

ONMEN NEWS

Central Valley's Urban News & Current Affairs Spot

Print Edition – Monday, December 19, 2016

Issue #003



Monthly News Post

Mayor Carlton Jones' first order of business is to unify the city of Tulare

December 13, 2016 | ONME Staff



Mayor Carlton Jones intends on keeping his day job as a Fresno fireman, as well as continue to mentor and coach the local youth

(TULARE, CA) -- Among the closed doors of the Tulare Public Library, a room was filled to capacity with eager stares from a relevant minority, anticipating the announcement of the first African-American mayor, Carlton Jones, who would be the first minority in this position in Tulare, CA's 128-year history.

As the humble, quiet voice addressed the attentive crowd, the broad athletic shoulders of a

powerful man tenderly leaned forward to tell his story, of the many hands who helped raise him to the position of where he sits today.

He spoke of his past teachers who "tolerated" his ambitious youth, a few of them were in the room that night, and lightly chuckled at his candid humor of his childlike mischief.

Jones also appreciated the guidance of former mayor and also his former coach, David Macedo, who sterned his tone to ask Jones if he was ready to take on the job that is not so easy as it may look.

In the mildly lit room, after a public city council vote to nominate and motion Jones as mayor, cheers of joy abruptly sprang out from many directions, as people stood with their enthused claps and ear-to-ear smiles of the night's accomplishment and historical moment in their California town, Tulare.

After the council meeting and ceremony, his wife, Cindi Jones of several years, stood back and watched the groups of people envelope her husband's candor, shaking his hand on a job well done and on the eagerness for him to start



his mayorship.

In her reserved demeanor, Mrs. Jones, confidently poised, took on an interview with one of the local media, with gentle smiles and praises of her husband, knowing the road ahead was just another new beginning

Eager to see the ending quarters of his son's basketball game the same night of his official mayorship--it was also his son's birthday-- Jones continued patiently and graciously to thank everyone in the room and his close friends and family for their support throughout the years, inviting them to join him at one of the local restaurants he would attend thereafter.

In an after-interview with Mayor Jones, he discussed the first order of business; fixing a divided council which would in turn unify the staff--having everyone on one accord in their office and in their city.



Watch the full experience followed by an exclusive interview below with Mayor Jones and the ONME News team [here](#) or at onmenews.com.

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December 15, 2016 | By McKenzie Jackson | CBM



A segment of the African-American community in Vallejo, a Solano County city nestled in the northern half of the San Francisco Bay Area, is worried.

(VALLEJO, CA)--There won't be a Black or brown face amongst the five trustees when the Vallejo City Unified School District Board of Education meets for the first time in 2017.

Rev. Dante Quick of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, a predominately Black church in the city, said the coming year would be the first-time in four decades no African-Americans or Hispanics have been members of the educational body.

The absence of a Black or Hispanic trustee on the educational body is a result of November's election: although three of nine candidates vying for three board slots were black, none were elected.

"That concerns us greatly," he said. "Now when we need an African-American presence on board, we don't have one, so this is uncharted waters."

When the school trustees meet in January, their membership will include two Filipinos and three whites.

Quick said a Black presence is needed on the VCUSD board because incoming members are focused on enforcing discipline on the majority Black and Hispanic student body. They are also going against VCUSD Superintendent Ramona Bishop, an African-American, over continuing the educational strides the district has made in the last five years under her helm.

Pastor Danny Jefferson of Rehoboth World Outreach Center, another Black church in Vallejo, said he is saddened there are no Blacks on the board of school system that features 70 percent of the children taking free or reduced lunches. The religious leader said that speaks to a lack of knowledge in policy making and experience in particular communities.

"You can teach teachers cultural competency, but who is going to teach the school board cultural competency?" Jefferson asked, wondering if the board will have VCUSD's minority students' best interests in mind.

Retired Vallejo teacher Bob Lawson, and educator Marianne Kearney-Brown won the two full-term board seats, and incumbent Rusal Cayangyang defeated outgoing board trustee Hazel Wilson, an African-American, for the two-year term position. Last February, Wilson was appointed as a trustee to finish a term of a trustee that resigned from the board. Outgoing trustee Ward "Ace" Stewart, also Black, did not seek re-election.

