

THE DECREE

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NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE, ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA 27804

Senator Hagan Urges New Graduates to Take Risks

By Meghan Herd
& Decree Staff

U.S. Senator Kay Hagan (D-NC) and Martin Luther King III each delivered a brief and inspiring message to NC Wesleyan's class of 2010 at graduation ceremonies held in the Dunn Center May 1.

The freshman senator—a lawyer and banker by training—reminded the audience that college graduates gain a distinct advantage in the job market over high school grads. "Your college degree is opening options for you out in the world," she said. With a college degree, "employers will answer your knock at the door."

But Hagan said the slumping economy has meant that new graduates must show initiative as there's no guaranteed job waiting. She urged graduates to take risks. "Jump in canon-ball style," she said, adding that, throughout history, many prominent Americans, such as the Wright Brothers, were willing to fail before they found success. Such success stories, she said, required not "temporary bravery," but

"sustained courage."

Picking up on Hagan's theme, King exhorted the graduates to pursue their passions. "Always work to fulfill your dream, whatever it might be," he said. "Never give up. Never give up."

During his speech, King invoked lessons he heard from his father. "We must identify our calling and do it well. If you sweep streets, then you should sweep like Michelangelo carved statues," he said, telling the audience that his father used to say "Anyone can be great, because anyone can serve."

King and Hagan were presented with honorary degrees by the college, and major awards were bestowed on two of Wesleyan's honors students and a faculty member. Elena Pisarik was awarded the President's Cup for academic excellence. She plans to attend graduate school in accounting. Ben Lilley, a math major already hired by the college's admissions department, was presented the Algernon

Sydney Sullivan award in recognition of his "character, leadership and community service." Dr. Bill Yankosky, promoted earlier in the year to the rank of full professor, was named winner of the Exemplary Teacher Award, the third math professor to receive the honor in the past five years.

According to the college registrar's office, 182 students had applied to graduate. Of that total, 73 were from the traditional day program and 109 were from the adult degree program's three different campuses. Among the graduates were 156 native North Carolinians and 26 others from the following states: Virginia (13), Maryland (5), New Jersey (2), Colorado (1), New Jersey (1), New York (1), Pennsylvania (1), Texas (1) and Washington DC (1).

In recent interviews many new graduates expressed optimism about the future. While some plan to attend graduate school, others intend to plunge into employment opportunities in business and the armed services.

Reshanda Smallwood plans on working first and then enrolling in the MBA program at Fordham University in New York, while Jaleesa Murray would like to pursue a job in marketing before she enters graduate school at Gardner Webb University.

After moving back to Goldsboro, Anthony Tyus hopes to find an internship or job in software/database development before graduate school in 2011. He said he wished he'd been more proactive in tackling the job market while still at Wesleyan. In particular, he thinks he could have done more networking with professionals, "who know about the field of work and can be a reference to get my foot in the door. Finding the best-fit position for my credentials has been a challenge."

Grad school is in the plans for Carmera Thomas, a biology major who will seek a masters in public health. Like Tyus,

she would like to first find a job—in research—but the market has been difficult. "I've been facing obstacles with getting a job in my field," she said, "because a lot of the jobs require previous experience."

Other grads will enter the military. Among them is Megan "Gumby" Kintner, a CIS major, who expects to keep a "low profile in Rocky Mount" prior to enlisting in the Air Force next fall. "I'm really excited to start my basic training," she noted.

Malynda Jones will become part of the Army family soon after she joins her husband James Jones, an officer who is set to move to Korea. At some point she would like to attend graduate school, though she considers her immediate prospects somewhat bleak. "For Army spouses, available government jobs are low paying and trivial," she said.

Some new grads look at the job market with trepidation. Peter Veach wants to find a job in business administration. "I'm just hoping I can find a job in my career field," he said.

As the class of 2010 was about to begin their new lives, some members took a moment to reflect on their time at Wesleyan.

Many acknowledged that the college had provided an opportunity for personal growth. "College is supposed to broaden a narrow mind and I can say Wesleyan has done that for me," said Smallwood. "Wesleyan allows its students to step outside a closed box because you're around so many different nationalities and students genuinely different from yourself."

Tyus feels that he has matured during the past four years. "I've gotten wiser and more educated in a field I wanted to pursue," he said. "And I got my life together spiritually."

Thomas agreed that her time at Wesleyan has been very beneficial.

