

Living Dolls

Photo by Bruce Chapman

Young girls hold up their Venus and Serena Williams dolls Tuesday on a tennis court at Hayes Taylor YMCA in Greensboro. They were among several youngsters who gathered at the Y for a chance to get a quick tennis lesson from Richard Williams, the father of the two top-ranked tennis stars. The kids were disappointed, though, when they learned that Williams had to cancel his planned stop in Greensboro. Williams reportedly had to fly to California to help Venus with a recurring injury. Officials said Williams may reschedule in the weeks to come.



City pairs top administrators, up-and-comers for program

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD
THE CHRONICLE

Martha Marcolini has spent the past three years managing the accounting departments for Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum. As finance director, financial statements, budgets and capital improvements occupy much of Marcolini's time, but still she figures she has plenty more to learn on the job.

"I like to learn new things. That gives me a lot of job satisfaction, and I'm always interested in knowing more," said Marcolini, who is one of 14 mid-level city employees to participate in the Leadership Management Program to learn more about the details of city operations. City officials supported the establishment of such a program that would tackle successional planning.

The program, developed by the Office of Organizational Effectiveness, began in May and was designed to develop and cultivate employees for future leader positions. Current city leaders are paired with protégés to identify and analyze the individual strengths and weaknesses of the protégé on the job.

Applicants were invited from second-tier supervisors and screened by a panel of department heads before being selected as protégés for the program. The program is scheduled to conclude in November.

Derwick Paige, director of development for Winston-Salem, was chosen to mentor Marcolini and he believes "the more you can groom people now," the more prepared they will be for future professional opportunities. Paige wears numerous hats on the job and Marcolini is getting a firsthand perspective of the various tasks and situations Paige jugs on a regular basis.

Paige and Marcolini meet for several hours each week. During that time, they discuss current projects or challenges Marcolini is facing and they attend city meetings where Marcolini can sit in and observe other aspects of city development. "I think one of the biggest pieces of the program is trust, because we do talk about a lot of things that are confidential....It just gives her another opportunity to lean on somebody who has been through the organization a little bit longer," said Paige, who has been working for the city for almost 20 years.

Participation in the Leadership Management Program in no way guarantees future professional advancement, said Lee Garrity, assistant city manager, who explained that it is a way to develop job skills and get exposure to city government.



Martha Marcolini, of Joel Coliseum, spends time with Derwick Paige, city director of development, as part of the city's new Leadership Management Program.

"It's good for employees and it's good for the city. We're investing in our employees. Turnover is very expensive for us, and all things considered, there are a lot of advantages to recruiting from within your own ranks," said Garrity, who said the city hopes to offer the program annually.

Marcolini is enjoying the change of gears from number crunching to policy and procedures of city functions. Much of what she is learning from Paige in the program is organizational and structural skills and methods, much of which she doesn't get to dabble in.

Paige said he is benefiting from the Leadership Management Program as much as his protégé. "I think (Marcolini) is extremely valuable to the organization, as somebody we'd like to keep around for the long term," Paige said. "I think just the fact of mentoring and grooming employees for the long term has been extremely enjoyable."

"I believe once people find out what type programs you have available, enrollment would fill up. Technology is the way to go today, and I think the top students realize that."

Brown said she too wants to see a state-of-the-art school. However, she said it is incumbent upon the School Board to realize how African Americans perceive its actions.

"This is one situation where I believe the School Board needs to keep its word," she said. "In the long run it's going to cause problems for the school system if they don't follow through. There is already a mistrust of the School Board by many African Americans. If they don't do what they said, a lot of people might not vote for a school bond in the future."

School

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"I think they ought to build it where they said they were going to build it," Brown said. "They keep saying that there's not enough land to build it on Old Greensboro Road, but that looks like an excuse to not follow through with what they said."

"When you say something, you ought to do what you say," Brown added. "But it looks like just another broken promise. The people that I talked to before the bond vote said they would vote for the bond if the school was going to be put in East Winston. They voted for it, and now it's time to see the School Board deliver it."

Johnson said the issue isn't cut and dry. The local School Board has had a difficult time obtaining enough land on Old Greensboro Road to accommodate the state-of-the-art technology school that he envisions. The School Board has lined up a 25-acre tract, but Johnson said he believes that is not adequate for the school's physical plant.

"I just can't live with the idea of having a facility on 25 acres when there's going to be a new school built in the Northwest District on more than 60 acres," Johnson said. "When the bond vote took place, we thought we had enough land and we moved forward with those plans."

Since then there have been many complications and setbacks. One of them involves the price of land that one owner is asking the School Board to pay for land on Old Greensboro Road. That has caused the School Board to seek another site.

The one that it is now considering is off Waughtown Street near Hall-Woodward School. It is 10 miles away from the original site.

Johnson said he doesn't see a

problem in making the switch if it will help all parties involved.

"Some people are going to raise sand about the change in sites, but they need to consider what's at stake," he said. "We promised to build a school in East Winston and that's what we want to do. But we also want to put up a school that we can be proud of and that will offer the children of this community what they really need. We want to do what's right for the children of East Winston."

That, according to Johnson, includes broadening the plans for the school.

"We haven't built a new high school in East Winston in more than 40 years," he said. "When

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