Kearney-Brown did not return a phone call from a California Black Media reporter as of press time; but Lawson, the 70-year-old, lifelong Vallejo resident, said he has a great record working with Black students.

"There is nothing I am going to do on the board that will take away what African-American students have," said the Vallejo teacher of 20 years. "I am always worried about African-American student achievement."

Supporters of Bishop such as Jefferson, Quick, and Deborah Dixon, a Vallejo activist, said the anti-superintendent Bishop rhetoric Lawson and Kearney-Brown used on the campaign trail worries them, though.

Jefferson said some words used by school board candidates reminded him of the controversial speeches Donald Trump used during his campaign for the U.S. Presidency.

"We had school board members that said they were going to build a wall, a beautiful wall, and now they are running our school district," he said. "We had some Trumpism on the local level. Marianne Kearney-Brown compared Vallejo schools to Compton. So, now we all Niggas With Attitudes?"

Jefferson said hateful messages on Facebook were directed at Hazel Wilson, and another post “portrayed our students as animals not worthy of a quality education.” Dixon said with a Facebook post, Kearney-Brown alluded to wanting to fight her.

“We have real concerns here,” Jefferson said.

Lawson said a lot of negativity was directed at Kearney-Brown during the school race, which was un-called for, noting the reason she might not call a reporter back was fear of “a hatchet job” being done on her.

Bishop’s supporters said Bishop, one of 26 Black superintendents in the Golden State’s 11,000 school systems, has accomplished a lot since becoming VCUSD’s head educator in 2011.

The pastors and Dixon mentioned several reasons why Bishop should be the 15,000-student school system’s superintendent, including: a rising graduation rate (73.8 percent in 2015, a 20 percent increase over six years) and test scores, teachers getting pay hikes, and the implementation of a progressive discipline alternative that reduced school suspensions—keeping black kids in the classroom.

“When you want to reverse those trends, that means we go back to a pipeline to prison,” said Jefferson.

Quick, a Vallejo schools’ parent, praised the increasing graduation rate, which includes increased numbers of Black students.

“That is the kind of progress we want to sustain on this board,” he said.

Lawson said he doesn’t want to see a reverse in that trend; on the other hand, a lot of work needs to be done in the school system. He said the school district has a bad rep, pointing out that teacher morale and school discipline needs to be improved, and district finances need to be monitored.

Lawson spoke of issues such as Vallejo High School’s accreditation and school safety, citing a Solano County Grand Jury report released in June that highlighted two of Vallejo’s high schools having numerous safety concerns, facilities issues, and bullying.

“I’m not saying we have to fire the superintendent, but someone has to be responsible at the end. When the team is losing, you can’t fire the players,” said Lawson, who added that board members “haven’t made a commitment to do anything about the superintendent although we hope she’ll make some changes.”

Lawson’s words somewhat echo the words penned by his son, teacher David Lawson, in an open letter published in a Vallejo newspaper in July. The educator said Bishop had several miscues including instituting “wall-to-wall” academies at the high schools, teachers being discouraged from writing referrals, students not being removed from the roll to decrease dropout rate numbers, and the accreditation problem at Vallejo High. ... **Read more [here](#) or at <http://www.onmenews.com>**

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health for all



Black hair-care association has found a ‘new style’ for store owners in the industry to prosper

December 7, 2016| ONME News Staff



BOBSA is creating a direct link to China to cut costs for Black hair care store owners and businesses

(Beijing-CHINA) – Whether it’s natural or relaxed, the haircare industry amongst US Black consumers has a predominance in spending habits more than any other US consumer group.

In fact, according to a consumer market analysis from Mintel Reports, 51% of Black consumers use styling products compared to 34% of US consumers overall.

Then, it is also no wonder that the sales of the overall Black haircare market in 2015 were an estimated \$2.7 billion...and according to Black Owned Beauty Supply Association, (BOBSA) the Black haircare & cosmetic industry nationwide and internationally is a \$9 billion industry that serves millions of African-Americans.

So what is the biggest issue with high black consumerism in this market?

