

BLACK ENTERPRISE

FEBRUARY 1983 \$1.75

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CAREERS AND
OPPORTUNITIES

**AMERICA'S BLACK
ASTRONAUTS**

**KEEPING PACE IN
THE COMPUTER AGE**

**MONEYMAKING
CAREER OPTIONS**



LT. COL. GUION S. BLUFORD JR.
First Black American In Space

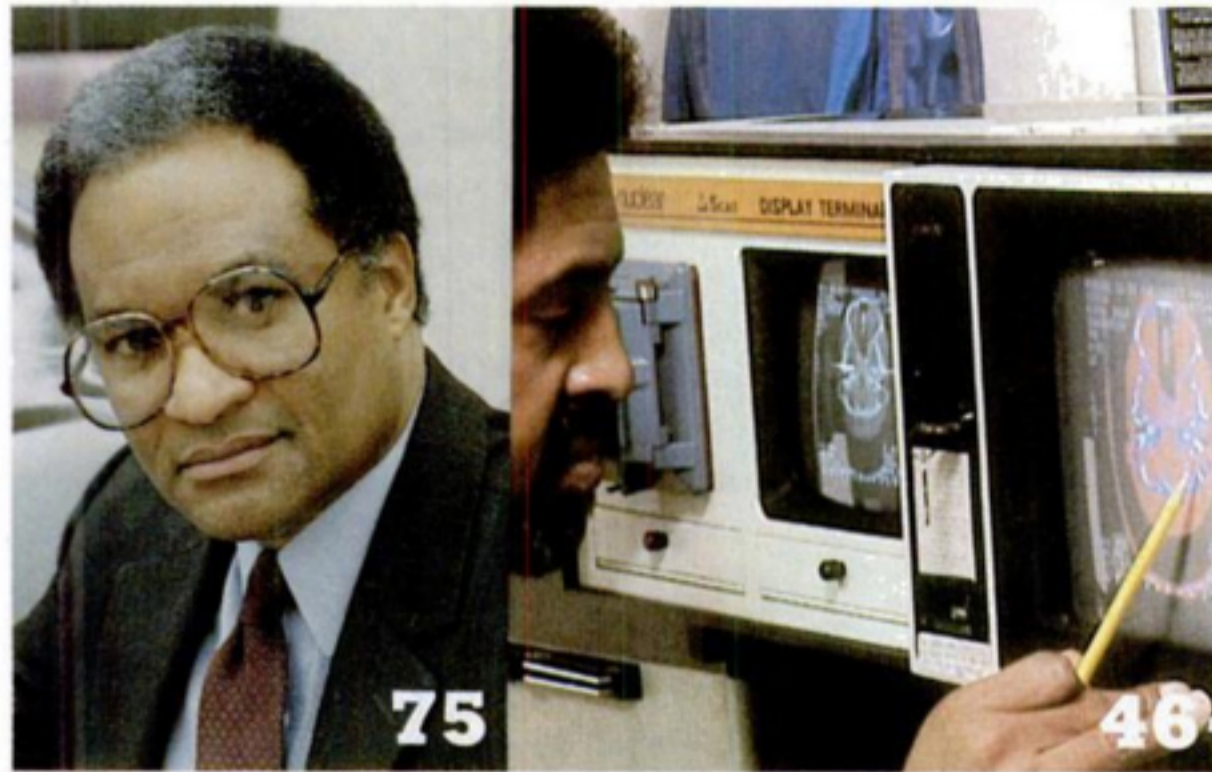


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BLACK ENTERPRISE

FOR BLACK MEN AND WOMEN WHO WANT TO GET AHEAD

FEBRUARY 1983 VOL. 13, NO. 7



FEATURES

Employment Outlook 1983
Technical skills are the key
to employment prospects **43**

Keeping Pace In The Computer Age
Retraining to use computers can
enhance career development **46**

Careers Behind The Launch Pad
A profile of black astronauts and
aerospace professionals **59**

Careers Without A Sheepskin
Special training can provide lucrative
careers without a college degree **66**

Tracking Down A Technical School
Tips on how to choose the right
business/vocational institution **71**

Back To The Drawing Board
Designing cars for Detroit is another
avenue of job opportunity **75**

Going To College On Uncle Sam
Navy ROTC lures college students
with tuition and officer status **79**

Ebony In The Ivory Tower
Non-teaching positions abound
on college campuses **84**

The Disappearing Civil Servant
The black middle class can no longer
depend on the safety of civil service **91**

Weeding Out Black Scholars
A look at why there has been a sharp
drop in black graduate student ranks **97**

DEPARTMENTS

Publisher's Page **11** **Personal Finance** **35**
Clout At The Ballot Box Mutual Funds

