time Warner).

"Anyone who is familiar with the comic strip knows that 'The Boondocks' is anything but soft," said actress Regina King, the voice of Huey and Riley. "Aaron McGruder is not scared of taking on anybody."

McGruder began writing the strip in 1997 while attending the University of Maryland. Now it's carried in about 350 newspapers, although some have moved it to the editorial page.

A few papers temporarily pulled the strip for its attacks against the war in Iraq in 2001. And earlier this year, several papers dropped it for a few days because of its use of the n-word — which, not coincidentally, is sprinkled throughout the TV series.

"This is a country that celebrates Richard Pryor as a genius, and still we wonder if we should be using the word 'nigger' in entertainment," said McGruder, 31. "It's a conversation that hasn't gone anywhere in about 30 years."

Bringing "The Boondocks" to television took several years. Fox made a pilot two years ago, but McGruder says the network's plethora of "rigid creative rules" made the experience a nightmare.

Cartoon Network "is letting me do the show I want to do," McGruder said. And network senior vice president Mike Lazzo is making "The Boondocks" the centerpiece of the three-hour "Adult Swim" late-night block, which pulls in more of the coveted 18- to 34-year-old male demographic than Jay Leno, David Letterman or Jon Stewart.

A longtime fan of "The Boondocks," Lazzo believes McGruder's voice is vital to

See 'Boondocks' on A10

More blacks try to make U.S. Senate

BY JAMES WRIGHT NNPA

WASHINGTON

Promising to be an independent-minded U.S. senator if elected in 2006, Maryland Lt. Gov. Michael S. Steele (R) entered the race for the Senate seat currently held by the retiring Paul Sarbanes, a Democrat. The announcement took place at the Novak Field House on the campus of Prince George's County Community College before a crowd of 350 supporters that included Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich (R), who enthusiastically endorsed Steele for the position.



Steele

"It is time to heal our divisions," Steele said. "It is time to empower people, instead of empowering government. It is time to change the culture of our nation's capital. And that is why I am certain it is time for me to run for the United States Senate."

Steele, who once served as the leader of the Maryland Republican Party, took a subtle swipe at both parties.

"For too long, one party worried more about prices in the stock market than prices in the corner market," Steele said, "and too

many in the other party preached reconciliation at the same time they practiced division.

"Red states must be red. Blue states must be blue; black always black; and white always white. It may look that way to Washington, but I know that that is not the view from Main Street, Maryland."

Steele talked about how his race will emphasize more economic empowerment for blacks.

"And instead of the right to sit

at the front counter, the new civil rights struggle would be a struggle for the right to own the diner and to create legacy wealth for our children," he said.

He talked about lowering barriers to small business ownership, fighting terrorism abroad and at home, making sure that health care is a reality for everyone in the 21st century, and improving failing public schools.

If Steele is elected, he will be the first black Republican U.S. senator since Edward Brooke of

Massachusetts, who served from 1966 to 1978.

Former congressman and NAACP Chief Executive Officer Kweisi Mfume is seeking the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate seat in Maryland.

Elsewhere, Rep. Harold Ford is seeking the Democratic nomination for a U.S. Senate seat from Tennessee, replacing

retiring Majority Leader Bill Frist (R). Keith Butler, a black Detroit

See Senate on A9

A New Direction for a New Day...

It's time for a change.

We need a new direction for a new day. My name is Mac Weatherman. I am a life long resident of Winston-Salem, NC. I am running for the City Council to represent you in the East Ward. I understand and intend to address the needs of the entire East Ward. You need and deserve someone to represent you.

As a long-time member of the community, I have seen the neglect that has continued for years due to the stagnant philosophy of our current administration. We must strive to curtail and eliminate unnecessary spending. We can no longer reach into the pockets of our residents by continuing to raise property taxes year after year. Why not increase our city revenue by creating more business ventures?

Well, it's time to make that change and I'm ready to take on the responsibility of helping to make the change a reality. Will you help by voting for me, Mac Weatherman, your new City Council person?



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