Unfortunately the Black haircare industry is predominately controlled by a conglomerate of Korean store owners and suppliers, who are able to drive down

prices, collectively buy in bulk and be middlemen, and buy out non-Korean store owners.

BOBSA, who provides African-American businesses and professionals a platform to compete by advocating for Black institutions that depend on beauty supply stores, has helped over the last 13 years open up 150+ stores, but with 10 to 15 percent closing within one year after they have opened due to the monopoly of the Korean store owners in this industry.



BOBSA founder, Sam Ennon, who was invited to China this past October by the Chinese government and their hair manufacturers, has found a way to change all the odds for Black haircare store owners.

“I have just made an agreement with the Chinese government and manufacturers of hair,” said Ennon. “We have created an alliance named Enterprise of Black Hair Alliance (EBHA) to change the distribution of hair in the U.S.”



Welcomed with banners, balloons, a singing choir, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony by the town’s mayor and the workers of the plant, Ennon and his US BOBSA crew were overwhelmed with the positive responses from the Chinese community during the 10-day visit.

“We got to visit Beijing, Taihe (the hair factory hub), and Shanghai,” explained Ennon. “We experienced the greatest welcome and hospitality on behalf of BOBSA. However, it was not the nice hotels and fancy meals every day that impressed me; it was their determination that really moved me.”



Ennon was given a tour of factories to understand and witness the processing of the wigs and haircare products, also noting some of the challenges his store owners may have.

“I have been told many times by African-American store owners that they buy directly from the factories. After being there, myself, I realize the logistics are not possible, which is a hindrance to the success Black beauty supply stores, and limits competition in this market.”

On the contrary, Ennon also understood the major struggles for the factories.

“I learnt that the factories have their struggles as well, i.e. the wholesalers don’t pay them on time, their workers work so many hours but the profits are so low, etc.”

To bridge the challenges of both cultures in the black haircare industry, Ennon was introduced to a new factory— Anhui Union Hair Arts and Culture Co., Ltd.

“It has just been built and was invested by a few other hair factories; their goal is to use this new company to sell directly to the customers by collaborating with B.O.B.S.A. It was a very exciting moment when I finally saw the 2,000-acre lot and 250,000 square feet building that I realized what a great opportunity this is to finally make black-

owned beauty supply stores able to compete with others.”

Ennon is committed to EBHA’s shared effort to create and develop a beauty industry that bridges with the Black community.

“Our vision embraces the belief that our alliance will provide meaningful opportunities for all parties to generate revenues and manifest premium products and brands. Our joint venture will enable the Black community to fully realize the potential opportunities in committing to the creation of industry brands that will bring pride and recognition to everyone involved in this joint venture.”

For media inquiry contact BOBSA: Phone: 650-863-3491 or Email: sam@bobsa.org



Join us as we review, learn and analyze the seven principles of Kwanzaa!

Email or call us if you would like to participate as a volunteer, vendor, pot-luck contributor or guest entertainer.

Please call: 559-544-1857 for more information or
Email: aahcmsiv@gmail.com

Vendors welcome - \$10.00 donation (Dec. 29th only)

The African American Historical & Cultural Museum
is open each day of Kwanzaa; the program starts promptly
6:30 PM to 8:30 PM.
We are located at 1857 Fulton St. Fresno, Ca 93721

Mon., December 26
Umoja ~ Unity
Gregory Melancon

Tues., December 27
Kujichagulia ~ Self-Determination
Ray Moore

Wed., December 28
Ujima ~ Collective Work & Responsibility
Black Student Union

Thurs., December 29
Ujamaa ~ Cooperative Economics
Dr. Claude Anderson Workshop

Fri., December 30
Nia ~ Purpose
Prof. Kehinde Solwazi

Sat., December 31
Kuumba ~ Creativity
OPEN MIC
& Community Potluck
***Special time 2-4 PM**

Sun., January 1
Imani ~ Faith
Local Pastors
***Special time 2-4 PM**



L.A. hiring fair aimed at giving formerly incarcerated individuals employment opportunities

December 5, 2016 | By McKenzie Jackson- CBM



(LOS ANGELES, CA) --The twinkle in Torrey Washington's eye when he talks about his hopes for the future could be just as bright as headlights as the Jaguar-brand truck the 20-year-old wants to one day purchase.

