

## He's already politicking at 11

By AUDREY L. WILLIAMS  
Staff Writer

For a young boy who lost his father just a year ago, Christopher Mack is adjusting well.

He is following in his father's footsteps, the Rev. Walter Mack, by taking on a leadership role with open arms.

Christopher, the youngest of the Mack family at 11, serves as chairman of the Student Advisory Council Group at Lowrance Intermediate School, which is just around the corner from his home on Bon Air Avenue.

"When I was in the fifth grade last year, I was elected by my class to represent them at the council," he says. "So when Mrs. (Vivian) Burke (the school's guidance counselor) asked everyone this year in an assembly who wanted to be chairman, I stood up."

Subsequently, he became the spokesman for his whole school.

As council chairman, Christopher carries the load of his classmates' problems on his back, in turn relaying them to officials at his school and the council.

"Most of the time the kids will come to me or Mrs. Burke when they have a problem," he says. "If something needs to be fixed in the bathroom or a water fountain needs to be fixed, I have to get in touch with the principal so that it gets fixed."

Not only is Christopher the key for an open line of communication, but he says he is happy with the whole atmosphere at his school.

"I like what goes on at Lowrance and how the teachers and students get together and talk," he

says. "Most of all it's a nice place to learn."

Being a football enthusiast, he says he allows for his free time to be spent playing quarterback for the Tiny Vikings football team, as well as dabbling in basketball, soccer, baseball and a little putt-putt now and then.

Besides being the big man on campus, complete with good looks and all, Christopher manages to maintain an overall B average.

"I really like school a lot," he says. "I study real hard and listen well in class. I know grades are important, plus my mother reminds me, too."

"Since I play a lot of sports, I thought about being a professional athlete, but I really think I'd like to be a doctor or work with computers," he says.

Part of Christopher's job as chairman of the student council means politicking for his constituents and making several speeches to the student body throughout the school year.

"Every since I was 6 years old, my daddy had me doing speeches," he says. "That's when I started not being shy, and from then on I would raise my hand in class to do a speech."

At his age, he's still uncertain about following in his father's footsteps.

"I've been thinking about it, but I don't know if I'm meant to become a minister," says

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## Young And Gifted

"Every since I was 6 years old, my daddy had me doing speeches. That's when I started not being shy ..."

-- Christopher Mack



Christopher Mack: Big man on campus (photo by James Parker).

## Lady Doctors

*Being black, female and young does make a difference*



By ROBIN ADAMS  
Staff Writer

If an aging, white male who is balding in the top and wears round, wire-rimmed glasses comes to mind when you think of a doctor, then you need to meet some of Winston-Salem's newest physicians.

Dr. Gertrude Brown, Dr. Vicki Lovings and Dr. Brenda Latham are neither white, old nor balding, but all three are licensed physicians.

And because they don't fit the stereotype most people have of what a doctor should look like, they sometimes feel the repercussions.

"I get a lot of dirty looks when I walk in the room," says Brown, who is the only practicing black female physician in Winston-Salem. The others are all residents or interns.

"I have been called a 'nurse' or 'Miss Brown,' but I never correct or embarrass anybody," she says. "If that's what they think, then that's what they think. I know who and what I am."

Says Latham: "It amuses me. It doesn't matter if you wear a white coat, 10 stethoscopes around your neck and have 10 name tags on with MD on them, people still think you are a nurse. But you have to laugh when something like that happens

because it happens so often. A lot of people still think all doctors are men."

But most agree that the stares and the misidentifications result from their age, rather than being black or female.

"Sometimes I wear my hair in two braids," says Latham, a second-year resident in family practice at Baptist Hospital. "And when I walk into the room I look like a little kid. And if the patient feels that a doctor should be 45 to 50 years old, then I don't fit the mold."

"Because of my age, a lot of my patients want to call me by my first name," says Lovings, 27, an intern in pediatrics at Baptist. "But I was taught to respect people, and I call them Mr. or Mrs. and I always introduce myself as Dr. Lovings."

Contrary to what some people believe, being black has not been much of a hindrance to any of them.

"There are some cultural differences that I notice," says Lovings, "but I don't let that bother me. Like I hear some comments about black patients. I feel like a person creates his own problems."

"I let things slip by me," she says. "I need to finish and I feel that here I am getting what I need."

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Three-year-old Ashley Lindsay receives expert service from Dr. Gertrude Brown (photo by James Parker).

Dr. Vicki Lovings: A lifelong desire to be a physician has kept her going (photo by James Parker).

## They say the glory is gone; they do it because they love it

By ROBIN ADAMS  
Staff Writer

To most non-physicians, being a doctor is the top of the career ladder. Not so, says Drs. Brown, Latham and Lovings.

"Medical school is very, very expensive," Brown says. "At this point, there are very few of us blacks who are able to have parents or relatives who are able to send us all the way through school. Most of us come out owing big sums of money, and you have to pay that money back."

"And if there is some glory, it doesn't come until later on in life. I agree it's a lucrative profession," she says, "but no one should go into

medicine for the money. It's not worth it."

Says Latham: "There is no glory and fame. There may have been when doctors were thought of as gods. But all that's changed."

"I think the perception of rich and famous is a perception from people not in the medical profession," she says. "You give eight years of your life in school. That is a lot of time and a lot of work. A lot of people don't realize the sacrifice you have to make. You are at the mercy of this beeper. No matter how much money you are paid, it can't buy back the time you put into it."

Latham adds: "When people ask me if they should go into medicine, I tell them, 'If you want

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