"When I came in as a freshman, I wasn't sure what type of experience I would have in college," she said. "I didn't think I would interact with the many people that I have over the years, join the clubs that I was in, or learn the things I have learned. Wesleyan has helped me grow and understand more about myself and to be tolerant of others. I don't take any experience for granted. I think that my four years at Wesleyan will be hard to forget."

All the graduates interviewed said that they will miss some aspect of the Wesleyan community.

While Tyus said he will miss the new additions to the college, such as the new library and grill, others pointed to the relationships that they've formed over the years.

Smallwood will remember the friends "who have brought fun times in my life and who have made me laugh until I cry."

Kintner said she liked the atmosphere on campus, the athletic department in particular. "This place has become a home to me," she said. "Not being able to just go hang out in the field house and the training room is going to be a big change."

Jones said it saddens her to leave peers as well as faculty and staff "I feel that if

you're an honest person, and make an effort to build relationships, many are willing to form a bond with you as well," she said.

Thomas admits that she will miss college life in general.

"I'll miss my friends, peers and professors who have helped me so much," she said. "I'll miss the whole college experience."

Strickland To Serve Third Term in SGA

By Melanie Rhodes
Decree Staff Writer

Jacob Strickland has been elected SGA president for the third consecutive year.

The recent SGA election brought both old and new leadership to the forefront. The Executive Board for 2010-2011 is:

President – Jacob Strickland
Vice President – Vacant
Treasurer – Jasmine Mann
Secretary – John Williamson

Each candidate was unopposed. To date there have been no qualified candidates apply to run for vice president and this office remains vacant at this time. A separate election will be held for the position of vice president in the near future.

Sophomore

Sharise Jones praised the leadership demonstrated by Strickland in the past two years. "I think he is doing a great job on campus," she said. "He is carrying the title very well."



Strickland

Williamson, a rising junior, said the president's background should benefit students in 2010-11. "Strickland has the experience to get the job done and leadership ability to guide us for the future."

Asked about the lack of candidates for each of the SGA positions, Strickland responded: "In my opinion, students are overcommitted, overworked and the GPA requirement may have had an impact as well on the lack of candidates this year."

Strickland looks forward to tackling the challenges faced by the student body. "As SGA president for the third term, many challenges still need to be completed," said Strickland.

He said that many changes have already been in the works. As examples, he noted the implementation of a recycling program and the return of the college yearbook.

The president said he would like to see an increase of student participation in events and students organizations. "I hope to see the completion of these items while serving as SGA president," he said.

In 2010-2011, Strickland said, SGA will embark on several new initiatives. One is the possible institution of a dress code, which, he believes, would "increase the professional atmosphere on campus." Another change would involve the establishment of a new honor code, which "encompasses the values, honor, and integrity of students." In a related move, an honor court, comprised of four students, two faculty and two staff, would be created to make decisions regarding misconduct among students. "The purpose is to be student-oriented, making NCWC the best school," Strickland said.

Mann intends to manage the SGA budget and funds in an orderly fashion. "I wanted to run for treasurer because I saw a need in the SGA to fulfill," she said. "I believe that honesty and integrity are very important and feel that I will bring those qualities to the position of treasurer."

As far as his goals, Williamson wants to increase publicity of SGA meetings and work to get more students involved in the organization. "I hope to run for SGA president next year," he added.



The men's tennis team claimed its second consecutive USA South Conference title, vanquishing Christopher Newport, 6-3, in the championship, after it recorded a 6-0 regular season mark. See sports, pages 4-5. SI photo.

Nyborg Leads Quiz Bowl Team to Early Success

By John Kostet
Decree Staff Writer

Wesleyan's first quiz bowl team entered four tournaments in its debut season, finishing with some notable individual accomplishments and grabbing a third, sixth and ninth team placing amid tough competition.

The Wesleyan team hosted one tournament, entered one at the University of Maryland and two in Richmond, all as part of the Academic Competition Federation and the National Academic Quiz Tournaments.

The team advisor, reference librarian Steve Bahnaman, said he was somewhat pleased with their first results. "We have a JV-type of team right now. We did not expect much," he said, adding that the team will aim for the national playoffs next year.

Student Jacqie Flynn agreed and said they have been doing well for being a new team. "We're still learning what goes on at tournaments and what kind of questions that are going to be asked," Flynn said.

Despite the team's lack of experience, there's been one outstanding player throughout the season as Wesleyan honors student Adam Nyborg surprised many by capturing a couple of individual awards. "I've won a couple of books. Apparently giving away lesser-known books by famous authors is a common practice in Quiz Bowl," Nyborg said.

