

# Smalls realizes her dream with new laundry

BY T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE

LaTonya Smalls has three beautiful children: a 2-year-old daughter, a 10-year-old daughter and a three-week-old coin-operated laundry.

And like most new mothers, Smalls' newest child gets her up early in the morning and keeps her up late at night. But Smalls would have it no other way.

"I don't mind the long hours. This is my baby," she said.

Crown Laundry Land is on the corner of Acadia and Hollyrod streets in a racially eclectic, mostly residential area. Pedestrians and drivers find the building hard to miss because of the colorful and expansive mural that adorns it.

The business is in a 100-year-old building that most recently was used as a bingo hall. Smalls acted as her own contractor in the nearly year-long renovation process — personally hiring the plumbers, electricians and roofers and working with them side by side.

Smalls had always dreamed of owning her own business. When she finally decided to take that leap of faith, she wanted the sort of business that would allow her to balance her duties as a mother and her part-time job, which she is keeping for know, partly because of the benefits.

"I wanted something that I could do myself. I didn't want to have to depend on a staff because staff gets sick and things happen in their life. I



Photos by Kevin Walker  
**LaTonya Smalls and cousin Lee Smalls run the new Crown Laundry Land facility, which is off Acadia Street.**

also wanted someplace where I could bring my kids," she said.

Smalls and cousin Lee Smalls man the laundry, which is open each day from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

"If you don't see my face in here, you will see his face," Smalls said.

Other family members have helped by giving their time as well. Smalls' father, Williams Smalls, is one of her biggest



supporters. As she talked about the laundry business Sunday, he and his grandchildren decorated a Christmas tree in a corner of

the facility.

The laundry is spacious with lots of windows and open spaces. Although a fairly new business owner, Smalls has already become a whiz at selling her business. She was quick to point out that the laundry boasts 20-, 30-, 40- and 50-pound washing machines.

"If you have a little bit of clothes we can accommodate you. If you have a lot of clothes we can accommodate you," she said. All of the dryers can hold 50 pounds of clothes. Smalls scouted several laundries before opening up hers. She said she wanted to offer things that the competition didn't have. So at Crown Laundry there is a large lounge/television area where people can sit down and fold their clothes. The facility also offers a drop-off service for people too busy to wash their own clothes.

The South Winston neighborhood that Crown Laundry calls home is a true melting pot, with white, black and Hispanic households. Smalls plans to brush up on the Spanish she learned in high school in order to better serve her clientele. She also is having bilingual signs printed.

Smalls is not only confident that Crown Laundry will be a success, she is already talking about the possibility of opening more laundries in the future. Business failure is a topic that Smalls has not given much thought to, nor does she intend to.

"I know that God did not create this for it not to exist," she said.

## Woods to give keynote tonight at ceremony

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Dr. Kristy Freeman Woods, professor of medicine at Wake Forest University School of Medicine and director of the Maya Angelou Research Center on Minority Health in the Department of Internal Medicine, will deliver the keynote address for Winston-Salem State University's School of Health Sciences Pinning Ceremony today (Dec. 11) at 6 p.m. in Dillard Auditorium of the Albert H. Anderson Conference Center.



Woods

The ceremony continues the observance of the school's theme "Celebrating 50 Years of Excellence in Nursing Education."

Woods is a graduate of Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, where she received her bachelor of arts degree in biology. She earned her medical degree from the Tulane University School of Medicine, New Orleans, La. She also earned a master's of public health degree from Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

She has served as a professor of medicine at Vanderbilt University's Department of Medicine in the General Internal Medicine Section in Nashville, Tenn. She also served as professor of medicine, director of the Meharry Sickle Cell Center and vice chair of the research department of internal medicine at Meharry Medical College in Nashville.

She was associate professor of medicine in the Medical College of Georgia's Department of Medicine in Augusta, Ga. She was also a member of the visiting faculty at Moi University of Health Sciences in Eldoret, Kenya, Africa.

The ceremony is free and open to the public.

# Victory and Truliant credit unions merge

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Mergers are not new for Victory Masonic Credit Union. In 1984, it merged with the Employees Credit Union of Winston Mutual Life Insurance Co., and in 1990 Victory merged with the Shriner Masonic Credit Union. Each move was a calculated effort by Victory's board of directors to expand available services and enhance member benefits.

So merging with Truliant Federal Credit Union is a natural step, said Lafayette Jones, Victory board chairman.

"Small financial institutions are struggling to operate, and their size limits how much they can do for members," said Jones. "By merging with a larger credit union, we can offer a vast selection of services to our membership because we'll have direct access to greater resources."

Jones explained Victory chose Truliant based on their common mission, the array of services Truliant offers and its strong standing in the industry. Truliant has more than \$900 million in assets. Victory will continue operations in the



**Lafayette Jones, Victory board chairman; and Lois Burks, Victory board member, present a gift to Marcus Schaefer, Truliant president/CEO, to honor their new partnership.**

5 Star International Market, and Truliant has established a call center to address the concerns of Victory members.

Truliant, with headquarters in Winston-Salem, serves about 170,000 members from more than 700 different organizations in North Carolina, South Carolina, Ohio, Florida and Virginia. Its mission is to enhance the quality of life of its membership, which echoes

the primary goal of Victory.

"Victory successfully served a diverse population, and this merger will help us continue these efforts," said Marcus Schaefer, president and CEO of Truliant Federal Credit Union.

This merger lays the groundwork for the creation of a new brand of financial tools, called Victory, designed to address the specific needs

of African-Americans and Latinos. It will continue Victory's legacy of advancing Winston-Salem's minority community. Second, Jones will join Truliant's board of directors as an associate director.

"Mr. Jones has a strong background in diversity marketing, and these skills will benefit Truliant and all of our members," explained Schaefer.

Finally, there are plans to build a new Victory branch in 2004 between downtown and East Winston for easy access to the combined membership.

For more information, visit the new Web site at [www.victory-truliant.org](http://www.victory-truliant.org) or call (336) 659-5335 for a member services representative.

## Spelman

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Fortune 500 companies.

She has used her background in national affairs and in law to become a leader in the House, serving in the Democratic House leadership group and as the Democratic chair of the Women's Caucus. She also has been a member of the Committee on the Reorganization of the Congress, appointed by the speaker when the Democrats controlled the House.

Her success in writing bills and getting them enacted has

made her one of the most effective legislative leaders in the House. She has a full vote in House committees and serves on the Government Reform Committee and the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Designed to be a research site, LEADS is a place for discussion of contemporary issues and their implication for public policy. It is an environment where students can learn from women who themselves have been on the front lines of social change in both the private and public sector. It is also a place where finan-

cial literacy and economic development are promoted, where the transformational power of the artist as community leader is embraced, where opportunities for dialogue across difference abound, and where our commitment to community service is enhanced and civic involvement is inspired by example.

"Ultimately, the center is intended to become a national resource for all who are concerned about the leadership development of women of color," explained Spelman College President Beverly Daniel Tatum.

## Eric S. Ellison Attorney at Law



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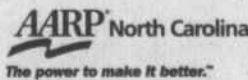
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