Letters **15** **Economic Perspectives** **37**
Readers' Forum 1983 Black Economic Prospects

Book Review **23** **Facts & Figures** **38**
Student's Guide To Colleges Unemployment Watch

In The News **25** **Career Marketplace** **115**
American-Nigerian trade venture Job Recruitment

Washington Page **31** **Classified** **123**
Affirmative Action Professional/Business Services

Making It **32** **On The Move** **124**
Hi-Tech & Creole Cooking New Jobs & Promotions

VERVE **105**

Disney's Epcot Center; Your Chair, My Couch; Collecting Pre-Columbian Art; Taping Music For A Party; Bordeaux; Hypertension

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COMING NEXT MONTH
Our Annual Washington Review issue examines what is going on in Washington and what that may mean for 1984. Also, a look at the new immigrants in black communities.

Medical Aid In Haiti

For the tourists in Cap Haitian and Petionville, Haiti is a sunsplashed Caribbean paradise where you can plunge into a warm sea, shop for colorful folk paintings and dance in the moonlight.

But beneath that exotic exterior and not far from sight, a population exists that is so poor that the infant mortality rate is higher than 33 percent, and many people live out their lives without ever seeing a doctor.

A handful of black American doctors are trying to make things a little better for the majority black population against great odds. With no government funding and little encouragement from anyone but friends, these doctors have been making annual forays into the Haitian hinterlands to provide some basic medical services.

For example, Dr. John Mitchell, a New York ophthalmologist, is getting ready to make his sixth annual visit to Lascahobas, a small farming



Haiti's infant mortality rate is above 33 percent

community near the border of the Dominican Republic, 45 miles east of Port-au-Prince.

"It was our intention to get away from the capital," says Mitchell. He explains that there are less than a dozen ophthalmologists in Haiti to attend to the eye problems of its six million citizens, and most of the doctors are in Port-au-Prince.

Last year, Mitchell and a team of fellow medical personnel established a temporary eye clinic in a cinderblock building in Lascahobas, a bumpy three-hour jeep ride from Port-au-Prince.

In a week, the team—two surgeons, an optometrist and a nurse—treated 451 patients, dispensed 350 pairs of eye glasses and performed 13 operations in a makeshift operating room.

For the most part, the American medical people pay their own way and bring their own medical equipment (though the Friends of the Children of Lascahobas, 969 E. 105th St., Brooklyn, NY 11236 accepts donations).

"I have found that when people use their own funds, they're often more motivated," says Dr. Algernon A. Phillips Jr., the

New Jersey Veterans Administration ophthalmologist who founded the whole volunteer effort 13 years ago.

Still the group needs additional funding from American charities and corporations. "Over the past five years, getting medication, sutures and other supplies donated by companies has become increasingly difficult," says Phillips. "What you used to be able to get with a phone call now requires a letter and a tax number. And much less is donated."

With the help of a few others—like Howard University's Dr. Claude Cowan who has encouraged the participation of university medical residents—the project will carry on.

The Haitian government under Francois Duvalier, known for its suppression of human rights, has offered little assistance. Yet, there are indications that the government may see volunteerism as an answer to some of the nation's problems. The Peace Corps announced recently that, for the first time in its 21 years, volunteers will soon begin projects in Haiti.

—N. Alexander

X-Rated Games Draw Fire

As sales of home videogame consoles skyrocket, manufacturers' imaginations seem to be going beyond reasonable boundaries in their efforts to increase their share in the six billion dollar market.

Recently, two new video consoles designed for home computers have sparked cries of protest—"Firebugs," by Muse Mfg. of Baltimore, Md. and "Custer's Revenge," by American Multiple Industries (AMI) of Los Angeles. They are among the growing number of videogames that promote X-rated sex and violence as home entertainment.

"Firebugs" is a maze game where the player's goal is ar-

son—get the video character to set fire to a five-story building.

Starting on the fifth floor, the "firebug" leaves a burning gas can on each floor. The object is to escape from the fiery maze before the building burns to the ground.

With arson being a major cause of death in many urban areas nationwide, residents of at least one community have not found the game amusing. In Erie County, N.Y., a local town council voted to ban the game. Says one local official, "Just what we need, a game to teach our young people how to become arsonists."

"Custer's Revenge," an X-rated military action game, has drawn even more criticism. Civil rights and women's rights organizations call the game an attack on Native American women and women in general.

"'Custer's Revenge' promotes the idea of violence and rape as an amusing game," says Denise Fuge, President of the New York Chapter of the National Organization for Women

(NOW). "It masks and trivializes racial genocide." NOW has initiated a national petition drive to force the game out of the market.

—Frank Dexter Brown

