

BUSINESS FOCUS

Briefs

Chamber's West Area Council will present 'Networking'

The Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce West Area Council will present "Networking," by Dr. Sherry Sherrill, leadership/communication trainer at Forsyth Technical Community College, on Jan. 15. Registration, networking and coffee will begin at 7:15 a.m., and the breakfast and program will be from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. The session will be held at Village Inn Golf & Conference Center, Clemmons (I-40 exit 184). Admission is free to chamber members, but reservations are required by Jan. 13 (777-3787 extension 1922). RBC Centura Bank is the sponsor. For information on additional chamber events, visit www.winstonsalem.com.

Durham paying consultant to help commemorate 'Black Wall Street'

DURHAM (AP) — The city of Durham has hired a consultant to help commemorate a downtown area once known as "Black Wall Street" because it was home to several successful black-owned financial institutions.

The city will pay \$80,000 to an Asheville consultant and design team for suggestions on how to commemorate the two main blocks of Parrish Street, located between Roxboro and Corcoran streets. Booker T. Washington used the moniker "Black Wall Street" to describe the businesses that bankrolled the city's black middle class during the segregation era.

Preliminary proposals include developing a museum or institute to teach economic diversity. Work could also include sprucing up awnings, planters and streetlights to reflect the area's historic character.

The city has planned to revitalize the street since it adopted a downtown master plan in 2000. City and tourism officials want to promote the area's history to attract the same well-heeled tourists who frequent such places as Charleston, S.C., or Colonial Williamsburg, Va.

George Owens, former president of Tougaloo College, dies at age 84

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — George Owens, the first black president at Tougaloo College, died recently. He was 84.

Owens had been battling Parkinson's disease, said Beverly Hogan, Tougaloo's current president.

Owens, a Bolton native, became acting president in 1964 and was appointed president in 1965, serving until 1984. He was the ninth president of the private, historically black college and is credited with increasing funding to the school during difficult financial times.

He was the first alumnus to head the small college established by the American Missionary Association and the United Christian Missionary Society.

Tougaloo was a target of the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission, a state watchdog agency that fought integration in the 1960s. Tougaloo's racially mixed faculty was the commission's proof the school near Jackson was bucking Mississippi's established policy of racial segregation.

Owens also established the college as a "safe haven." The state chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union began at Tougaloo while he was president.

In 1998, the campus's health and wellness center was named after Owens and his wife, Ruth.

Black leader critical of Bank of America Kwanzaa gift card

CHARLOTTE (AP) — The leader of a black cultural center is encouraging blacks to protest a Bank of America Visa gift card decorated with symbols of Kwanzaa, saying the card misuses the holiday.

Gerry Chisolm, executive director of the Nubian Rootz Cultural Center of Charlotte, said the card promotes overspending by blacks.

"They are attempting to commercialize our spiritual holiday of Kwanzaa," Chisolm told a crowd of about 50 people who had gathered Sunday — the third day of Kwanzaa — at the main branch of the local library for a presentation on black burial grounds. "We feel it is urgent enough to bring to your intelligent attention."

Chisolm said Bank of America officials have declined to discontinue the prepaid card.

The card is sold like store gift cards: The giver pre-pays a balance and the recipient can then use it anywhere Visa cards are accepted. Bank of America has several such cards, including cards decorated for Christmas and Hanukkah.

The card is also a prominent part of a new campaign targeting black consumers and designed by an advertising agency that specializes in marketing to blacks.

ESR makes programmatic changes

To better serve all its clients and the community, ESR (Experiment in Self-Reliance) made these programmatic changes effective Jan. 1:

- ESR will receive walk-in clients from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays.

- ESR will be open Thursdays for staff meetings and training, computer and paper work (client appointments only).

- ESR will no longer provide bus passes for non-client walk-ins (clients only).

ESR appreciates your cooperation with these changes, especially regarding referrals. ESR will be as flexible as possible during the transition.

HUD program will train teens, expand housing

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

WASHINGTON — Thousands of young people who have not completed or who are at-risk of dropping out of high school will get a second chance to graduate while beginning a possible career in the construction trades because of nearly \$54 million in grants announced Dec. 23 by Alphonso Jackson, acting secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The grants are part of HUD's Youthbuild Program to provide job training, leadership skills and academic schooling to an estimated 3,300 low-income young people. These grants also will help build and rehabilitate more than 1,700 affordable housing units for lower income families.

Two grants were awarded in North Carolina: \$593,000 to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and \$400,000 to River City Community Development Corp. in Elizabeth City.

"Youthbuild grants help young people get back on the right track by not only providing them the education they need but the training they can use for careers in home building," said Jackson. "It's a wonderful feeling to know these young people discover the satisfaction of a job well done and local communities get more affordable housing in the process."

Young people who participate in these Youthbuild programs experience difficulty finding good jobs because they lack high school diplomas and necessary job skills. The grants

announced Dec. 23 will help these young men and women to receive high school equivalency diplomas and provide training in home-building skills that will qualify them for careers in the building industry.

HUD's Youthbuild Program provides young people between the ages of 16 and 24 with on-the-job training to acquire construction skills by building and renovating single-family homes and multifamily apartments. The homes are then sold at affordable prices to low- and very low-income persons as well as homeless individuals and families. In addition, these grants are anticipated to generate millions of additional dollars from other public and private sources. Youthbuild grants totaling \$437 million have been awarded since 1993.



