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Black vote key & Hillary may let it slip away

Behind the brawl between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama is a fight over the black vote, a valuable piece of political turf both are counting on to carry them to the White House.

The competition has been brewing for months. You could hear it in the coded observation from black polls around the country that Obama might not be "black enough."

In translation, that means the young Harvard-trained lawyer has failed to conduct a cross-country humility tour to kiss the rings of a patchwork of black ministers, lawmakers, college presidents, business titans, county commissioners and mayors that most of us have never heard of.

Obama did secure the endorsement of fellow Chicagoan Jesse Jackson, but he has ignored many of the lesser-known local headmen around the country who register, rise up and turn out black voters every election season.

Obama stopped in Hollywood, not Harlem, this week.

Hillary, meanwhile, made a splash in South Carolina, an early-primary state where blacks could comprise up to half the vote, deploying the Clinton knack for wooing black leaders that's been honed to perfection by hubby Bill.

She's landed the support of black billionaire Bob Johnson, a former Obama supporter who founded Black Entertainment Television - and, more importantly, nailed the lower-profile endorsement of a state senator named

Darrell Jackson, who doubles as pastor of a 7,000-member megachurch in Columbia, S.C. And to seal the deal, the Clinton camp began negotiating a campaign contract with a publicity firm called Sunrise Enterprises whose principal owner is - you guessed it - that same Rev. Sen. Darrell Jackson, the same headman in charge.

Earlier this week, Bill Clinton was dispatched to Albany, where he gave the keynote address at the annual conference of the Black and Puerto Rican Legislative Caucus. The ex-President walked out with the star-struck lawmakers and party bosses - basically, New York's black vote - snugly in his pocket, safely out of Obama's reach.

Obama has nowhere near the depth, reach and ruthlessness of Clinton's team, which was aptly described by New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd as "a do-whatever-it-takes family firm with contract killers and debt collectors."

But the kid from Illinois has a secret weapon of his own: a rising public disgust with roughhouse politics. David Geffen, an ex-Clinton baker who helped raise more than \$1 million for Obama in a single night, put his finger on it when he predicted the Clinton crew "is going to be very unimpressed and unattractive and effective."

Coming from Geffen, a Hollywood mogul who grew rich from an exquisite talent for sensing the public mood, that prediction should give pause to Clinton's political leg-breakers. Obama may be stumbling in his efforts to build a bridge to black voters, but nothing will win sympathy for him faster than a mugging by Team Clinton.

And so, with nearly a year to go before the first primaries, the two leading Democrats are at each other's throats, in a farcical battle sure to bring a smile to the lips of Republican strategists everywhere.

EYE ON BIZ

Harlem Institute of Technology and Pathways to Learning™

Staff
Everyone knows that human knowledge is increasing exponentially. By 2020 human knowledge will double every 72 days, and people will live longer and change frequently their jobs and careers. Today our society is driven by science and technology, but a large segment of our nation is left outside this process, and cannot benefit from it. African Americans and Latinos live on one side of the 'digital divide'. The time has come for a new approach to bridge the gap. Today we have a unique opportunity for

people to acquire skills for life, reach out to the best jobs available in our economy and take advantage of the most profitable opportunities that Communication and Information Technology can offer to the Latino and African American communities. The future is here today.



The Harlem Institute of Technology' vision can be implemented with the support of the new citizens and in their personal lives. Learning in the 21st century does not take place exclusively in physical locations, such as classrooms, science centers, museums and libraries, or on the Internet.

There is nothing better than community churches and music icons to bring back this message to the young and the old alike. With this vision in mind, the Harlem Institute of Technology' was recently created by Professor Graciela Chichinsky of Columbia University and Paul Jackson, producer of Harlem Today, to take advantage of this historical opportunity and bring powerful and profitable community services to Harlem in the Technology' area with the cooperation of leading Columbia's faculty. Reverend William James is the Chair of our Advisory Committee, together with rapper Chuck D, founder of the enormously-popular hip hop group Public Enemy. Reverend James founded the Ministerial Interfaith Association (MIA) encompassing catholic and protestant churches, and the HCCI (Harlem Community CD). Our goal and strategy is to provide a free broadband access infrastructure on which profitable opportunities can be deployed by Latinos and African American entrepreneurs alike. The content will include advertising, entertainment

events as well as educational on-line services that can help improve the job opportunities available to the community.

This new approach, and the entire vision of the Harlem Institute of Technology, must take into account that Free-Choice Self Directed-Learning, learning outside the formal education system, will assume a critical and increasing role for meeting the challenges we face in the 21st century. Successful self-directed lifelong learners will be able to participate and benefit from the knowledge economy and make informed choices both as

citizens and in their personal lives. Learning in the 21st century does not take place exclusively in physical locations, such as classrooms, science centers, museums and libraries, or on the Internet.

Based on a service-oriented web technology, "Pathways to Learning" (or simply "Pathways") is a Self-directed Learning Management System (SLMS) that supports citizens of the 21st Century as they pursue their learning objectives and improve their learning skills. Pathways is leveraging current cutting-edge technology and is being designed in collaboration with the University of Arizona's College of Education, the MIS Department at the Eller School of Management, the Tucson Pima Public Library and with faculty from Columbia University.

Co-directed by Professor Chichinsky and P. Jackson, and in addition to educational on-line tools, the Harlem Institute of Technology will help "incubate" a number of technology opportunities for African American and Latino Entrepreneurs.