

Speaker urges audience to think as 'persons of promise'



Thomas Barksdale enjoys the feast at the Soul Food Festival following his speech on January 12.

By KWAI CHUN CHAN

On Friday, January 12, 2001, students, staff, faculty and guests at WCC Moffatt Auditorium celebrated the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Multi-Cultural Association Enrichment (MCAE) and the Diversity Committee at WCC sponsored the event.

Pastor Timothy Dortch started the ceremony by playing the songs on piano, and Yvonne Goodman, Associate Vice President of Student Development Services, welcomed the audience.

Manuel Dudley, Interim Chair, Human Services Department, introduced the speaker, Thomas Barksdale.

Barksdale was born and raised in Greensboro. He graduated from North Carolina A&T State University in 1996 with a degree in business, founding the Barksdale Foundation, a motivational speaking and consulting firm.

He has written, "It's All About You: A Young Adult's Guide for Positive Living, You Matter," and "Beyond Walls."

He has been the keynote speaker in 1992 at the Annual convention of Dudley Products Inc. (hair care items) and in 1998 at the 20th Annual NAACP National Convention in Atlanta, GA.

As a college student, he won the Bluford F. Lawson Oratorical Contest for North Carolina, representing his fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha, Inc. He won the Alpha South Regional Award for an essay, "Self Determination" in 1995. He facilitates the personal mastery training program in middle schools, STEP UP, Success Through Effective Participation Using Positive Potential.

The topic of Barksdale's speech was "Let your plight be peaceful during your pilgrimage on this planet."

First, he said, people must think of themselves as "persons of promise." Barksdale cited examples of athletes who succeeded or failed because either they realized their value or they could not face defeat. He said, "People are frustrated, fearful, and furious when they cannot see where they are going."

Second, Barksdale said, "People need to realize their plight will produce pain." He used painful times in the life of Dr. King to illustrate this point. He pointed out that people have 2 birthdays, the physical one and the mental one when people realize their purpose in life. He said, "Show people your dream; don't just talk about it."

Last, Barksdale said, "People need to project themselves as pictures of progress, and look as though they want things to come to them, and they will."

He introduced his parents and grandmother seated in the audience and told how they had influenced him to become a success.

MCAE member Brandi Barnes presided at the program, and Dortch led the group in "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

Carl Brow, counselor, presented Barksdale with a gift; and Susan Keel, Director of Counseling Services, made closing remarks and led the group in "America the Beautiful."

Following the program in the auditorium, students, staff, and guests proceeded to the Student Lounge for a Soul Food Festival where the menu included traditional Southern dishes like collard greens, corn bread, barbecue chicken and pork, chicken pastry and banana pudding along with many other desserts.

The guests paid one dollar for lunch to offset costs, but Coca-Cola Bottling Company, Clarence Simmons (WCC Security), a WCC faculty and staff and members of MCAE and African American Males Committed to Success (AMCS) supplied beverages, meat, and side dishes.

Spring Fling activities occur in cool weather

By RHONDA ALDRIDGE

Spring Fling, an annual event sponsored by the Student Government Association, was held on April 19, at 12:00 p.m. near the tennis courts.

Spring Fling is a day when students and faculty/staff come together to eat, play games and have fun.

The festivities began with lunch catered by Alton's. During lunch the candidates running for the 3 main offices in the Student Government Association gave their speeches.

The candidates included: Tammi Allen, Robert McAllister Jr, and Renee O'Neal running for president and Carlita Williams running for secretary.

After the speeches the election was held for president and secretary. The other candidates will be selected by interview.

Spring Fling was not all-serious business though.

After the elections the activities for the day began, including an egg toss, cake walk, quiz bowl, water gun fight, donut on a string, soccer, pie baking contest, guess the M&M's, water balloons, softball, volleyball, basketball, a dance contest and egg in a spoon.

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