

WSSU get new vice chancellor

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Winston-Salem- Dr. Melody C. Pierce, vice chancellor for student affairs at Southern University (New Orleans), has been named vice chancellor for student affairs at Winston-Salem State University.

In making the appointment, Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr. said, "We are quite pleased to have Dr. Pierce join our team here at Winston-Salem State. She has more than 20 years of higher education experience in student affairs, teaching, and research, and I believe she will serve the university well in strengthening programs for our students."

Pierce's management experience covers an array of areas,

including: student personnel services, teaching, research, counseling, program development and implementation, academic advising and the coordination of state-level politics in higher education. Throughout her career she has also overseen the areas of disabled student services, student activities and organizations, student health services, registrar services, admissions, residence life and housing. Having served in student affairs leadership at several academic settings, she has worked with a variety of multicultural student populations.

"My philosophy on student life is grounded in putting student learning at the heart of the education enterprise," said Pierce.

Before her position at South-

ern University, Pierce served as vice president for student affairs at Albany State University, assistant vice president and director of residential life and student union building at Chicago State University and director of student life at University of the Virgin Islands, St. Thomas.

Pierce earned her Ph.D. at Michigan State University, Ed.S. at University of Missouri, and her master's and bachelor's degree at Southern Illinois University.

She is a member of numerous national professional associations, including the American College Personnel Association, Association of College Administration Professionals and the American Association of University Women.



Students pose in an unoccupied holding area in the Forsyth County Detention Center. Photo by Kevin Walker

Jail

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"This is where we keep people from 16 to 93," Sgt. B.G. Geiger told the group as they assembled on the steps outside of the facility before the tour.

The journey began where it begins for everyone brought to the jail - the intake area, where some are brought to face a magistrate or to be administered breathalyzer tests.

The students were surprised to see several individuals locked away in holding cells in the area. The scene resembled a zoo, with the youngsters peering awkwardly into cells as those behind bars looked dazed and confused about the entire situation.

Cpl. L.P. Pegues, who led the tour along with Geiger, told them to respect the men and women on the other side of the bars. He reminded them that many in the jail are still awaiting trial and have merely been charged with crimes.

After the lecture, there was a little less staring as the students were taken to the main male and female housing areas, located on separate floors.

The harshness of jail life was explained more thoroughly by officials. Televisions are in each area, but were off during the tour. Officials explained that television time is limited and television choices are even more limited.

"They do not get to watch what they want... We choose a station and it stays there," Pegues said, responding to a question from a student.

The workout area on each floor was barren. The students were told that play time in jail is rare.

Because the population at the jail

is not at its highest, students actually were able to enter the holding area and marveled at the nearness of two bunks and a commode. They also expressed disgust over the showers, with no curtains, in open view in the holding area.

Crosby said he did not want the students to get a watered-down version of jail, like those often depicted on television shows where inmates work out all day and watch sitcoms at night. Jail is not a Hilton, officials stressed.

Youth offenders, those 16 to 18, wear special color jumpsuits in the jail. As one official held up one of the outfits for the youngsters to see, Crosby reminded them that 16 was not far away.

"Now you have a choice about coming here. Don't ever do anything so that you won't have a choice about coming here," he said.

Besides the tours, the program tries to teach skills such as anger management and violence prevention through several programs designed by Crosby. For instance, when a situation arises in the program, students are tried by their peers in a mock court setting. Students are also given jobs in the program. Some serve as police officers; others are lawyers and judges. They are paid in faux bills for their services - just as the real professionals are - and are given raises and bonuses for good work.

Students are given frequent opportunities to spend their dough to buy a variety of items, from clothes to electronics. Crosby buys the items out of his own pocket. He has bankrolled much of the program himself, although the school's PTA has stepped up to help as well.

In its first year, Crosby was able to convince several local businesses to provide food and other merchandise for the youngsters. But the battle for sponsors has been harder this year, he said.

Two teachers at Hanes recently gave Crosby \$100 each. He'll use the money to give one of the students a scholarship.

Anyone interested in donating money to the program can contact Hanes Middle School at (336) 727-2252.

Kimberley Park

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zone 5. It specializes in math, science and technology, and features hands-on activities with small classes.

Jackson said her previous experience as principal at Y.E. Smith Science, Design and Technology Magnet School in Durham, and assistant principal at schools in Danville, Va., has prepared her for the challenge of enrolling more students and building upon the school's past successes.

"I have a lot of good people helping me. The assistant principal (Minnie Hewitt) has been very helpful, like a right hand."

Jackson acknowledges that she has challenges ahead. She says that parents perceive location as a major element in the decision of

choosing their child's school. More than 90 percent of the students at Kimberley Park are African-American - a reflection of the surrounding community.

"I hope parents are very involved in looking for schools, not just based on where they're located, but the program. A lot of times that's not the case."

The school is now trying to get the word out about its program through various means, including its Web site, which gives various details and highlights about Kimberley Park.

"We want people to know that we are open for business," Jackson said.

The other zone-5 schools have concentrations in visual arts, communications and 21st century academics. The school system provides transportation to any school in the zone that parents choose for their child.

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