



Obama pushes to close pay gap

▪ The president says there's more to be done for working women.

BY JOSH LEDERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama sought to showcase progress on his watch on closing the pay gap for women while keeping up the pressure on business, Congress and individuals to tackle an issue he said was still far from being solved.

Marking the seventh anniversary of signing the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, Obama said more must be done to get women into high-paying jobs, including those in science, technology, math and engineering. In recent years, the pay disparity has narrowed slightly, but a woman in the U.S. still makes 79 cents to a man's dollar, the White House said.

"This will be a long haul," Obama said.

Working to ferret out abuses of equal pay laws, Obama announced that his administration will expand its collection of data from

businesses about what they pay.

In 2014, Obama directed the Labor Department to collect data from federal contractors about what they pay employees, sorted by gender, race and ethnicity. The revised proposal will cover all businesses with 100 or more employees, regardless of whether they contract with the government.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission will collect the data, which the government will use to help identify companies that should be investigated for failing to pay workers fairly, officials

said. The first reports from companies will be due in September 2017. The administration estimated that compliance will cost less than \$400 per employer the first year and a few hundred dollars per year after that.

The president reissued his call to Congress to pass further legislation giving more tools to women to fight pay disparities. Republicans have been skeptical about the legislation out of concern it could encourage frivolous lawsuits, and some Republicans criticized

SEE PAY E2

BlueStone II wins \$245M bid for assets

▪ Quicksilver purchase is the largest acquisition by the Tulsa-based firm.

BY CASEY SMITH
World Business Writer

Tulsa-based BlueStone Natural Resources II LLC is buying the U.S. assets of Quicksilver Resources Inc., a bankrupt upstream exploration and production company headquartered in Fort Worth.

The \$245 million acquisition of Quicksilver assets, which will close in the coming weeks, is BlueStone's largest purchase to date.



Redmond

Quicksilver Resources petitioned for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in March 2015. An auction of the company's assets began Jan. 20 and meetings spanned over 19 hours and two calendar days before BlueStone's offer was announced as the highest and best bid.

"It was fairly extensive but obviously netted us a great result," BlueStone II President and CEO John Redmond said.

The U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Delaware approved BlueStone as the buyer Wednesday.

Quicksilver's assets include more than 1,000 operating wells in the Barnett Shale natural gas play

SEE BUY E2

AA reports record \$7.6 billion profit for 2015

BY CASEY SMITH
World Business Writer

American Airlines reported two more landmark financial results Friday morning — record earnings for both the fourth quarter and full-year 2015.

American Airlines Group reported a record fourth-quarter net profit of \$3.3 billion, or \$5.09 per diluted share, which includes a \$3 billion net special credit resulting from the reversal of the company's tax valuation allowance, according to generally accepted accounting principals.

This compares to a GAAP net profit of \$597 million in the fourth quarter of 2014, or \$0.82 per diluted share.

For full year 2015, the company reported a record GAAP net profit of \$7.6 billion, or \$11.07 per diluted share, compared to a GAAP net profit of \$2.9 billion, or \$3.93 per diluted share in 2014.

American Airlines Group's fourth-quarter 2015 net profit, excluding net special credits, was a record \$1.3 billion, or \$2.00 per diluted share.

During the fourth-quarter 2014 net profit excluding net special charges was \$1.1 billion, or \$1.52 per diluted share.

Excluding net special credits, American's 2015 net profit was a

SEE AA E2

MARGARITAVILLE: MILESTONE CELEBRATED

Reaching the top

BY ROBERT EVATT
World Business Writer

In a topping-off ceremony, builders of tall buildings often choose a native tree to place at the top of a building to show respect for the land.

But with the Margaritaville Restaurant and Casino complex under construction at the site of the River Spirit Casino Resort, the choice of vegetation for Friday's ceremony was clear — a tropical palm tree.

With Jimmy Buffett's most famous song playing on speakers, construction workers hoisted the tree on a beam to the top of the hotel tower to mark the completion of the frame for the 27th and final floor of the new addition to the River Spirit Casino



Construction is ongoing at the 27-story hotel tower in the Margaritaville complex at the River Spirit Casino Resort in Tulsa. MATT BARNARD/Tulsa World

Resort.

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Chief James Floyd said he's impressed by the amount of development the tribe has brought to the area in such a short time.

"I can remember when we had the first bingo parlor here in the '80s," he said. "This is a transformational project, not just for the Creek Nation, but for the community."