His teammate Flynn was very impressed by his performance. "Adam has been absolutely amazing at tournaments, making everyone else very proud of him," she said.

Bahnaman agreed and said it was impressive for Nyborg to put up such performances during his first year. Nyborg was on a quiz bowl team in high school, but Bahnaman explained the set-up in college to be a bit different.

Quiz Bowl is the common name for a trivia competition between two teams of four. A moderator reads 20 descriptions of titles, names and locations chosen from science, literature and history. Called toss-ups, the descriptions are designed to become easier as more information and clues are unveiled. The first team to hit the "buzz button" gets to answer; if they're correct, they can receive up to three bonus questions.

Here's a sample question: "This country's Lapua Movement succeeded

in banning Communist activities, and a 1918 civil war saw Gustav Mannerheim's government forces emerge victorious. The Continuation War, which saw this country aid Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, was a sequel to the Winter War in which the Soviet Union preemptively invaded this country. The 1975 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe led to some 'Accords' named after this country's capital. For 10 points, name this country led by Tarja Halonen, whose major city is Helsinki. ANSWER: Finland"

Bahnaman, the former quiz bowl star at Emory University, said he had the ambition to form a team ever since he started as a librarian at NC Wesleyan in 2007.

He felt there was a lack of student activities associated with overall knowledge and liberal arts. "NC Wesleyan is doing a great job with sports events and activities related to certain fields, but seems to miss out on general education outside the classroom," Bahnaman said.

So last fall he put up some posters and handed out a few flyers with low expectations on participation. "I never thought so many as seven people would show up to our first meeting," Bahnaman said, impressed, as his alma mater Emory, never had more than 11 players.

Flynn was one of the students that saw the flyers and attended the first meeting. "A friend and I decided to check it out just for fun," she said. "We really got into it and kept going back to practices."

Aside from knowledge, one of the main attributes required in quiz bowl is the ability to listen and anticipate where the passage is going. But most important is the capacity to memorize names and titles, though Bahnaman said it's unnecessary have to "know everything. You have to be intelligent in a way that you can sort, place and connect information with the correct label."

Nyborg added mental endurance to the list of traits necessary for success. "Since the tournaments are at least a third longer than they should be," he said. He noted that a specialist will do wonders for a team, meaning that a team should be as broad as

possible with different strengths. Bahnaman agreed and said that ideally there should be one specialist for every topic, but not even the biggest schools always have that luxury.

The team tries to practice at least once a week, reviewing different questions as it simulates game conditions. Relying on his own experiences as a Quiz Bowler, Bahnaman teaches the team about names and titles that he knows are very common at competitions. "For an example I could say, here are the five most famous Japanese writers, and this is what you need to know about them," Bahnaman said.

While productive, the practice sessions allow for camaraderie as well. "We're having fun with it," Flynn said.

The quiz bowl team has received solid support from students, faculty and a generous staff who provided financial help to make their trips possible. "The staff has been very supportive and it was not hard to convince them about us," Bahnaman said.

With a little more experience the team hopes to keep improving their skills next year, and with most of their squad coming back they are optimistic of qualifying for the national playoffs. "We're getting the hang of the way tournaments work," Flynn said.

Five Punished for Role in Book Store Thefts

By Jarad Brown
& Decree Staff

President James Gray announced that three students have been expelled and two others fined for their involvement in last fall's thefts at the bookstore.

The news came in a recent email sent to members of the Wesleyan community and during a campus-wide meeting on April 21, when the president updated students on recent community activities and plans for improvement at the college.

The thefts occurred as members of the Wesleyan football team were getting sized for their USA South Conference championship rings. Taken were books, personal care items and cash.

Two students were convicted and expelled earlier in the year.

Nine students were brought before the college's disciplinary board on April 10. Following twelve hours of witness testimony and deliberations, the board convicted four and acquitted five, the president said, adding

that appeals were filed by all four of the convicted.

According to the president, the Appeals Committee then heard evidence and ruled that one appeal would be denied. The other three students were allowed to return to school, but two of them were placed on probation, fined \$250 and prohibited from playing sports for Wesleyan, the president said.

"We never got to the absolute truth we were looking for," Gray said. "We did the best we could with the evidence we had, though."

The campus-wide meeting, held in Everett Gymnasium, allowed President Gray to provide a "state of the school" address. "I really just wanted to give a summation of the academic year," he said. "I wanted to put things in perspective for students, both good and not so good."

Besides discussing the book store incident and highlighting the success of Wesleyan's athletic teams—four conference titles—the president outlined recent initiatives to

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