

# OPINION

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The Portland Observer

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BY MARC MORIAL

## Sidelines Show Hiring Injustice

### African-American coaches deserve chance to star

Now that the Thanksgiving holidays are within sight, the annual fall frenzy surrounding college football has shifted into high gear.

College football, whether played before crowds of a few thousand nestling on wooden bleachers or a hundred thousand roaring fans packed into gigantic stadiums, goes a long way toward displaying the variety of the American populace itself, and the variety of its sources of talent, too.

Unlike in the past, when black players were almost universally barred from the two leadership "thinking positions" in football—quarterback on offense, middle line-backer on defense—today, it's largely talent that wins out. The guy out there on the field calling the formation's signals is likely to be black as well as white.

Statistics help tell the story: 43 percent of all varsity players in Division IA, comprised of the largest 117 colleges, are black; and their numbers are rising.

That's on the field. But on the sidelines, where the head coaches and the assistant coaches pace up and down watching their teams' fortunes rise and

fall, it's quite a different story. On the sidelines, and in the offices of collegiate athletic departments, it's still largely a matter of the leadership positions being reserved for white males.

That's unjust, and inexcusable. Among those making that change—and wanting to change things for the better—is Myles Brand, the new president of the

Brand points out that only four of the 117 head coaches in Division IA are black and, excluding the historically black colleges and universities, just 15 out of 547 collegiate head football coaches are African-American.

The dearth of black and Latino coaches doesn't just exist in football. Of nearly 14,000 head coaching positions (excluding historically

*Excluding the historically black colleges and universities, just 15 out of 547 collegiate head football coaches are African American.*

National Collegiate Athletic Association, the giant association overseeing intercollegiate athletics.

Brand, the former president of the University of Indiana, says bluntly that too often, "qualified minority candidates who have demonstrated ... talent, determination, and effort have been figuratively stiff-armed by a process that prevents them from competing for head coaching positions or jobs in senior athletic administration."

Again, statistics help tell the story, and they are startling.

black colleges and universities) in the NCAA, fewer than 800 are African-American males and fewer than 200 are African-American females.

Furthermore, excluding the historically black colleges and universities, there are only 29 African-American male and three African-American female directors of athletics among institutions in all NCAA divisions.

Brand says that much of the problem is rooted in the hiring process for these positions, which now is

heavily dependent on a limited, old-boys network and is often done "in a week or a weekend from a short list of candidates known only to a closed circle of confidants."

College presidents, he says, are the ones to change that process. They "must not yield to the pressures of making quick decisions, even when media coverage is intense, if that haste excludes a full and fair hearing for qualified minority candidates."

His proposal is that the hiring, for example, of a head football coach should involve a search committee representing the athletics department, faculty, administrators, and perhaps alumni and others from outside the institution. Its job would be to develop a diverse pool of candidates, and recommend the three or four best qualified to the president. The president would then interview the finalists and, in consultation with the institution's athletics director, either make the final decision or recommend that candidate to the institution's trustees.

Brand's point is that something must be tried now. African Americans have long shown they can star on the playing fields. They deserve the chance to star on the sidelines, too.

As he says, "This is not a problem to be addressed next year. It is a problem for each campus to address now. We've waited far too long."

Marc Morial is President and CEO of the National Urban League.

## Issue is Jobs, not Conservative Judges

BY U.S. REP. ALBERT WYNN

On Capitol Hill much is being made of the Senate's so called "reverse filibuster" to encourage action on the Bush Administration's right-wing judicial nominations currently being blocked by Democrats.

The U.S. Senate held all night sessions to push for confirmation of ultra-conservative nominees such as Judges Janice Rogers Brown, Carolyn Kuhl, Charles Pickering, and Priscilla Owens, who are all strongly opposed by the Black Caucus and the civil rights community.

Meanwhile, the Department of Labor reported promising signs that the economy is rebounding. But what does this really mean for the African-American community?

