

Cloves Campbell, Jr.: The ‘NNPA Chairman’ Interview

Kam Williams
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Cloves C. Campbell, Jr., is the publisher of the Arizona Informant, a family-owned and operated newspaper that provides an important voice for the African-American community in Arizona. This year it celebrates 42 years of publishing. Currently, he serves as Board Chair of the National Newspaper Publishers’ Association.

As a Phoenix native, his personal commitment and knowledge of the community in which he grew up shows throughout his work. Most recently, he served in the State House of Representatives for District 16 from 2007-2010 fulfilling duties on the Appropriations, Banking and Insurance, and House Ethics committees.

With an extensive background in marketing communications, media/public relations and advertising sales, Clothes lent his expertise as Vice-Chair of Arizona African-American Democratic Caucus. He is also a board member of the following organizations: The George Washington Carver Museum Board, Roosevelt Foundation for Our Children’s Future, The Black Theatre Troupe, Arizona African American Legislative Days Coalition, Wells Fargo Community Advisory Board, Tanner Chapel A.M.E. Church Renaissance Committee and First Tee of Arizona.

A lifetime member of the NAACP, Clothes was educated at Pitzer College in Claremont, Calif., and University of Virginia Darden School of Business Legislators Program. He and his wife of 22 years, Lanette, have three children: Daivon, Chanette, and Clothes III.

Kam Williams: Hi Clothes, thanks for the interview. Congratulations on being reelected Chairman of the NNPA!

Cloves Campbell: Thanks, Kam. It is truly an honor to be the Chairman of the premiere news organization in the world for black folks.

KW: How are things at the Informant?
CC: Things are going really well. We are celebrating 42 years of publishing.

KW: I really admired your dad and your uncle, and I think it’s great that you and Roland have not only built upon their vision, and that you run a photo of them in the paper every week. That touches me every time I see it, since they were such solid gentlemen and reminded me of my father who was from the same generation and also a WWII veteran.

CC: Thank you. I believe that it is important to remember the people that paved the way for you. They are definitely my role models. I think about them every day.

KW: How would you describe the primary mission of the Black Press?

CC: I believe that our mission is to deliver the news of and about the Black Community to our respective markets. The most important aspect our mission is that we deliver that news from the black perspective.

KW: What’s at the top of your agenda as you start your new term?

CC: My main focus will be, as it was two years ago, to continue to integrate the digital platform to our member papers’ portfolios. However, we still want to maintain our



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Portland and Seattle are the finalists to host the National Newspaper Publishers Association national convention in June of 2014

strong print presence, as well as to continue to reach out to younger readers.

KW: Do you consider mainstream papers as your competition?

CC: Not at all. Mainstream papers biggest competition is television. They are competing for the instant gratification customer. Black newspapers are a niche market and black consumers are now being targeted by major corporations for their dollars.

KW: Do you think the NNPA publications get their fair share of corporate advertising dollars?

CC: Definitely not! We have been making that argument for several decades. As a matter of fact, two years ago we partnered with the Nielsen Ratings Research Company to do a study of African-American consumers and it has been very useful in our advertising sales call and marketing efforts.

KW: What did you think of the Zimmerman verdict?
CC: Unfortunately, it was what I expected. Once we knew the makeup of the jury, the verdict was a forgone conclusion. Naturally, I am disappointed, but I honestly believe that this may be the wakeup call that this generation of black folks needs.

KW: Does Arizona have a “Stand Your Ground” law in effect right now?

CC: Yes we do. We are currently engaging with our legislature to review the law.

KW: The Ling-Ju Yen question: What is your earliest childhood memory?

CC: Well, probably really wanting a pair of cowboy boots. It is likely the reason why I wear them now so much!

KW: The bookworm Troy Johnson question: What was the last book you read?

CC: “Uneven Lies” by Pete McDaniel.

KW: The music maven Heather Covington question: What was the last song you listened to?

CC: “Jamaican Funk” by Tom Browne.

KW: What is your favorite dish to cook?
CC: Angel hair pasta with shrimp.

KW: The Mike Pittman question: What was your best career decision?

CC: Getting into the newspaper business, of course!

KW: The Anthony Anderson question: If you could have a superpower, which one would you choose?

CC: I would be able to fly. You saw Big Willy in the film Hancock!

KW: The Judyth Piazza question: What key quality do you believe all successful people share?

CC: The ability to listen.

KW: The Michael Ealy question: If you could meet any historical figure, who would it be?

CC: Frederick Douglass.

KW: What advice do you have for anyone who wants to follow in your footsteps?

CC: Treat everyone the same way you would want to be treated.

KW: Attorney Bernadette Beekman asks: What is your favorite charity?

CC: The Arizona Informant Foundation. [Chuckles] I’m a little biased.

KW: The Tavis Smiley question: How do you want to be remembered?

CC: As a person who was always willing to help others.

An advertisement for New Seasons Market. On the left, a vibrant red apple with a green leaf sits next to a clear glass bottle of orange juice. The background is a solid light green. To the right of the apple and bottle, the word "to" is written in a large, white, lowercase font. Further right, the phrase "And everything in between." is written in a smaller, white, lowercase font. On the far right, there is a dark brown rectangular box containing the "NEW SEASONS MARKET" logo in yellow and white. Below the logo, the text "Our Williams location is now open." is written in white. Underneath that, "N Williams & Fremont" and "Open 7-11 every day" are listed. At the bottom of the box, the hashtag "#newseasonsnewstore" and the website "newseasonsmarket.com" are displayed, followed by icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.