First though, the Los Angeles resident needs steady income. Washington has had a few jobs in warehouses, but is now out of work and wants a job to build a future on that will help negate any tugs to a sketchy street life.

"My focus is bettering myself," Washington said. "It's not really finding a job; it's keeping a job. There are a lot of distractions – stuff here and there – but it's not always about making fast money. I want something safe; something that will make me feel positive about myself."

So there Washington was on Dec. 2, walking from vendor to vendor, with his mother a few steps behind, introducing himself to perspective employers at the city of Los Angeles' Fair Chance Hiring Fair at Los Angeles Technical Trade College.

The morning job fair aimed at giving formerly imprisoned individuals a fair shot at gaining employment, and was a partnership between L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti's Blue Ribbon Commission on Employment Equity, L.A. City Councilmember Curren Price Jr., California Assemblymember Reginald Jones-Sawyer, ride-sharing giant Uber, and LATC.

Over 200 job seekers, mostly blacks and Latinos with criminal records, spoke with representatives from over 50 employers and 30 workplace development organizations situated at tables under two large canopies on the trade school's campus.

Over 200,000 afortime incarcerated residents live in the L.A. region on an annual basis, said Anna Bahr, a communications associate with Garcetti's office. Price, who represents L.A.'s ninth council district, said the hiring fair let those once jailed persons know people do care for them.

"We need to try to expand the workforce," the South L.A. representative said. "We know that African-Americans are disproportionately affected by the criminal justice system. The formerly incarcerated come out and the statics are 50 percent can't get a job and if they are African-American it's even higher."

Jones-Sawyer said he has seen a lot of people from South L.A., which he represents in Sacramento, released from prison with no work prospects, so he is happy that there are employers willing to employ people that have spent time behind bars.

"For our community to be rebuilt again everyone needs the opportunity to get a job," said the 59th Assembly District representative, adding that former inmates must have the chance to be productive members of society. "The only way we are going to do that is give everyone a fair chance."

Employers at the event included Uber, Grid Alternatives, Inclusion Services, General Coatings Corporation, the Santa Monica Pier, and B.M.W Nationwide Security.

Uber Southern California General Manager Christopher Ballard said the tech giant changed its policies to allow individuals with low-

level, non-violent and minor offences the opportunity to become Uber drivers.

“Drivers with records have the exact same driving rating as the national average,” Ballard said. “Expanding opportunities to peoples with records is not just good policy - its good business.”

Dwayne Holt, B.M.W.’s owner, said he has two brothers that were in similar positions as many of the event’s employment seekers.

“Everyone deserves a second, third and fourth chance,” said the Long Beach business owner.

Bahr said more than 320 job interviews took place at the event and there were approximately 100 job offers.

While bouncing from employer to employer, the job-seeking Washington seemed confident he would find a gig. He smiled, pointed at his doting mother and said jokingly, “I’m trying not to live with her anymore.”

Washington continued: “I’m ready to go and do my own thing. Manage to get a car and move out of mom’s house.”

Ray Zacarias, once jailed for armed robbery, now helps parolees find employment and works as the executive vice-president of Communities in Schools. He encouraged the job seekers to not give up on finding a good job.

"Having a felony is a huge barrier," he said. "So, wherever you go, you're going to be really limited. It's going to be a lot of warehouse positions."

The job fair comes after the L.A. City Council recently passed the Fair Chance initiative banning the checkbox on job applications that asks if applicants have ever been convicted of a felony. Employers will still be able to conduct

criminal background checks once a job offer has been made.

Price, a major advocate of the initiative, said, “It’s unfair for someone to do their time, pay their fine and still be penalized by not being able to work.” The councilmember added that sometimes the crimes were committed years ago, and job hunters should have a chance to explain that to hiring businesses.

“Then decide if they are the right person or not,” Price said. “It’s all about working, it’s all about supporting our families and we get to provide examples for our younger citizens about having a good record, a clean record, but also never giving up.”

Garcetti said parolees getting a job helps to reduce recidivism and keep crime rates lower.

"If we don't give people jobs who have served time, guess what?" he said. "They recommit crimes."

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