

**Bass**

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 survival program. This month, *Essence* magazine highlighted the center as "the extended parental force so vital as families have become scattered and the black community less inclined to step in." Each day, the center provides after-school academic assistance, cultural activities, drug-prevention education and parental support. Currently, 150 children are served by the center.

According to center director Dorothy Graham Wheeler, the donation will establish the Marshall Bass Best Choice Center Endowment Fund. The money is being deposited with the Winston-Salem Foundation, with NationsBank acting as the trustee of the funds. Tom Lawson, director of donor services, noted that the foundation will "kick-in an additional \$20,000 when the Bass Endowment Fund reaches a threshold of \$80,000."

Additionally, in the exclusive interview, it was announced that Ernie Pitt, publisher of *The Chronicle*, dentist Raymond Oliver, and local businessman Tom Trollinger will lead the Center's Select Committee for the Endowment Fund in an effort to raise \$250,000 by Thanksgiving. Bass has also agreed to chair the Select Committee for the Best Choice Center Endowment Fund.

The Fund will attempt to leverage Bass' gift in a campaign specially targeted to Winston's African-American community. "Our Center has enjoyed the broad-based support of this entire community," said Graham Wheeler. "Like Mr. Bass, there are many African Americans in our community who are influential and affluent, and, with Mr. Bass' lead, hopefully, their minds and hearts will be triggered to make them play their unique role in the lives of these children who need them so badly."

"We are especially keen on getting the support of the African-American faith community," said Graham Wheeler. "Through our churches, we will access the everyday, grassroots people. And, with businessmen like

Messers, Bass, Oliver, Pitt, and Trollinger, we will have inroads to our community's substantial business and professional people. It is exciting!"

Bass' philanthropy is the largest single gift ever made to advance the work of the Best Choice Center. "However," Graham Wheeler said, "since we got started almost a decade ago, between his personal donations and his influence with other people, Mr. Bass has steered more than \$20,000 to the work to save our children here at the Best Choice Center." Wheeler's brother, Joseph Carter of Raleigh, gave \$25,000 to purchase the Center's building a few years ago. Bass' gift and the \$250,000 to be raised within the next six months, will go for facilities expansion and a sustaining reserve to keep and attract staff.

Bass, a native of Goldsboro, is president and CEO of Marshall Bass and Associates, a Winston-based management consulting firm. He studied at Morgan State University in Baltimore and is a graduate of the University of Maryland, College Park. After retiring as a senior Army officer, he took a position with R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company for one year before being elected vice president for human resources of RJR Industries in 1970.

From 1985 to 1991, Mr. Bass served in his elected position as senior vice president for RJR/Nabisco. He oversaw the staff responsibilities worldwide in public and governmental affairs, including eight operating companies in South Africa.

Over the years, Bass has been deeply involved in civic and philanthropic work. While at RJR, he was a key player in the relations between the corporate and private sectors and community-based organizations in black communities across America. He holds almost a dozen honorary doctoral degrees, primarily for his work to strengthen historically black colleges. When asked his motivation, he responded humbly, "It is the right thing to do because I have been blessed."

**WSSU**

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eight years. They were joined by members James A. Fyock, James W. "Mike" Page, George A. Ragland and Walter S. Tucker.

Tucker, who is relocating to Charlotte, said that is the only reason behind his resignation.

Other members who will have to sit out one year after June 30 are Bernice H. Davenport, John D. Eller, Robert A. Emken and Dallas Mackey.

"I felt my services there were no longer needed," said Newell, a retired WSSU professor who has been involved with the school since 1965.

"I think it's unfortunate that we've had the adverse publicity," Newell said. "It appears the community is very much divided and very much concerned."

Some feel the resignations were the only

avenue that could have been taken.

"I think it's all going to work out," said Gregory T. Burrell, one of the remaining members of the board. The resignations might have been the only way for the foundation board to move ahead, he suggested.

"Bickering back and forth is not going to benefit anyone in the long term," Burrell added. "We just don't need any more negative press."

The foundation board called the special meeting to announce the resignations and vote on new bylaws. The board voted to allow the chancellor and vice chancellor for development and university relations voting privileges. Not included in the new bylaws is a request by the board of trustees to appoint the vice chancellor for development as president of the foundation board.

Hiring a new vice chancellor for development will assist the board in moving

ahead, said Burrell. That position, which serves as a liaison between the university and the foundation, has been vacant for about a year.

Schexnider has not indicated if he is currently considering any candidates for the position, but mentioned earlier that he was waiting to clear matters with the foundation board before appointing a new vice chancellor for development.

Even though some foundation board members welcome a lessening of tension, the resignations still hit hard.

"I would guess this is the saddest time of my life," said National Alumni President Beaufort Bailey, an ex-officio member of the board.

Still, Newell said, what matters is the school and its students.

"People will come and go, but the university will remain there," she stated.

**Dismissed**

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services board.

Arnold feels confident that the court will back the commissioners' decision. "Case law in North Carolina is pretty clear, that the appointing authority has the power," said Arnold.

Arnold said he holds Dorsett and Barnett responsible for the financial problems of the social services department; however, Barnett has only been on the board since July 1996 and has never voted on a social services budget.

The cost of specialized foster care has risen over the past several years, said Arnold, and the social services board has not moved to ebb the flow of cash.

Dorsett disagreed with Arnold's assessment, and said that costs were down by more than a million dollars this year. Dorsett added that the social services department's financial problems existed while Arnold was on the board.

The conservative commissioners are using those problems as justification to dismiss him and Barnett, said Dorsett, and replace them with members who will do the commissioners' bidding.

Items on the Republicans' wish list may include dismissing the recently hired director of social services, Joyce Lewis, and the Rev. Michael King, chairman of the social services board.

Lewis was recently hired by the social services board, even though county commissioners passed a resolution ordering that the board wait before hiring a director.

Problems between conservatives on the board of commissioners and King have been ongoing. While drawing up the 1996-97 fiscal year budget, the previous board of commissioners withheld some of the money requested by Social Services. They instructed the social services board to request

additional money as needed.

When Social Services made that request, the now-Republican board of commissioners balked at honoring the previous board's promise.

Several months ago, King threatened to sue the board of commissioners for that funding. King could not be reached for comment.

This attempt at wholesale control by the county commissioners is at odds with the structure of the social services board, said Dorsett, which is regulated by the state.

"The county commissioners are not supposed to be micromanaging the social services board," said Dorsett.

All's fair in politics, replied Arnold, and all is open to interpretation.

"Politics is policy, and their policy is lousy," said Arnold.

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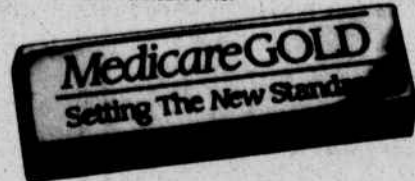
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