

VISIT
BVN ONLINE
www.
Blackvoicenews.com

The Black Voice News

PRE-SORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
RIVERSIDE, CA PERMIT
NO. 1942

Volume 37 Number 31

Serving the Inland Empire Riverside/San Bernardino Counties

Thursday, February 25, 2010

New Credit Card Rules Take Effect

Some locals remain skeptical, others celebrate going plastic free

The Black Voice News

RIVERSIDE

By Chris Levister

"I don't trust them. They lie." "We only have ourselves to blame." "Never trust a zebra to change his stripes." "I cut mine up." "I never heard of anyone imposing fees on cash!" "It's just another government band-aid." "Putting the brakes on credit card companies is definitely a step in the right direction - I guess."

From the couple settling their \$896 hotel bill with a Platinum American Express credit card at Riverside's toney Mission Inn, to Henry Simons who used a credit card to buy a gallon of milk at the Food For Less in San Bernardino, there's not a lot of love for credit card issuers as new consumer rules take effect.

Simons got hit in January with a \$150 fee after he went \$8.25 over his credit card limit. "Add insult to injury I got a letter raising my interest rate from 17.8% to 28.9%. Those companies are the worse."

The Credit Card Accountability, Responsibility and Disclosure Act of 2009 is intended to protect con-

sumers like Simons from some of those deceptive tactics and outlaw unwarranted fees and huge interest rate hikes.

"I think it's a good thing. We've become a credit card dependent society," said Sherrie Anderson holding a Macy's shopping bag. She admits to adding another \$197.00 to her \$3,290 Visa balance. "Truth is I'll never pay the

damn thing off."

Among the changes your next credit card statement is going to contain an ugly truth: how much that card really costs to use.

Now, thanks to the long-awaited law that took effect Monday, you'll know that if you pay the minimum on a \$3,000 balance with a 14 percent interest rate, it could take you 10 years to pay it off.

"Jaws will drop," said David Robertson, publisher of The Nilson Report, a newsletter that tracks the industry. "I don't doubt for a nanosecond that it's going to give a lot of people a sinking feeling in their stomachs."

That's not all that will make them queasy.

During the past nine months, credit card companies jacked up

interest rates, created new fees and cut credit lines. They also closed down millions of accounts. So a law hailed as the most sweeping piece of consumer legislation in decades has helped make it more difficult for millions of Americans to get credit and made that credit more expensive.

Under the law signed by President Barack Obama in 2009 credit card

companies can no longer increase interest rates on existing balances unless you are 60 days overdue and they have to give you 45 days notice if they impose an annual fee or raise your interest rate.

But there was a catch. Card companies had nine months to prepare while certain rules were clarified by

See CREDIT, Page A-4

Black History Month Event honors Photogs



Fourteen photographers were honored at Assembly Member Wilmer Amina Carter's Black History Month event on Feb. 18 at the San Bernardino Government Center in San Bernardino. From left, front row, Sam James, Cheryl Brown, Assembly Member Wilmer Amina Carter, Henry Hooks, Dr. Eliz Coleman Dowdy, Chris Sanchez of A.B. Miller High School and Tonessa Mickey of Wilmer Amina Carter High School. Back row, from left, Lafonzo Rachel Carter, William Wilson Lewis, III, Walter Hawkins, John Coleman, Van Howard, Richard Gardenhire, Harry Carson Jr. and Randy Cole. About 250 guests attended.

Photo by Amber Shattler

NAACP Elects Youngest Board Chair

The Black Voice News

NEW YORK, NY

The NAACP named Roslyn M. Brock as Chair of the Board of Directors at its Annual Board Meeting on February 20 at the New York Hilton.



Roslyn M. Brock

Brock, 44, became the youngest ever and fourth woman to serve as Chair of the NAACP's Board of Directors. A highly qualified candidate, her NAACP resumé boasts more than 25 years of service to the NAACP in many capacities, including as a youth board member, Youth and College State Conference President, board member, and Vice Chair to the Board of Directors. Brock also created the annual NAACP Leadership 500 Summit, and has served as Chair of the Board Convention Planning Committee.

Obama Puts New Conditions On Gov't Aid For Poor Students

Governors told states should only get 'No Child Act' funds if they adopt academic standards

The Black Voice News

WASHINGTON

By BVN Staff

President Barack Obama wants to rewrite federal education law by sending aid for poor students only to states that adopt new standards to prepare high school graduates for college or a career.

States that fail to raise the bar could lose their share of federal funding, though it's unlikely that would happen. Administration officials say they expect states will comply to remain eligible for the federal money.

