

O'Brien's failures highlight need for more Black GMs



By **John Harris Jr.**
VILLAGER Sports
Columnist

(VILLAGER) - Houston Texas coach/general manager Bill O'Brien just made the case for more black executives in the NFL that much stronger.

O'Brien, who has been given unchecked power by ownership to coach the Texans as well as making all the trades and free agent signings, finally went too far on Monday when he traded superstar receiver DeAndre Hopkins to the Arizona Cardinals for injury-prone running back David Johnson and the equivalent of a handful of beads, trinkets, and some belly-button lint.

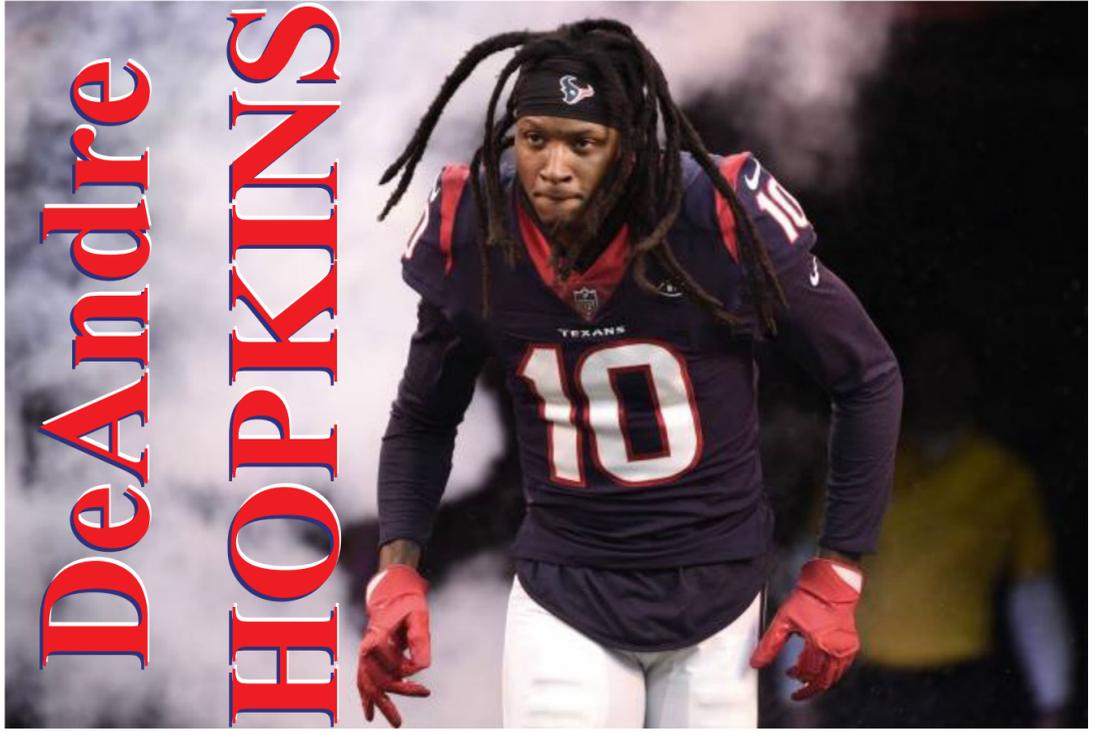
Maybe O'Brien has some secret information about Hopkins, who has 315 receptions and 31 touchdowns over the past three seasons, that led to him making the one-sided trade. To hear some tell it, Hopkins is

the best receiver in the NFL. Other believe Hopkins and O'Brien butted heads over Hopkins' desire for a contract extension with three years remaining on his current deal.

So what? Players always want more money. Besides, Hopkins wasn't holding out. Superstar receiver Julio Jones of the Atlanta Falcons has held out plenty of times while under contract, and the Falcons relented and gave him a new deal every time. They certainly didn't get lost in their feelings like O'Brien did, hold a grudge, and trade one of the team's most valuable assets.

That's precisely why you don't promote a coach, especially one like O'Brien who has no front-office experience, to general manager. You need a business person running the front office, not some coach who obviously can't control his emotions when it comes to business matters and is likely to fly off the handle at any time.

Coaches don't see the big picture. They only see what's directly in front of them. O'Brien considered Hopkins to be a



Eric Christian Smith/Associated Press

problem, so he traded him. A real general manager, not a play one like O'Brien, if he indeed decided it was in the Texans best interests to trade one of the best receivers in the NFL, would hold out until he received a first-round draft pick in return (Hopkins netted the Texans a second-round pick and Johnson).

Going back to my column lead. What has O'Brien ever done to justify adding the general manager title to his resume when he has absolutely no prior front-of-

fice experience? And for that matter, why can't more black coaches get general manager jobs? There are currently two black general managers in a league in which more than half of its players are black.

During the recent NFL combine in Indianapolis, high-ranking league officials and members of the Fritz Pollard Alliance (named after the first black coach in the NFL) discussed the need for more inclusive hiring with nothing being de-

termined other than acknowledging there's a problem.

More meetings, more rhetoric.

I say point to Bill O'Brien as Exhibit A as to why there should be more black general managers in the NFL and leave it at that.

O'Brien has been a colossal failure as a general manager.

