

Newcomer

Winston may be the place for Tupponce

By AUDREY WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

In every city she's ever been in, 31-year-old Toni Tupponce says she had an opportunity to put down roots, but something always pulled her away -- mostly employment or education.

A longtime attraction to Winston-Salem pulled her away from the N.C. Department of Transportation in Raleigh when she took Jim Crews, her present supervisor, up on the offer to become a transportation planner for the city of Winston-Salem nine months ago.

"Working for the state was not a goal for me," says Tupponce. "Getting my master's was."

With various interruptions to deal with, it took the North Carolina Central graduate nearly four years to find the time to complete her master's degree in regional transportation at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

A three-year employment stint in South Carolina put a halt to her studies until she was offered a job with the state of North Carolina. While working in Raleigh, Tupponce completed her degree.

"As soon as I got my degree," she says, "I started looking again (for another job)."

Jim Ritchie, manager of the Winston-Salem Transit Authority and an acquaintance of the West Point, Va., native, contacted her and a

network began between the two. By February of last year, eight months after completing her thesis, Tupponce says she was offered the position here.

"I always said if I were to settle in North Carolina, it would have to be here," she says. "I've always loved the Piedmont."

In fact, Tupponce, who is single, likes the area so much that she has purchased a home in Winston.

"I made a bit of a commitment when I

"There's a growing political awareness here as far as black folks are concerned and that intrigues me...."

-- Toni Tupponce

bought my home," she says, "so I guess I'm sunk for a while."

She says she's had other offers to go elsewhere, but a magnetic attraction to the arts and a progressive city kept her from doing so.

Putting down roots in Winston-Salem hasn't really occurred to her, she says, despite the fact that she's now a city taxpayer. But she says planting herself here permanently is a possibility.

"I don't have anybody really but me," Tupponce says, "so I can go where I want to go. Nobody is counting on my paycheck but me."

"If my absolute goal was to be in Atlanta or

Manhattan by the time I was 35, I would have made that move by now," she says.

Noting that she had not actively sought employment in Winston-Salem, Tupponce says, "... I didn't seek Winston, but this city appealed to me."

It is apparent that Tupponce is also impressed with the city's black community, but she sees the problems, too.

"There's a growing political awareness here as far as black folks are concerned," she says, "and that intrigues me. I've always liked politics, but I haven't ever considered running for office."

To Tupponce, the black religious community, which she says has always been a very important part of her life, is stronger than any she's ever seen, citing some of Winston's politically active church leaders as proof.

But, she adds, "I've not done a whole lot of delving at this point, but there appears to be a lot of arenas that we as a (black) community have yet to take advantage of."

Those arenas, she says, include the arts, Winston-Salem State University, black businesses and the electoral process that helped elect the city's four black aldermen.

"Those are the avenues," says Tupponce, "but out of all those avenues, I really don't feel a strong sense of community here."

"It seems to me that with a unified communi-

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Toni Tupponce is intrigued by the political awareness of black people in Winston-Salem (photo by James Parker).



By Mike Campbell



Young & Gifted

Fourteen-year-old Mike Campbell's ambition in life is to become an accomplished artist and nothing else will do (photo by James Parker).

Artist shooting for the sky at 14

By AUDREY WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

Mrs. Alma Campbell thinks it's time her 14-year-old son, Michael, went out and got himself a job. So far, her chiding has been unsuccessful.

No, Mike isn't lazy. He just has his mind set on the one thing in life that appeals to him most.

"I'll tell him, 'Mike, go and get a work permit,'" says Mrs. Campbell, who is also the mother of an 11-year-old son, "and he'll tell me, 'Mom, I don't want to be a bag boy. I'm going to be an artist.'"

Since he has his mind made up, Mrs. Campbell says she wants him to pursue his aspiration to become an artist, using all the necessary channels available to him.

A lot of artists would probably give almost anything to get the exposure Mike is getting for his creative talents as a cartoonist at such a young age. His cartoon, "Brandt," is featured on the *Chronicle's* amusement page each week.

A lot of cartoonists come up with the ideas for their characters from either childhood or just out of the blue. Brandt, an inquisitive little baby girl, similar to Mort Walker's Hi and Lois, but from a black perspective, is actually patterned after Mike's real-life baby cousin, whose name is Brandt.

"I just like watching her," says Mike. "She's funny because if she doesn't like something, she won't eat it; she'll just throw it down."

As a ninth-grade honor student at Hill High School, Mike has often been called upon by teachers for his assistance with classroom bulletin boards, but his greatest

and most surprising accomplishment to date, he says, came when the editor of the *Chronicle* selected his work to be featured in the paper each week.

