

Monsanto Signs Agreement With North Carolina Mutual

ST. LOUIS - As part of a program to support minority business ventures, Monsanto Company has signed an agreement in which North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company becomes the reinsurer for a \$61 million portion of Monsanto's domestic life insurance coverage. North Carolina Mutual is the largest minority-owned insurance company in the nation.

"North Carolina Mutual is a good example of minority potential to profit in the enterprise system," notes William S. McEwen, Director, Equal Opportunity Affairs at Monsanto.

Under the agreement, North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company, working through Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, becomes the reinsurer for this significant portion of Monsanto's domestic life insurance coverage, effective January 1. North Carolina Mutual, which has been in existence 81 years, is one of only two minority insurance companies with an "A" rating from Bests Insurance Reports.

According to McEwen, "This is only one facet of Monsanto's expanding commitment to minority economic development." The company's formal commitment to minority enterprise began in 1973 with a minority purchasing



William S. McEwen (left), Director, Equal Opportunity Affairs at Monsanto Company, and Edward J. Halfacre, Director, Group Sales for North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company, review a new contract. Under the agreement, North Carolina Mutual, the nation's largest minority-owned insurance company, becomes the reinsurer for a \$61 million portion of Monsanto's domestic life insurance coverage.

program and has expanded to a minority economic development program at all company locations.

This year, Monsanto expects to exceed \$27 million in purchases from minority vendors as well as deposits of \$41 million in minority-owned banks. Currently minority firms have contracts for construction,

transportation, advertising, food service, accounting and legal services.

In 1976, Monsanto sponsored the first chemical industry conference on minority purchasing at its world headquarters in St. Louis. The company has since assisted 17 U.S. firms in developing their own minority purchasing programs.

Delano Rackard Awakens Energy As Did Dr. King

By Teresa Burns
Post Staff Writer

Each time Delano R. Rackard approaches a podium and recites a Martin Luther King speech, he is, of course, paying tribute to a great man. But there is something else Rackard does - somehow he awakens the same energy that Rev. Dr. King could. And instantly you find yourself listening.

Rackard, a 32 year-old Employee Relations Representative for the North Carolina State Department of Transportation, is presently living in Charlotte. For the last three years he has spoken in North Carolina churches - Children's Chapel United Church of Christ in Graham, Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church in Lenoir and East Stonewall A.M.E. Zion Church in Charlotte, are a few of

them. He was also featured at the unveiling of King's statue in Marshall Park. He recited excerpts from King's "Remaining Awake Through A Great Revolution."

Each time he speaks the audience is amazed at his poise and presence. Once, after speaking at Johnson C. Smith University, Rackard received a four count standing ovation. The technique is not a matter of extensive practice. "It's more in terms of smoothing it out," Rackard explained.

"I practice all the time - in the shower - driving down the highway. I memorize the entire speech, but I do use notes for reference."

So far Rackard has purchased five of King's albums. "I listen to him and I try to correct the pronun-



Delano Rackard
...Dynamic speaker

ciation of certain words I try to follow King's style as near to perfection as I can - I try to basically do as King would do it."

As Rackard listens to King's records he writes the words down long hand. Calvin Ross, Vivian Nevins and Betty Beatty then

type the speeches for him. "They are a big help to me," Rackard remarked.

Rackard has perfected his technique. He recently received offers to speak in New York and Washington during King's birthday this year. In New York he will deliver "The Drum Major Instinct," which is considered to be King's desired eulogy, and excerpts from "I Have A Dream."

He will then travel to Washington, D.C. to participate in Howard University's celebration in honor of Rev. Dr. King.

Rackard admits that his talent and concentration was something he just picked up. "I used to imitate ministers on the way to church a number of years ago. It was something I just picked up. And then one day my friend Rance Jack-

son heard me and inspired me to do it before an audience. He spent a lot of time convincing me and helping me."

Another important venture Rackard has recently embarked upon concerns the public television station WTVI-TV, Channel 42. During Black History Week he will deliver excerpts from "Drum Major Instinct" on air.

With this abundance of talent one wonders if Rackard is ready to preach or teach. "I have thought of becoming a minister," Rackard admitted. "I have inclinations toward ministry and it is weighing heavily. Right now I'm trying to make that decision."

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Independence Implements New Reading, Math Labs

In the past few years Independence High School has implemented new Reading and Math Labs, and this year hopes to improve their Science Lab.

Contrary to popular belief, the money for these improvements didn't come from the School Board. The Labs are a result of fund raising efforts by parents, students and teachers in the Independence High School PTSA.

According to H. L. Hawkins, Principal of North Carolina's largest high school, "school appropriations cover only our very basic needs. Each year I have a list of projects that will improve the quality of education we can offer. The PTSA selects a project and runs with it."

Mrs. Joan Shaw, PTSA President, believes that parent, student, and teacher involvement makes improvements more meaningful. "It is healthy for parents to have more input in their children's school.

This year the PTSA is "Sweeping in the New Year" with a unique fund raising effort. The group is arranging chimney sweeping appointments. "People are using their fireplaces and woodstoves more frequently and are often not aware that their dirty chimney is creating a serious fire hazard. The newspapers were full of chimney fire stories over the holidays. Hopefully we can open some eyes, provide a valuable service and raise money, too," says Connie Laney, project chairman. The PTSA is using professional chimney sweeps who work in top

hats and tails. For information contact Connie Laney at 545-9163 or Vickie Watts 545-6420, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

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