

News at a glance

CBC members host bone marrow drive to save life of teen

U.S. Reps. Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. (D-IL), Donna Edwards (D-MD) and U.S. Delegate Donna Christensen (D-VI) hosted a Bone Marrow Drive during the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference last week in Washington, D.C., to find a life-saving donor for Justin Nicholas Thornton. They called the event "a matter of life and death."

A 17-year-old high school student, Justin attends Our Lady of Good Counsel in the 4th Congressional District of Maryland. In 2006, Justin was diagnosed with cancer, specifically T-Cell Acute Lymphatic Leukemia. After 26 consecutive months of intense chemo and radiation therapy, recent test results showed that the cancer was back — this time attacking his central nervous system.

African Americans have the lowest likelihood of finding a match — only 60 percent are likely to find at least one potential match, significantly lower than the nearly 88 percent likelihood for Caucasians and just over 80 percent chance for Hispanics. These donors must then be available to donate — making minority availability less than 50 percent.

Congresswoman Christensen, who is a physician and the Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Brain Trust, said, "We hope today's drive will be a small, but significant step to bring greater diversity to the Registry and to improve all patients' chances of finding a donor. We need to help Justin and others who are waiting for a match and the opportunity to live longer and healthier lives."

S.C. trooper goes on trial in crash case

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — A South Carolina state trooper who bragged about a crash that sent a fleeing suspect flying over the hood of his cruiser goes on trial this week.

Lance Cpl. Steve Garren is accused of using unreasonable force and depriving Marvin Grant of his civil rights in the crash, which was captured on the patrol car's dashboard video camera. Garren is white; Grant is black. The case is drawing scrutiny from leaders in the black community.

The trial begins Tuesday in Greenville. The now-suspended officer faces 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine if convicted.

The state NAACP will also keep an eye on another trial in which a trooper is accused of repeatedly kicking a prone truck driver in the head after a chase.

UNC Charlotte chancellor recommends adding football

In a presentation on Sept. 18 to the University's Board of Trustees, UNC Charlotte Chancellor Philip L. Dubois recommended the University should start a football program and field a team by 2013. The proposal came during the board's meeting at the Harris Alumni Center.

The trustees took the chancellor's recommendation under advisement. They will make the final decision whether or not to accept the recommendation, and the decision likely will come in November.

The chancellor's recommendation comes after 21 months of deliberation and research by a football feasibility committee, Dubois and others at the University. Dubois has given several previous reports to the trustees on the issue of whether to add football to the University's roster of athletic programs.

In his presentation, Dubois said he felt the time was right for football at UNC Charlotte because it helps foster a full university experience that many students crave in their undergraduate careers and could help build even closer relationships with the greater Charlotte community. The University is expected to have 35,000 students by 2020.

The soonest the trustees are expected to make a final decision would be at the board's Nov. 13 meeting. If football is approved, the most likely scenario would have UNC Charlotte fielding its first team in the fall of 2013.

Racial tensions brew at Tucson high school between blacks, Hispanics

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Racial tensions are brewing at one Tucson high school, with black and Hispanic students squaring off on two occasions and threatening text messages circulating among the student body.

The troubles at Palo Verde High Magnet School began last week when about 100 black and Hispanic students yelled at each other and threatened to fight during lunch and after school.

Last Thursday, text messages circulated among students saying guns were going to be at the school and warning people to stay home.

As a result, a half-dozen police cars cruised the area around the 1,500-student school on Friday. Principal Tina Isaac canceled a homecoming pep assembly, tightened up who gets hall passes, and sent a letter home to parents telling them about increased security on campus.

Isaac said the friction does not seem to be gang-related and no weapons were found on campus during investigations throughout the day. About 10 students were suspended, she said.

Several parents interviewed said they knew nothing about what was happening at the school, even though Palo Verde has a system that issues text messages, e-mails and phone calls to parents if their child is tardy or absent or if the school has any announcements.

