

# Business Briefs

## BUSINESS PROFILE

### Entrepreneur calls for a network of 'us helping us'

By ROBIN BARKSDALE  
Chronicle Staff Writer

Christmas is not the busiest time of the year for Sandra Gray. Her busiest time is the weeks that follow, most commonly known as "tax time."

And while others hurried around purchasing and mailing Christmas packages and making lists of New Year's resolutions, Ms. Gray, a local entrepreneur, was catching up on the ever-changing tax laws. Ms. Gray, who operates Professional Administrative Services, provides accounting and tax information services as part of her line of business services. A graduate of High Point College, she worked as a bookkeeper before deciding that she was ready to test her skills as an entrepreneur. She admits that she had an attack of nerves and second-guessed herself before going through with her decision. Now, a little more than 18 months later, she said her business has progressed further than she had expected it to be at this point

and is "holding steady."  
"I thought about it for about a year, and I saved up money before I started my business. I was very nervous at first. I was frightened that people would not know me. I was trying to figure out how to get new customers. I had two customers when I started," said the Winston-Salem native. "Now, I'm further along than I thought I would be. I thought that I would only have half the clients that I have. I'm going at a steady pace."

But Ms. Gray said that her good fortune thus far has not come without hard work, underestimation and growing experiences.

"The hardest part was coming up with money to get started. Then, I had to decide if I would open an office or work out of my home," said Ms. Gray, who began her business by going door-to-door with fliers advertising her services and by making personal contacts with potential clients. "I underestimated the income that I would make, but I think that has

ended up being to my advantage. I had a part-time job for eight months after I went into business."

The accounting field is a competitive one, so Ms. Gray opted to add a dimension to her services that would help give her an edge over her competitors. She said that she believes in personal contact and bringing services directly to her clients. And, in addition to accounting functions, Ms. Gray's service line also includes coordinating all payroll operations, hiring personnel, preparing job descriptions and general office administration. She said that those and other "extras" have given her a boost in a career field that has many suppliers.

"I haven't met anyone with the same system of services I have," she said. "The style is different from that used by older accountants. Everything I do is done on the computer, and I can go into offices and do the work right there for my clients."

There are few Afro-American female accountants in this area, and



Sandra Gray is preparing herself for the busiest season of her year -- the tax season. Ms. Gray operates Professional Administrative Services.

Photo by Mike Cunningham

Ms. Gray said that she has only come across one other Afro-American accounting business in the city, which is operated by a husband/wife team. But she said that she has not encountered any problems or rejections that she feels were clearly related to her being a minority. But she does feel

that the Afro-American community as a whole can do much more to get the maximum mileage out of their economic dollar within their own communities. She has dedicated herself to a system of networking within the black community that promotes reliance on one another for the

advancement of the overall group.  
"Winston-Salem is in an economic slump. We're going through a transition. The major companies have mainly disappeared. But that gives us more opportunity for small businesses

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### Allen Elected Systems Officer

Cecelia E. Allen of Greensboro has been elected systems officer at First Wachovia Operational Services in Winston-Salem. She is a senior analyst/programmer in Systems Development. Ms. Allen is a native of Nanticoke, Md., and a graduate of North Carolina A&T State University. She has a master's degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.



### Small business loans promote economic growth in area

CHARLOTTE -- During fiscal year 1989, 23 small business loans were approved in Forsyth County, totaling \$3,296,795, according to Gary A. Keel, district director of the Charlotte District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Statewide, 295 loans were approved from October 1988 through September 1989, totaling more than \$57.6 million. The loans, which were made in 60 of the 100 counties in North Carolina, helped small businesses create jobs or retain employees. This represents

an 11-percent increase in the number of loans, and a 9-percent increase in the dollar amount over fiscal year 1988.

"Small business is the key to economic growth in North Carolina," said Mr. Keel.

North Carolina ranks sixth in new business incorporations, which increased 11.4 percent in the first six months of 1989 compared to the first six months of 1988.

SBA loans are primarily made by private lenders, usually banks, guaranteed up to 90 percent by the

SBA. The maximum guaranteed percentage of loans exceeding \$155,000, up to \$570,000, is 85 percent.

Loan proceeds may be used for legitimate business purposes, including machinery, equipment, furniture, inventory, real estate and working capital. Working capital loans generally have maturities of five to seven years. Fixed assets, such as the purchase or major renovation of business premises, may have maturity up to 25 years.

