

The Tobacco Epidemic and the African American Community

How can we break the stranglehold the tobacco industry has had on the African American community for centuries? This was one provocative question of many that was addressed during a live online chat held Thursday, February 27.

The Adrienne Jules Foundation, a Los Angeles-based non-profit focused on eliminating health disparities through public education, hosted an online forum featuring leading African American health and advocacy professionals who dialogued—and debated—about tobacco use. Additional topics that were covered included the aggressive marketing of tobacco products towards African Americans; the increased use of mentholated cigarettes among the population and the corresponding health disparities that drastically affect these communities. The forum prompted engaging questions from viewers, both domestically and internationally, and proved to be a topic of importance among the public.

The conversation was lead by Gwendolyn W. Young, executive director of the Adrienne Jules Foundation and president of



Gwendolyn W. Young

Young Communications Group, Inc., which is currently concentrating on expanding awareness and action among communities of color of the inherent dangers of tobacco use. Panelists were Brenda Bell Caffee, Chair of the Board for the National African American Tobacco Prevention Network (NAATPN), and Dr. Jessie Lee, former Executive Director of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE). Each year approximately 45,000 African Americans die from smoking-related diseases. This represents the number one cause

of death among the population. Participants concluded that ending this epidemic requires that three steps be taken: educate our youth of the inherent dangers of tobacco products, support companies that take a stance against tobacco-use and identify areas of collaboration between entities supporting this cause. To view the recorded version of this forum, visit Facebook.com/AddictionIncorporated Follow the Adrienne Jules Foundation's tobacco education campaign at @AddictionIncorp to learn about future tobacco-focused online forums.

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Tyler Perry's 'The Single Moms Club'



Actors Terry Crews (L) and Imani Hakim arrive at the premiere of Tyler Perry's 'The Single Moms Club' at the Cinerama Dome on March 10, 2014 in Los Angeles, California. (Photo by Kevin Winter/Getty Images)

El Camino College to Break Ground on New Multi-Purpose Stadium Complex



El Camino College will celebrate the groundbreaking of a new multi-purpose stadium complex with a ceremony scheduled for 3:30 p.m. March 17 at the south entrance to the construction site.

This \$37.2 million project includes the construction of a brand new, modern stadium to support the college's outstanding athletic programs and kinesiology classes. This state-of-the-art complex will also include an athletic training and sports medicine facility. The new stadium replaces the original structure, which was built in 1949.

Design features include a modern locker facility and a press

box for both teams, as well as football and soccer fields, and a 10-lane running track and field facility for college competitions and instruction. Also included in the plans are elevated viewing areas and a roof-top filming deck. The two sides of the stadium will connect along an elevated walkway around the north side that culminates into a small plaza.

Various support facilities such as a new equipment room and storage areas are also part of the construction. Landscaping designs will feature drought-tolerant plants and the use of reclaimed water wherever possible.

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General's Defense To Try For Plea Deal In Sex Case

Attorneys for an Army general charged with sexual assault said Tuesday that they have decided to try to renegotiate a plea bargain with a new set of military officials after the judge determined that the case may have been improperly influenced by political concerns.

Judge Col. James Pohl sent the jury of generals back to their duty stations around the world after the defense's decision.

Pohl had declined to dismiss the charges outright on Monday. But he reviewed newly disclosed emails in Sinclair's case and said he found the appearance of "unlawful command influence" in Fort Bragg officials' decision to reject a plea bargain with the general in January.

The twist came with the Pentagon under heavy pressure from Congress and beyond to combat rape and other sex crimes in the military. On Monday, the Senate approved legislation cracking down on misconduct.

Under the military code of justice, the decision was supposed to be decided solely on the evidence, not its broader political implications.

But Pohl said the emails showed



that the military officials who rejected the plea bargain had discussed a letter from the accuser's lawyer. The letter warned that allowing the general to avoid trial would "send the wrong signal."

Sinclair, the 51-year-old former deputy commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, is accused of twice forcing a female captain to perform oral sex on him in Afghanistan in 2011 during a three-year extramarital affair. He has admitted to the affair but denied assaulting the woman.

He is believed to be the highest-ranking U.S. military officer ever court-martialed on sexual assault charges. He could get life in prison if convicted.

The defense has portrayed the woman as a liar who concocted the allegations after she saw emails between Sinclair and another woman.

Scheff said the new developments vindicated what the defense has been claiming for months — that the Army pressed ahead with a weak case for fear of the political blowback that would result from dropping charges against such a high-profile defendant.

peared to be contradicted by a Dec. 20 email he sent to a military lawyer. Fowler said Monday that the courtroom maneuvering over her letter was "nothing more than an attempt to take the focus off the general's gross misconduct."

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