Black N.C. native made history nearly 140 years ago

Like Obama, Sen. Revels faced challenges to make history

BY FREDERIC J. FROMMER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Senate galleries were packed, filled with both black and white spectators, and a murmur filled the air as the nation's first black member of Congress, Sen. Hiram Revels, stood to deliver his first speech to the chamber.

Nearly 140 years before Sen. Barack Obama's historic quest to become the nation's first black president, Revels captivated a nation in the midst of social upheaval following the Civil War. The date was March 16, 1870, less than five years after the 13th Amendment abolished slavery.

"I rise," Revels said, "with feelings which perhaps (have) never before entered into the experience of this body."

Revels, a 42-year-old Mississippi Republican, was a product of postwar Reconstruction, when Republicans — including white northerners known as "carpetbaggers" because they came south with their luggage in carpetbags and black southerners — dominated state governments in the South. The Mississippi Legislature, in which Revels served, voted with the backing of its black members to send him to the U.S. Senate. (Senators weren't popularly elected in the United States



Sen. Hiram Revels tried to be the first black president.

until 1913.)

Revels was born free in Fayetteville, N.C., and like Obama, was of mixed-race background. Revels' mother was white, of Scottish heritage, and his father was black with possibly some American Indian lineage.

He spent much of his career as a minister, and was

once imprisoned in Missouri for preaching the gospel to blacks. He wrote that his preaching was generally tolerated in slave states as long as he didn't encourage slaves to run away. During the Civil War, he helped organize black regiments for the Union Army.

In his first Senate



Sen. Obama

speech, which The Washington Post later called "the sensation of the town," he quickly made a point of assuring whites that they had nothing to fear from blacks seeking payback for slavery.

"They bear toward their former masters no revengeful thoughts, no hatreds, no animosities," he said.

While Obama faces obstacles in the presidential campaign because of his race, Revels had to surmount much more overt opposition. Just a few weeks before his speech, a small group of senators, mostly border state Democrats, spent three days trying to deny Revels his seat in the Senate.

Sen. Garrett Davis of Kentucky, a Democrat, mocked Republicans by declaring, "Oh ye Pharisees political! You who profess

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Investigators: Former NBA star misused grants

BY JUDY LIN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SACRAMENTO — A nonprofit run by mayoral candidate and former NBA star Kevin Johnson used AmeriCorps grants to pay volunteers to engage in political activities, run personal errands for Johnson and even wash his car, federal investigators say.

The findings from an agency that oversees the grants were sent to federal prosecutors and listed in a letter to Johnson dated Sept. 24 that also says he will be prohibited from receiving federal money while the investigation is under way. The Associated Press obtained a copy of the letter Friday.

Johnson's campaign said he will appeal the decision.

Johnson's nonprofit, St. HOPE, has received money through AmeriCorps, which provides college grants to people who volunteer for certain community service programs. He handed over management responsibilities for St. HOPE earlier this year so he could focus on his campaign to unseat Sacramento Mayor Heather Fargo.

Investigators from the Corporation for National and Community Service say several jobs St. HOPE assigned to its volunteers fell outside the scope of the federal grants. They said those jobs included running errands for Johnson, washing his car, recruiting students to attend St. HOPE Academy, engaging in political activities related to a local school board race, traveling to New York to help promote an academy Johnson has opened in Harlem and performing cleaning duties.

"The evidence is adequate to suspect that you have committed irregularities which seriously reflect the propriety of further federal government dealings with you," William Anderson, who is in charge of suspensions for the corporation, wrote to Johnson.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Sacramento said it had received a report from the corporation but would not discuss the case. Prosecutors will decide whether to file charges.

Johnson's campaign issued a statement characterizing the problem as administrative errors and accused the corporation's investigation of being tainted because it is headed by

a President Bush appointee who has made disparaging remarks against blacks. Johnson, a three-time all-star for the Phoenix Suns, is black. Johnson's campaign cited

2005 news reports that Inspector General Gerald Walpin introduced Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney during a Washington

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Johnson

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