Interest rates for loans with

maturities of seven or more years cannot exceed 2.75 percent above prime, and loans with maturities of less than seven years cannot exceed 2.25 percent above prime.

SBA loan programs also include the Export Revolving Line of Credit to assist small businesses in exporting their products and services abroad, contract loans to give contractors and subcontractors a short-term line of credit, and the seasonal line of credit to assist small businesses affected by a seasonal upswing in business.



Three of the winners were welcomed backstage at the Tryall Beach and Golf Resort by a Motown performer and the company president. Pictured are, from left, Lanita Kelly of Euclid, Ohio, Teddy Riley, a Motown singer, Brenda Lee Moore of Richmond, Va., Jheryl Busby, president and chief executive officer of Motown, and Kendal Eutomey of Brooklyn, N.Y.

### Pepsi treats 20 winners to 'Soul-By-The-Sea' vacation

MONTEGO BAY, Jamaica -- Twenty grand prize winners of the Pepsi-Cola-sponsored "Soul-By-The-Sea" sweepstakes -- and their guests -- enjoyed five fun-filled, all-expense-paid days under the warm Caribbean sun here recently.

Selected from more than 20,000 entrants in 15 states, the District of Columbia and the nation of Jamaica, the winners were special guests at a Motown Records concert featuring Smokey Robinson, Stevie Wonder and the Boys, with a dozen more Motown recording stars.

This "family gathering" of Motown star performers revives a company tradition, dating back to the time when the Gordys hosted such parties in their home.

Hosted by Donnie Simpson of Black Entertainment Television, the concert was aired on BET's "Video Soul" program from Dec. 25 to 28.

"This soul-fun-in-the-sun vacation is our way of saying 'thank you' to Pepsi customers," said Michael Green, manager of

black consumer marketing for Pepsi-Cola Co.

"Sweepstakes winners enjoyed a rest from a hectic, chilly winter in the United States and collected memories of a beautiful country, with beautiful, hospitable people," Mr. Green said.

"They also saw, close up, many of the giants who are making musical history in America and the world."

The sweepstakes winners also made friends. "I plan to write everybody I met on this trip," said Tracey Johnston, a Newark, N.J., secretary, who collected addresses.

Another winner said: "We came from all over the country, but after sharing the concert, the cruises and the meals, we began feeling like family."

Other Motown Records performers taking part in the event included the Good Girls, a new group which supporters tout as the new Supremes, Gerald Alston, Shanice Wilson, Street 4, Teddy Riley, Johnny Gill, Wrecks 'n Effect and the bassist "Brownmark."

## Chronicle Award Nominees

The Winston-Salem Chronicle invites you to help in the selection of this year's recipients for our "Man and Woman of the Year" and for our "Community Service Award."

Recipients will be chosen by the Chronicle staff and advisory board. Judging will be based as follows: The "Man and Woman of the Year" will be persons who have demonstrated an outstanding character trait, one which would serve as a model for others. This could be the fact that they have triumphed over some personal tragedy, or they helped an individual (or group of people) overcome some obstacle in order to obtain a better standard of living. The incident or incidents for which the "Man and Woman of the Year" are being nominated must have occurred during the year of 1989.

The recipient of the "Community Service Award" will be judged based on his or her contribution to the Afro-American community. The individual must have demonstrated a commitment to serving the Afro-American community through his or her affiliation with community service agencies, community-oriented projects or community institutions, ie, schools, churches, etc.

Your nominees (one for "Man of the Year," one for "Woman of the Year," the other for "Community Service Award") should be Winston-Salem residents and will be recognized in the Jan. 25, 1990, special edition of the Chronicle as well as receive commemorative plaques.

Please print legibly and be as specific as possible in describing your nominees' accomplishments. Nominations must be received by the Chronicle no later than 5:30 p.m. on Jan. 12, 1990.

### WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Nominee's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominee's Address \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Activities, memberships, affiliations \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain briefly why you think this person deserves to be "Woman of the Year."

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### MAN OF THE YEAR

Nominee's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominee's Address \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Activities, memberships, affiliations \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain briefly why you think this person deserves to be "Man of the Year."

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

Nominee's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominee's Address \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Activities, memberships, affiliations \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain briefly why you think this person deserves to receive "Community Service Award."

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Deliver Your Form To:

# Winston-Salem Chronicle

617 N. Liberty St., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102 (919) 722-8624