

## Carla Bridges: Miss W.S.S.U. Combines Charisma and Academics

By M.A. Pharr

Carla Elizabeth Bridges, Miss W.S.S.U. 1990, pays close attention to small items. Because of her eye for detail she enrolled at Winston-Salem State University after being accepted at both UNC-Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. "My sister attended W.S.S.U. and I applied here after being accepted at two larger universities. After I filled out the application, W.S.S.U. sent me a birthday card," said Carla. "I was further impressed by a visit in which I recognized the caring attitude of the staff," she added.

Since her arrival on the W.S.S.U. campus she has displayed her knack for details, as well as her leadership abilities. She is currently President of Delta Sigma Theta, former President of the Pan Hellenic Council, and is listed in Who's Who in American Colleges.

The Concord, North Carolina native is the daughter of Mary and Charles Bridges. She admits to being the one child that steps to the beat of a different drummer, but it never infringes upon her judgement in giving credit where it is due. "My mother is the person I most admire. Not because everyone else says this, but because she raised my two sisters (Audrey and Wanda) and I on her own," she said. "Anytime I lose sight of my goals her teachings help me remember why I'm here," she added.

Carla is an education major, with hopes of getting her Masters Degree and Ph.D. in History. She hopes to one day teach on the collegiate level.

People often times misunderstand campus queens. Some do seem to change once the title is earned, but sometimes we change in our regard to them and their new position. Miss

W.S.S.U. mentioned certain qualities a queen should possess. "A queen should be someone who reflects the people she represents," said Miss Bridges. "I've been in a variety of organizations and I feel I know the spirit of the



Carla Bridges

W.S.S.U. student body," she added.

Goals are nothing new for Carla Bridges. She combines them with a strong belief in God and sets to attain them. During the 1990-1991 academic year she has set goals as Miss W.S.S.U. "I would like to break the stereotypical image of queens. Some place too much emphasis on looks and social status," said Carla. "I think by being socially and academically sound I can make an even greater statement in terms of leadership," she added.

Born under the sign of Virgo, she enjoys writing, drawing and singing in her spare time.

Carla is an avid reader who keeps up with current events on all levels. Her response to the Iraq-Kuwait situation was concise, and typical of a lot of young Americans. "I really think we are sticking our noses in someone else's business," she said. She added, "America intervenes in any action where profit is concerned."

The role of the black male, and his demise, has been a topic of concern in our communities, schools and hearts. The W.S.S.U. senior commented on this

negative situation. "One has to consider that the establishment holds the black man down and in return he turns to drugs, violence and crime," stated Miss Bridges. "Our women need to stand by the black man more. We must all share the blame. We believe too much of what we read (newspaper) and see (television)," she added.

Being an Education major Carla has taken a few classes that have discussed "mainstreaming". She is an advocate of eliminating the separation of students in the classroom. "Personally I think the more labels placed on kids the more apprehensive they become about education," said Miss Bridges. "We need to help them feel a part," she added.

During the final months of ones college career it is alright to look at it in retrospect, because after three full years one has matured more and their judgement is a lot better. Carla looked at one of the things about her career she would like to change. "If there was one thing I could change about my college career at W.S.S.U. it would be the misconception that everybody who belongs to an organization (sorority, fraternity) are different," said Miss Bridges. "One has to remember that we are linked because we are all black. We have to be the masters of our own destiny," she added.

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