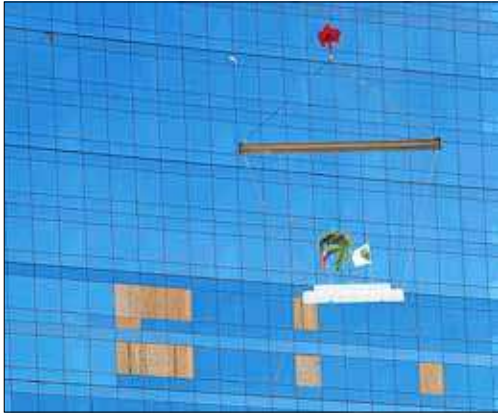
The Margaritaville expansion is the biggest development the nation has undertaken in the area by far — \$365 million for 1.2 million additional square feet, 483 hotel rooms that will be more than any other facility in the area, and 1,000 additional full-time jobs.

During the topping-out ceremony, officials announced that everything except the hotel tower will be finished Labor Day weekend.

John Cohan, CEO of Margaritaville, called the local Margaritaville development one of the better-executed Margaritaville projects the company has seen, and the opening is likely to draw the special visitor Parrotheads have been hoping for.

SEE CASINO E2

Margaritaville CEO John Cohan takes part in a topping-off ceremony Friday with Muscogee (Creek) Nation Principal Chief James Floyd (left), Jerry Floyd (right), CEO of Muscogee (Creek) Nation Casinos, at the Margaritaville complex at the River Spirit Casino Resort in Tulsa. MATT BARNARD/Tulsa World



Cranes raise a steel beam with a palm tree to the top of a 27-story hotel tower at the Margaritaville complex during a topping-off ceremony.

BIZ QUICKS

Magellan Midstream Partners announces dividend increase

The board of directors of Magellan Midstream Partners LP announced recently it has increased the partnership's quarterly cash distribution to 78.5 cents per unit for the period Oct. 1 through Dec. 31, 2015.

The move is the Tulsa-based partnership's 55th distribution increase since its initial public offering in 2001.

The fourth-quarter 2015 distribution is 13 percent higher than the fourth-quarter 2014 distribution of 69.5 cents per unit. It also represents a 3 percent increase over the third-quarter 2015 distribution of 76.25 cents per unit.

For the year, Magellan declared dis-

tributions of \$3.005 per unit for 2015, or 15 percent higher than distributions of \$2.615 per unit for 2014.

The new distribution, which equates to \$3.14 per unit on an annualized basis, will be paid Feb. 12 to unit holders of record at the close of business Feb. 5.

Magellan Midstream Partners primarily transports, stores and distributes refined petroleum products and crude oil.

Magellan plans to announce financial results for fourth quarter 2015 on Thursday before the market opens.

Noodles & Co. to open Broken Arrow restaurant Monday

Noodles & Company, which serves classic noodle and pasta dishes from around the world, announced it will open a Broken Arrow location Monday.

The restaurant, 1556 N. Ninth St., will open at 10:30 a.m.

"We are excited to continue to expand in Oklahoma and bring our real food, real cooking and real flavors to Broken Arrow," said Erin Murphy, senior manager of communications at Noodles & Company. "From healthy to indulgent, spicy to comforting, we have something for everyone from kids to adults. With a broad menu of noodles, salads, soups and sandwiches, you can get a different taste every day, in lots of different ways. We offer flavors from around the world, right down the street."

Noodles & Company has more than 480 restaurant locations across the U.S. and delivers its globally inspired, cooked-to-order menu in a real bowl.

Its menu consists of more than 25 fresh, customizable dishes prepared quickly with quality ingredients includ-

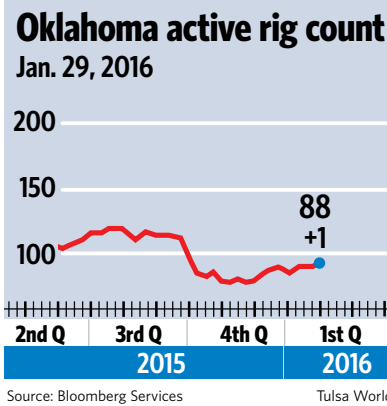
ing cage-free eggs, naturally raised antibiotic free pork and organic tofu. Menu favorites include the sweet and spicy Japanese Pan Noodles, zesty Pesto Cavatappi and the popular Wisconsin Mac & Cheese.

The company has one restaurant in Tulsa at 9205 E. 71st St. and also has a location in Stillwater.

Oklahoma drilling rig count up by one to 88 this week

The number of drilling rigs actively exploring for oil or natural gas in Oklahoma increased by one this week to 88, Baker Hughes Inc. reported Friday. The tally is down 95 rigs from a year ago, when it was 183.

Nationwide, the net number of active drilling units fell by 18 this week to 619, said Houston-based Baker Hughes. The total is down 924 rigs



from a year ago, when it was 1,543.

Of the rigs operating this week across the U.S., 498 were exploring for oil, the lowest number in years, and 121 were deployed for natural gas.

— FROM STAFF, OKLAHOMAN AND WIRE REPORTS