"I was really surprised when I got a call from the *Chronicle* and they told me they wanted me to do a cartoon every week," Mike says. "I had put it in the back of my mind and forgotten about it."

Mike also realizes that the more advanced his art work becomes, the more competition he will be up against.

"There are other people at my school who draw real good," he says. "I get mad sometimes when I see somebody that draws better than me."

That's one of the reasons he reaches for his clip board and art tools as soon as he arrives home from school.

But what about school work?

"Oh, I do that at school during lunch," he says, "but as soon as I get home I start drawing until about 11 at night."

Mrs. Campbell says her son began showing his first signs of creativity when he was just a toddler. At six, she says, the images started to take on more than just first-grade sketching.

"It really doesn't bother me that he likes to draw," she says. "When he was smaller, he used to doodle and waste a lot of paper and it would be all over his bedroom floor when he would wake up in the morning."

"But he loves it and now he's into drawing these weird, way-out pictures," says Mrs. Campbell, giving a puzzled look at one of her son's fantasy sketches.

Many of Mike's ideas come from one of the many action-packed comic books, such as "Heavy Metal" and

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Black Medal of Honor winners have served their country well

By GERRI TAYLOR
Department of The Army

CHICAGO -- From the smoky fields of the Civil War to the sweaty jungles of Vietnam, black soldiers have fought long and hard for their country. Within a multitude of battles, 55 of them earned the nation's highest decoration for heroism -- the Medal of Honor.

Sgt. William H. Carney, a union soldier in the Civil War, became the first black to be awarded the Medal of Honor after his heroic actions at the battle of Fort Wagner, S.C., in 1863.

While advancing toward the gates of the fort, Carney's unit, Company C of the 54th Colored Infantry, was bombarded by musket fire and shells, killing or wounding men left to right. One of the wounded was the color bearer. But before the flag touched the ground, Carney seized it and made his way to the front of the company as it retreated.

Still hampered by enemy fire, he continued his flight to the rear, all the time clutching the flag. Bullets hit him in the chest and leg, and another soldier treated his wounds. As they moved on again, another bullet grazed Carney's head. When the other soldier offered to take the flag, Carney refused, saying, "No one but a member of the 54th should carry the flag."

Later, as Carney carried the regimental flag into camp, his comrades cheered at the sight of him. Carney smiled proudly and said simply, "The flag never touched the ground, boys."

Seventeen black soldiers received the Medal of Honor during the Indian Campaigns. Five others received the

medal for their actions in the Spanish-American War.

But not until 1950 did another black soldier receive the Medal of Honor.

Pfc. William Thompson, a member of Company M, 24th Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, was the first black to be awarded the medal during the Korean Conflict.

On Aug. 6, 1950, Thompson and the rest of his platoon came under fire by enemy forces near Haman. Thompson set up his machine gun and fired on the attackers, halting their advance enough so part of his platoon could take cover from exploding grenades and gunfire.

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Badly wounded by grenade and small-arms fire, Thompson refused to leave his station and continued firing at the enemy as his comrades retreated. His gun was silenced when he was mortally wounded by an exploding grenade.

As the nation's soldiers struggled through the Vietnam War, Sfc. William M. Bryant was the latest black to earn the United States' highest military award.

Bryant earned the Medal of Honor while serving as commanding officer of Civilian Irregular Defense Group



Winston-Salem native Lawrence Joel, a 23-year Army veteran, earned the nation's highest decoration for bravery, the Medal of Honor, for his service in Vietnam. Joel died from a diabetic coma two weeks ago.

Company 324, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Mobile Strike Force Command in the Long Khanh Province. On March 24, 1969, Bryant's battalion came under heavy fire and was suddenly surrounded by enemy regiments. While exposed to enemy fire many times during the attack, Bryant scrambled back and forth among his company's positions giving out ammunition, helping the wounded and directing return fire.

During a break in the attack, Bryant led a group of his men outside the perimeter to gather information on the enemy. When the patrol was pinned down by intense automatic weapons fire, Bryant singlehandedly fought off the enemy, inspiring the rest of the platoon to fend off continued attacks.

In the midst of the enemy's deadly assault, Bryant regrouped his men and attempted to break through the enemy circle. Moving forward about 200 meters, the men were again pinned down by heavy fire; this time Bryant was severely wounded. Regardless, he assembled his men and radioed for a helicopter gunship attack on the enemy position.

When the choppers had gone, Bryant charged and overran an enemy position, killing its three defenders. Then, while regrouping his men for a final assault, Bryant was mortally wounded by an enemy rocket. Bryant was one of 15 black soldiers receiving the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War.

From these examples of black soldiers answering their country's call to arms, and giving themselves beyond the call of duty, today's soldier, regardless of racial origin, can point with pride and confidence to the triumph of the human spirit during combat.