

# Farmington Observer

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## Discrimination case goes against Mercy

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

A federal jury has found in favor of a former Mercy High School black employee who brought suit against his supervisor and the Sisters of Mercy for racial discrimination.

Irvin Beauford, 44, a former boiler room operator at the high school, is expected to receive a total \$300,000 in damages, said Frances McIntyre, Beauford's attorney.

The six-member jury found the Sisters of Mercy Province of Detroit and Clark Bowman Sr., director of the high

school's physical plant, guilty of discriminating against Beauford "on the basis of race."

The Sisters of Mercy are expected to pay \$150,000 in damages and Bowman the remaining half.

"We will be asking the judge to throw out the verdict on the grounds that it was not based on the facts," said David Chardavoyne, attorney for Bowman and the Sisters of Mercy.

"If the judge won't, we'll appeal the decision," Chardavoyne said, refusing further comment.

THE SUIT, filed in October 1983 in U.S. District Court, charged Bowman

and the Sisters of Mercy with three counts of racial discrimination. Judge Ralph Freeman presided.

The first count charged the defendants with spying on and harassing Beauford. The suit claims that Bowman's son spied on Beauford one night, scaring him and causing him to fall and hurt his back.

Because Beauford had been awarded benefits through the Bureau of Workers Disability for his back injury and medical leave, he was barred from seeking damages for physical or mental injuries in this case, according to McIntyre.

The second count of discrimination

charged that a white employee, Marvin Horton, was promoted to supervisor over Beauford when Beauford was the more qualified.

"Beauford had a boiler operator's license. Horton didn't. But Horton was promoted to supervise the boiler operators," McIntyre said, adding that Beauford had more experience and seniority than Horton.

The suit's third count charged that the Sisters of Mercy retaliated against Beauford for filing a claim of discrimination in promotion with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights.

IN THE suit, Beauford claimed the

Sisters of Mercy and Bowman retaliated by changing his work shift when he returned from medical leave for his back injury. The shift change caused a time conflict with a second job Beauford had with the City of Detroit.

"They were trying to squeeze him out of one job or another," McIntyre added.

According to McIntyre's arguments, "the racial atmosphere was tense after Mr. Bowman was hired, and although Plaintiff (Beauford) and others complained to Defendant Sisters of Mercy, they seemed to condone it as they took no remedial action against Clark Bowman."

But according to Chardavoyne's claims, "Defendants deny that they caused plaintiff's injuries, physical or mental, and they deny that plaintiff's shift transfer was retaliatory or was racially motivated."

In his response to McIntyre's claims, Chardavoyne denied Bowman or his children harassed the school's black employees.

Beauford was replaced in May 1983 when he complained his back hurt, left work and did not return.

The Sisters of Mercy replaced Beauford with another black man.

## Ellis tapped as top citizen by Chamber

A civic and political activist, whose roots go back to township days, was honored by the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce Thursday at the Boltsford Inn.

Jim Ellis, who has served on the Farmington Zoning Board of Appeals since 1975, was named as the Chamber's Citizen of the Year.

Surrounded by family and friends, the usually gregarious Ellis modestly accepted his award from chamber president Russ Tuttle.

Besides his ZBA activities, Ellis also is well-known for his efforts in aiding youth. From 1971 through 1974, he was the treasurer of the Farmington Chapter of Youth for Understanding — a student exchange program. He currently serves as president of the Boys' Republic of Farmington Hills.

In 1981, he served as district chairman of the Youth Exchange Program for Rotary International, covering Oakland, Macomb, Livingston and Washtenaw counties.

*'Jim embodies all that is right in our society and truly is dedicated to the theory of service above self.'*  
— Harold Wolkind

AN ACTIVE ROTARIAN, Ellis was nominated by his club colleague and friend, Harold Wolkind.

"Jim embodies all that is right in our society and truly is dedicated to the theory of service above self," said Wolkind in his letter of nomination.

Calling Ellis "an exemplary citizen of our community," Wolkind noted that besides handling the vocational scholarship program for the Rotary, he is one of only three persons to receive

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

## New partnership hailed as cure for economy

By Steve Barney  
editor

Business and education must form an alliance if the American economy is to remain competitive in the next century.

That's the message from Phillip Runkel, Michigan's superintendent of public instruction, in the Farmington and Farmington Hills business community. The veteran educator was guest speaker at the chamber of commerce annual dinner Thursday evening at the Boltsford Inn.

"The will and legacy we leave our young people is in how much we view the future," he told the business group

gathered in the Inn's carriage house. "We've got to be concerned and committed, and I'm not sure we have the will to deal with the future. But I hope we do."

RUNKEL POINTED to the influx of foreign competition into the United States since the end of World War II and to the number of technological changes that have put American education under pressure.

"We need to prepare people to live in a world that has changed dramatically, and we haven't kept up."

The economic challenge from Japan has met little response from either the business or educational communities,

he said. The most effective way to do business is by speaking the other person's language — literally, Runkel told the business group.

"How many schools in America are teaching Japanese?" he asked, noting that only 11 percent of students in Michigan take a foreign language.

BUT THE business and educational communities have yet to cement a bond to deal with the economic changes.

"You (business) and local education have a common bond. Our futures are so closely intertwined we ought to do something about it."

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## All smiles

Jim and Bev Ellis (above) enjoy the festivities on Thursday evening, which saw Jim honored as the Citizen of the Year by the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce. The chamber's annual meeting at the Boltsford Inn featured as its guest speaker for the evening, Phillip Runkel (left), superintendent of public instruction. He urged a closer tie between business and education to aid the future of the American economy.

## Changing grade concept contemplated

Secondary administrators last week asked the Walled Lake Board of Education to consider implementing a middle school program in the 1987-88 school year.

The board took no action on the proposal, but requested additional information, including a more detailed explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of the middle school concept.

Superintendent Don Sheldon described the study completed by the secondary administrators as a "very small first step" toward instituting middle schools in Walled Lake.

graders by 1987.

The maximum enrollment at Walled Lake and Clifford Smart Junior highs is 930 students each, Pacacha said. "However, we do not recommend this number," he added. The secondary administrators suggested enrollment not exceed 850 at each school. Currently, both schools enroll under 750 students.

DR. SAMI ALAM, director of program, planning and evaluation, provided enrollment projections for the middle school study. According to his statistics, enrollment in grades 6-8 is expected to steadily decline over a five-year period from a high of 2,091 in 1984 to 1,599 in 1988.

"Based upon these projections, it is anticipated that each proposed middle

school (grades six, seven and eight) would contain approximately 837 students for the 1987-88 school year," Pacacha said. "Therefore, it is recommended by the committee that 1987-88 be the year (considered for) implementation of the middle school concept."

The junior high schools contain students, grades 7-9.

"BEYOND the instructional need for information (centers in each building, the elementary principals are interest-

ed in converting selected areas of the elementary schools into classrooms and multi-purpose rooms," the committee report explained. The committee proposed converting two or three classrooms into a cafeteria in buildings that presently do not have a separate cafeteria.

In addition, it was suggested one available classroom per building be used as a community room and one as a "special projects room," for programs such as latchkey, preschool story hour, science projects or other special uses.

"The bulk of space is being accumulated at the elementary levels (according to this plan)," said Trustee Patricia

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