

San Antonio Branch NAACP

Prepared by Oliver W. Hill, President

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In response to a letter from the Branch to KABB-TV dated January 16, 2014, meetings were held January 19th and 20th with members of the Sinclair Broadcast Group regarding the egregious remark made by Meteorologist Mike Hernandez on-air, referring to the MLK March as Martin Luther Coon Day. Several members of the Executive Committee met today with the General Manager of Sinclair and staff, to discuss disciplinary action taken against Mr. Hernandez as well as other issues of concern. Company policy would not allow the divulgence of the action taken against Mr. Hernandez; however, we were assured that our concerns during the original meetings led to changes in the original date of his visible return to on-air broadcasting.

Sinclair Broadcast Group is comprised of three San Antonio stations--WOAI-TV4, KABB-TV29 and KMYS-TV35. Although an apology had been made to the community for the incident, the NAACP was concerned that a culture could be developing in the broadcast community of the station(s) that would require immediate addressing of issues to prevent these occurrences.

Members of the NAACP were briefed on the sensitivity training the company requires of all new employees during their probationary period and all employees must complete on an annual basis, regardless of position in the company. The briefing further divulged that appropriate actions are taken immediately when acts of hostility, harassments or other infractions occur in the workplace.

The NAACP encouraged the Sinclair Group to have a more visible presence in the African American community to show they are truly an Equal Opportunity Employer. Additionally, publication of job announcements in all categories of open positions and internships that will enlist African American students for increased opportunities of employment.

During the closing moments of the meeting, Sinclair Broadcasting Company offered the members of the NAACP an opportunity to meet with the Editorial Board to evaluate the process by which news and other programs are determined for airing through all the stations.

After the meeting with the NAACP, the General Manager of the Sinclair Broadcast Group offered an open door policy for continued dialogue that will benefit the community and the company.