While it is encouraging that the economy is gaining jobs rather than losing, in the grand scheme of things this Administration still has a long way to go to regain the nearly 2.4 million jobs that have been lost since the economy began to slump.

Recently, The Washington Post reported that African-American males have a 59.9 percent employment rate. To some this may seem encouraging, but compared to a 70.3 percent employment rate of white men, 75 percent for Hispanic men, and 70.1 percent for Asian-American men, it is clear that in the race for jobs, African Americans are falling behind.

Congress needs to focus on helping small businesses to create more jobs to address the disproportionate rate of unemployment in the African-American community, not on confirming right-wing judges determined to turn back the clock on civil rights, civil liberties, and Affirmative Action.

Congress can and should do better.

Congressman Albert Wynn is a member of the Congressional Black Caucus and represents Maryland's 4th Congressional District.



## DRUG TEST

Did you know...

- Alcohol is the number-one drug problem among youth?
- More youth drink alcohol than smoke cigarettes or use illegal drugs?
- Alcohol use contributes to the three leading causes of death among Oregon teens?

Alcohol use among youth is a serious health problem that can lead to addiction, poor performance in school and sports, violence, other drug use and other risky behaviors.

But help is available...

Oregon Partnership HouthLine provides free and confidential services for individual seeking assistance with alcohol or other drug problems.

Call 503-244-1312 today



www.orpartnership.org



**REACH**  
Racial & Ethnic Approaches to Community Health

A program of the African American Health Coalition, Inc.  
Sponsored by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

### Wellness Within REACH Activity Calendar

All classes are free of charge!

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<b>Matt Dishman</b> 77 NE Knott		Stretching/Body Sculpting 7-8am Lois		Stretching/Body Sculpting 7-8am Lois		African Dance 10:00-11:00am Addo
<b>Salvation Army</b> 5325 N Williams	Salsa 6:30 - 7:30pm Henry	Water Aerobics Contact AAHC 503-413-1850	Tai Chi 6:30 - 7:30pm Lyles	Water Aerobics Contact AAHC 503-413-1850		
<b>Wild Oats Market</b> 3535 NE 15th		Yoga 7:30-8:30pm O'Rourke		Yoga 7:30-8:30pm O'Rourke		Body Conditioning 9:30-10:30am Nickerson
<b>Peninsula Park</b> 700 N Portland		Walking Group+ 6:00-7:00pm Woods		Walking Group+ 6:00-7:00pm Woods		Walking Group 12:30pm Woods
<b>Mallory Avenue Christian Church (Gym)</b> 126 NE Alberta	Aerobics 5:30-6:20pm Granville		Aerobics 5:30-6:20pm Granville		Aerobics 5:30 - 6:20pm Granville	
<b>Highland United Church of Christ</b> 4635 NE 9th Ave	Aerobics 6:00-7:00am Pierce	Aerobics 6:00-7:00pm Keller	Aerobics 6:00-7:00am Pierce	Aerobics 6:00-7:00pm Keller	Aerobics 6:00-7:00am Pierce	
<b>Whitaker Track</b> 42nd & Killingsworth		Wt. Management/ Conditioning 9:00 - 10:00am Hasan Walk to Run 6:30pm Thorne	Wt. Management/ Conditioning II 6:00 - 7:00am Hasan	Wt. Management/ Conditioning 9:00 - 10:00am Hasan Walk to Run 6:30pm Thorne		
<b>Irrington Covenant Church</b> 4008 NE MLK Blvd				Aerobics 7:30 - 8:30pm Keller		Aerobics 8:00 - 9:00am Norris
<b>Daniel's Memorial Church</b> 12th & Killingsworth		Low Impact Aerobics 7:15 - 8:15pm Granville				

\*Must be 21 or older to participate. Please check with AAHC before showing up to the first class 503-413-1850. Please receive approval from your doctor before beginning exercise class.

+ Walking group meets inside Lloyd Center in front of Sears



**African American Health Coalition, Inc.**

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