It would be one thing if O'Brien proved he knew what he was doing as general manager. Remember, O'Brien has now traded Hopkins and de-

fensive end Jadeveon Clowney (who also wanted more money) without receiving a first-round pick in return. That's blasphemous.

As a coach, O'Brien is 52-44 with four play-off appearances in six seasons competing in the mediocre AFC South. In this year's divisional playoff round, O'Brien's Texans led the Kansas City Chiefs 24-0 but somehow lost 51-31.

Certainly, a black general manager could do better. He definitely couldn't do any worse.

The White House wants to give you \$1,000. Here's how it could work

by **Andy Sullivan** | REUTERS



(REUTERS) - As the coronavirus threatens to push the global economy into recession, the Trump administration is rolling out an unusual idea: handing out free money.

President Donald Trump and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin on Tuesday proposed mailing out checks of up to \$1,000 to American adults to quickly pump hundreds of billions of dollars into the U.S. economy at a time when airlines are slashing flights and officials are shuttering restaurants, sports arenas and other public venues.

Though details remained unclear, Washington could turn to the playbook it deployed in February 2008, when the Great Recession was just taking hold. The Economic Stimulus Act of 2008 provided payments averaging \$600 per person, injecting more than \$100 billion into the economy within a matter of months.

The payments were directly deposited into bank accounts by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to taxpayers who filed their taxes electronically or came as paper checks to other taxpayers. Individuals who didn't make enough to pay federal taxes still had to file an IRS statement that year to get a payment.

Economists concluded that it was one of the most effective measures deployed to blunt the impact of the worst downturn since the 1930s.

Any such program would need Congressional approval. Support in both the Republican and Democratic parties has been building.

Advocates say it would have a more immediate effect than other proposals, such as a payroll tax cut, because the government could get money into peoples' hands within a matter of months and those dollars would quickly circulate back into the economy.

Republican Senator Mitt Romney and Democratic Senator Sherrod Brown advocated for \$1,000

payouts on Monday, while Democratic Senator Kamala Harris called for "emergency cash" for families.

Some economists say most U.S. households have little, if any savings, and the money could be used to cover rent or other bills if they lose work, or go toward necessities such as groceries, circulating back into the economy.

It might be too soon to consider direct payments, as it is not yet clear how the coronavirus will affect the economy, some economists say. While airlines and restaurants are likely to be hard hit, Amazon.com Inc (AMZN.O) announced on Monday that it plans to hire 100,000 workers to deal with a surge of home delivery orders, and it could take months for the Federal Reserve's aggressive monetary response to have an impact.

Like other stimulus efforts, free money would not come cheap.

In 2008, the IRS mailed out more than 132 million payments between May and July to households that had filed tax returns for the previous year.

That cost the U.S. government \$106 billion in lost tax revenue and increased payments, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

But economists also found the tax refunds were among the most effective measures that Washington deployed to blunt the recession. Moody's Analytics estimated that each dollar spent resulted in \$1.55 to \$1.71 in economic activity.

If Congress approves the \$1,000 checks that Trump suggested, that would lead to a much bigger price tag at a time when Washington is already running up near-record budget deficits.

But even that may not be enough. Jay Shambaugh, an economist with the Brookings Institution's Hamilton Project, said lawmakers should also quickly increase food-stamp payments to low income recipients and enact a payroll tax cut for businesses to minimize layoffs.

2020 PROFILES OF PROMINENCE POSTPONED

By **Arlene L. Youngblood**

The Austin Metroplex Chapter of National Women of Achievement, Inc. will induct 11 honorees for the Sixteenth Biennial African-American Women's Profiles of Prominence 2020 ceremony. *This year's program will now be held on Saturday, May 9, 2020 at St. James Missionary Baptist Church, 3417 East Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Austin, Texas at 6 p.m.*

The 11 new members of the 2020 African-American Women's Profiles of Prominence are:

Arts: Thais Bass-Moore – published author and director of the Fearless Leader Institute at The University of Texas at Austin.

Business: Christie Hall – a top producing real estate agent for Keller Williams Realty and lead agent for the Holmes with Hall Team.

Foreman-Jones Caregiver Award: Lydia A. West-Moore – community home health care provider volunteer and companion for the elderly and retired educator.

Civic Leadership: Brigid Roberson – a girl power advocate, supporter, and volunteer with civic and community-related organizations and the Founder/Chief Executive Officer of the Bridge2Greatness Foundation, Inc., which provides leadership skills and empowerment for underserved girls.

Communications: Naomi Richard – entertainment journalist and photographer and the owner of White Glove Photos® and Red-Carpet View (Blog).

Education: Dr. Norma J. Baker- retired education administrator, educational consultant, and member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.

Health Professionals: Dr. Aisha White- plastic surgeon and owner of Quintessence Plastic Surgery.

Law: Amanda Moore – staff attorney for the Texas State Teachers Association and board member with the Writers' League of Texas.

Professional Leadership: Cierra King – ISV Partner and Account Manager for Oracle Corporation

Youth Achievement: Sarah R. Robertson - a junior at John B. Connally High School who serves as a veteran reporter and chair for the Youth Brigade with The Villager Newspaper.

Lifetime Achievement: Eleanor Davis Thompson, long time political strategist and senior planner for Travis County – Precinct One for The Justice of the Peace Office.

The revised date of May 9 is in compliance with the City of Austin's COVID-19 Regulations on Small Gatherings.