Jackson

Wake offers info sessions for those with MBA resolutions

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Wake Forest University's Babcock Graduate School of Management will hold information sessions in January for its evening and fast-track executive MBA programs in Winston-Salem and its evening and Saturday MBA programs in Charlotte.

The sessions will be: 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Jan. 13 at the Morrocroft Centre, 6805 Morrison Blvd., Charlotte; and 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Jan. 14 at the Worrell Professional Center, room 1117, on the Wake Forest campus in Winston-Salem.

Anyone interested in learning more about the programs is invited to attend.

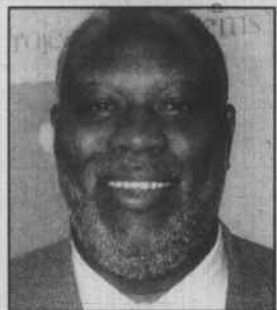
The Wake Forest Evening MBA Program — Winston-Salem and the Wake Forest Evening MBA Program — Charlotte are designed for professionals, managers and entrepreneurs with strong job performance and potential for advancement. Classes in Winston-Salem meet two evenings a week at the Worrell Center. Classes in Charlotte meet two evenings a week at the school's campus in the South-Park area. The two-year programs admit new classes each August.

The Wake Forest Fast-Track Executive MBA Program — Winston-Salem is completed in 17 months and is designed for upper-middle and senior-level executives with general management responsibilities or those preparing for higher management positions. Classes begin each August and meet on Fridays and Saturdays every other weekend at the Worrell Center. Weekend lodging and a two-week international management study tour are included in tuition.

The Wake Forest Saturday MBA Program — Charlotte is designed to provide in-depth education for young working professionals with a classroom investment of just one day a week. The program meets 42 Saturdays a year for two years.

The school also offers a two-year full-time MBA program in Winston-Salem. Information on all Babcock programs will be available at the sessions.

For information on the Winston-Salem evening or fast-track executive MBA programs, call 758-4584 or (866) WAKE-MBA. For information on the full-time MBA program, call (800) 722-1622.



Nigel Alston



Annie Hairston

Motivational speaker inspires members of city's black chamber

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Winston-Salem Black Chamber of Commerce met Dec. 16 at the Goler Community Building. Nigel Alston — motivational speaker, talk show host, meeting facilitator, and newspaper columnist — was the speaker.

Alston is the director of employee/community relations for GMAC Insurance. He received an honorary doctorate from Livingstone College in February 2002.

Alston shared thoughts with those in attendance on the topic "You Have What You Are." He reminded the members and guests that we judge ourselves by our intentions, but others judge us by our actions. He emphasized that what a person does on a daily basis is what a person believes, which leads to what a person has. Alston encouraged the members and guests to "do" for the community

individually and collectively.

Alston can be reached on his Web site at www.motivationalmoments.com.

The "Business Spotlight" featured was Annie Hairston of Pan African Imagery, a family-owned business that began Jan. 12, 1993. Hairston told the significance of many of the artifacts on display from six African countries. As a former educator she sees Pan African Imagery as a venue to continue pursuing and promoting her first love, education. She can be reached on her Web site at www.panafricanimagery.com.

The Winston-Salem Black Chamber of Commerce's next monthly meeting is scheduled for Jan. 20 at 7 p.m. at Goler Community Center, on the corner of Sixth and Chestnut streets. The meeting is open to the public.

For more information contact Miriam McCarter, president, at 724-0334.

United They Sign



Ernst & Young COO Dennis Purdum (left) joins Bert Mitchell, chairman and CEO of Mitchell & Titus (right), for the signing of an alliance agreement between the two firms. Mitchell & Titus is the largest minority-owned firm in the country. Purdum and Mitchell are joined by John Ferraro, vice chair of Ernst & Young, and Laurence Charney of Ernst & Young's Metropolitan New York Area management team (front row left to right) and other senior leaders of both firms (back row).

Flagstar Bank settles discrimination case against white clients

BY DEANNA WRENN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

Flagstar Bank will pay \$1.2 million in a class-action settlement, after a judge ruled the lender charged white customers higher fees than minorities.

Flagstar, a mortgage company based in Troy, Mich., charged minority customers up to 3 percent in loan officer commission fees while charging whites a maximum of 4 percent.

"I've never seen anything like it," said Amy Ficklin DeBrot, an Indianapolis attorney who sued Flagstar on behalf of 970 consumers who claimed they were overcharged.

Flagstar spokeswoman Susan Cherry said the company does not comment on lawsuits.

Tim Baker, a U.S. District Court magistrate judge, signed the settlement agreement in Indianapolis last week.

Flagstar has agreed to reimburse lawsuit participants the amount they were overcharged, ranging from \$63 to more than \$2,000 each and

totaling \$704,000 plus interest. The company also will pay each person \$193 in noneconomic damages, about \$160,000 total.

In addition, the company will pay \$300,000 in legal fees.

Most of the lawsuit participants live in Indiana and Michigan, and should get checks from Flagstar soon, DeBrot said recently.

U.S. District Court Judge John Tindler ruled in August that Flagstar's policy discriminated against nonminorities. The decision allowed the class-action case to continue.

Flagstar implemented the policy in May 2001 and discontinued it in January 2002, according to court documents.

DeBrot said the bank started the policy because internal investigators thought minorities might have been charged more than whites, and the bank wanted to ensure that wasn't the case.

DeBrot said the bank used U.S. Housing and Urban Development forms intended for statistical purposes only to determine a loan applicant's race.