

Chronicle Profile

If they could only see her now

By IRENE PERRY
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In high school, Sandra Douglas' guidance counselor told her there was no need for her to apply to college because she would never complete an undergraduate program.

But five years after her high school graduation, she enrolled in R.J. Reynolds Industries' continuing adult program sponsored by High Point College. Three-and-a-half years after that, she graduated with a bachelor of science degree in business administration.

She was the first R.J. Reynolds Industries'

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-- Sandra Douglas

employee to graduate from the program with no prior college credit. But she didn't stop there. Today, she is a second-year student at the Wake Forest Babcock School of Business and expects to graduate in May of 1985.

"I don't like people telling me what I cannot do," says Douglas. "That has been my motivation. It started when I was in the fourth grade. For two years, I was the only black in an all-white school, and I was always being put down. Now, when I accomplish something, it's like holding up a flag that says, 'You said I couldn't do it, but I did.'"

Her educational pursuits began in earnest in 1979. It was the same year she married and purchased a home. "I never believed in doing

anything easy," says Douglas with a smile -- which seems to be true, considering she's also expecting a child in February and is building another home.

When Reynolds started the college program, Douglas had already contacted several colleges regarding evening classes. "That's why I felt the program was started just for me," says Douglas.

After graduation from High Point College, she received two scholarships to attend business school -- one from UNC-Chapel Hill and another from Wake Forest. In order to remain at home with her husband, Douglas decided to attend Wake Forest University.

"I am totally committed to my family and I needed the support of my husband, Kelvin," says Douglas. "Kelvin has always been my strength and my added motivator. I believe the Lord works through him to give me the strength that I need -- plus Kelvin is so understanding. Think about this: All the years we have been married, I have been a student."

She has no regrets about the sacrifices she has made to pursue her educational goals. "I realized I had to give up something," says Douglas, "whether it was a Saturday night movie or a quiet evening home with my husband. Because I had to study, there were times I just could not be there."

As a graduate student, Douglas studies 10 to 12 hours a day, and when she does have time to relax, she attends Winston-Salem State football games.

She admits graduate school is extremely demanding and strenuous. "It's the hardest thing I've ever been through in my life," she says. "It is even more arduous than when I work-



Sandra Douglas: They said she couldn't, but she did (photo by James Parker).

ed full-time and attended evening college. In graduate school you teach yourself. You are given a road map and you are expected to be an expert driver."

Yet, her life has been enriched by the experience, she says, and because of the short time she has to spend with her family, Douglas realizes how important her family is. "I notice the little things that occur; things I never would have noticed if I had not made this sacrifice."

One sacrifice Douglas has made that many other people in Winston-Salem would not even consider doing was quitting her job at R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. However, to take advantage of the opportunity to attend graduate school, Douglas resigned from the company in June of 1983.

"My career goals and inner growth are more

important to me," says Douglas. "I felt going to school would make me more valuable to any company than staying in the position I was in. I never would have been satisfied until I met my educational goals."

Those goals finally will be achieved when she graduates in May. After graduation, Douglas wants to work with marketing a consumer product -- to use her skills acquired in a marketing-oriented field.

"I also want to be involved in some type of youth program to help kids who, just like myself, were told, 'You just can't do it,'" she says.

"I want to let them know that their PSAT, SAT, GMAT scores are not signs of inferiority -- that they can do anything if they really want to do it. Believe that you can do it, because you can if you think you can. Believing that you can is half the battle."

Social Notes

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supporter of our organization."

Elberson, who is a native of Winston-Salem, began his business career in 1954 as a management trainee with Hanes Hosiery. He held a series of management positions there and was named president in 1968. He became president and chief operating officer of the Hanes Corp. in 1972.

When Hanes was acquired by Consolidated Foods Corp. in 1979, Elberson was elected corporate executive vice president

and a member of their board of directors. He became president and chief operating officer of the company in January 1983.

Consolidated Food Corp., based in Chicago, is a diversified, multinational company with annual sales of \$7 billion and 93,000 employees. Its well-known consumer products include Hanes Hosiery, Hanes Underwear, L'eggs, Sara Lee frozen baked goods, Shasta beverages, Popsicle, Electrolux and Fuller Brush products.

Local groups distribute heating funds

The Crisis Control Ministry Inc. and Sunnyside Ministry of the Moravian Church have been designated to administer Duke Power Company's 1984-85 Community Challenge Heating Fund in Forsyth County, said Pete Burris, Duke's Winston-Salem district manager.

The fund, initiated by Duke Power stockholders, is designed to help less fortunate families pay winter heating bills, Burris said. Forsyth County families will be eligible for a total of \$48,360 in assistance if local agencies can raise matching funds for Duke's contribution, he said.

"The challenge fund is just that," Burris said. "We are challenging local sources to come forward and triple our donation

for the sake of Forsyth County's needy."

The fund has the potential of raising more than \$600,000 in the company's North and South Carolina service territory, Burris said.

It isn't to be a Duke Power customer to qualify for the assistance. Homes may be heated with any fuel, including natural gas, oil, coal and wood, he said.

Individuals or organizations wishing to donate to the fund should contact Crisis Control at 724-7453 or the Sunnyside Ministry at 724-7558.

"Cold weather is upon us now, and the need for assistance has never been greater," Burris said. "We have high hopes that local organizations will respond to that need."

Banquet honors three for outstanding service

Mrs. Connie Cambell, Thomas Ellerbee and Edward Peebles were the honorees at a banquet on Saturday, Nov. 24, at the Ramada Inn in Clemmons for outstanding service in their churches and communities.

The banquet was planned by members and friends of their churches -- Tabernacle United Church of Christ in Huntsville, Mount Sinai AME Zion Church in Advance and Brooks Memorial United Methodist Church in Jamaica, N.Y.

Even though Ellerbee lives in New York, he is married to an Advance native and comes here each August at "Big Meeting" time and usually in the fall. He is head of ushers in areas of New York and helps churches to organize usher boards. He organized the usher board group at Piney Grove in Advance in 1978. A tribute was given to him by Mrs. Ann H. Bynum.

Mrs. Campbell works in all areas of her church, as well as other churches in her vicinity, especially Piney Grove United Methodist Church. She is a mother and grandmother and has been an inspiration to the young people in her area. A tribute to her was given by Mrs. Whitlock, her pastor's wife.

Peebles, like Ellerbee, is married to an Advance lady who is a member of Piney Grove United Methodist Church. A tribute to him was given by Mrs. Ernestine Holman, the church secretary.

After a musical interlude by Mrs. Anna Ingram of Winston-Salem, and the procession of the platform guests, the anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing," was sung. The invocation was given by the Rev. Glenn Brooks, pastor of Crews United Methodist Church of Winston-Salem. The introduction of the

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