Obama's proposal, announced Monday, would require a change in the nation's main elementary and secondary education law, which became known as the No Child Left Behind Act during the Bush administration. The law is up for renewal. Congress so far hasn't been able to generate a consensus to overhaul it, though

See STUDENTS, Page A-4

Sen. Barbara Boxer Kicks Off Campaign in Riverside



Photos by Linnie Bailey



Saying "It starts here!" Senator Barbara Boxer kicked off her campaign for a fourth term in the Senate in Riverside. After placing her name on the ballot at the Registrar of Voters, Boxer attended a rally hosted by the Women's Democratic Club of Riverside at Mexicali Grill. Over 100 people attended the luncheon, and club President Corinne Parker stated, "We're all on the same team, so it only shows what we can accomplish when we work together." Members of the club pledged their support to Boxer's reelection efforts. Boxer is joined by Riverside Councilman Andy Melendrez and his wife Ann Marie.

UC Riverside, African-American Students Are Staying and Succeeding

The Black Voice News

RIVERSIDE

African-American students at the University of California, Riverside continue beyond their first year and graduate at higher rates than any other ethnic group, according to the latest retention and six-year graduation figures.

African-Americans in the fall 2002 freshman class had a 73.9 percent graduation rate by 2008, while the overall campus graduation rate was 64.3 percent. Their first-year retention rate was 92.8 percent, while the campus persistence rate was 84.9 percent.

Nationwide, about 54 percent of full-time students at four-year public universities graduate in six years, but the rate for African-Americans is 38 percent, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

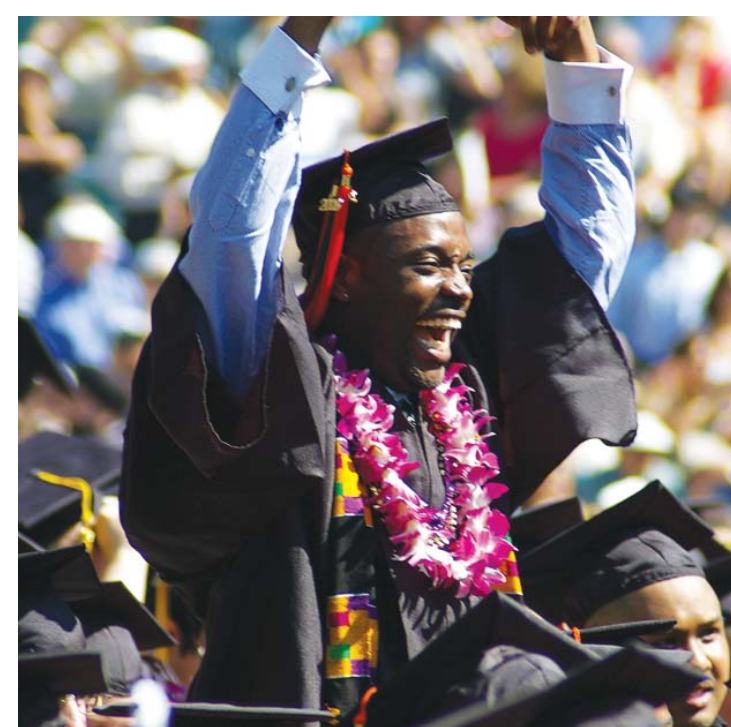
"I'm delighted to see concrete evidence of what we have known

anecdotally - that our African-American students are doing as well, or in many instances, better, than UCR students overall," said UCR Chancellor Timothy P. White. "However, our goal is to further increase both retention and graduation rates for African-American students as well as for all student groups."

Campus officials are not entirely sure why African-Americans do so well at UCR, but they believe a critical factor is that African-Americans feel comfortable on the campus, which is the most diverse in the UC system and was ranked fifth most diverse nationally by U.S. News and World Report.

"Critical mass matters," said White, "and UCR's undergraduate student body reflects the face of California." African-Americans are 7 percent of UCR's student body, not the 1 percent they are on some college campuses.

A 2008 system-wide survey of



A student celebrates success at UC Riverside's commencement

undergraduate UC students found that a higher percentage of African-Americans on the UCR campus reported that "students of my race/ethnicity are respected on this campus" than their counterparts at any other UC campus.

At UCR a total of 71 percent of African-American men responding said this was true as did 83 percent of African-American women. In the overall UC system only 58 percent of male African-Americans and 63 percent of female African-Americans agreed.

In the same survey 91 percent of all UCR undergraduates responding compared to 83 percent of UC system undergraduates agreed that "diversity is important on this campus."

"We have a campus culture committed to the success of all students, and it shows," said David Fairris, vice provost for undergrad-

See UCR, Page A-4