

Hunt Project ED brings years of experience



Regional Director
Ruby B. Archie

AKAs to convene in Greensboro

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The 55th Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., is coming to Greensboro's Koury Convention Center today (March 20) through Sunday. The Mid-Atlantic Region is one of 10 regions that collectively form Alpha Kappa Alpha, the nation's first black Greek letter sorority. The region covers North Carolina and Virginia, and has produced two national presidents, three national parliamentarians, two national treasurers, a national secretary, an Ivy Leaf editor-in-chief and a plethora of National Committee Representatives.

More than 5,400 AKA members make their homes in the Mid-Atlantic Region. The oldest chapter in the region is Delta Omega of Petersburg, Va., while the newest chapter is Psi Gamma Omega of Hillsborough, N.C. There are currently 118 chapters in the region. Dr. Norma S. White, the 25th AKA National President, coined the region "The Marvelous Mid-Atlantic Region."

This year's conference is under the leadership of Centennial Mid-Atlantic Regional Director Ruby B. Archie. For the past several months, the chapters in the Northern Carolina Cluster have spent countless hours planning this Centennial Conference Celebration. More than 1,200 AKA sorors are expected to attend to celebrate their past accomplishments and plan future goals.

For more information on the conference, go to www.midatlanticaka.org.

Pam Peoples-Joyner is well-known for her work at the Urban League

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

The waiting room is full down the hall from Pam Peoples-Joyner's office. Men sit there in comfortable chairs filling out forms while waiting to be seen.

The men in the waiting room have come seeking cures for what troubles them, but Peoples-Joyner is no doctor and her office isn't located in a clinic or hospital. The men in the waiting room are ex-offenders looking for basic needs like employment and shelter.

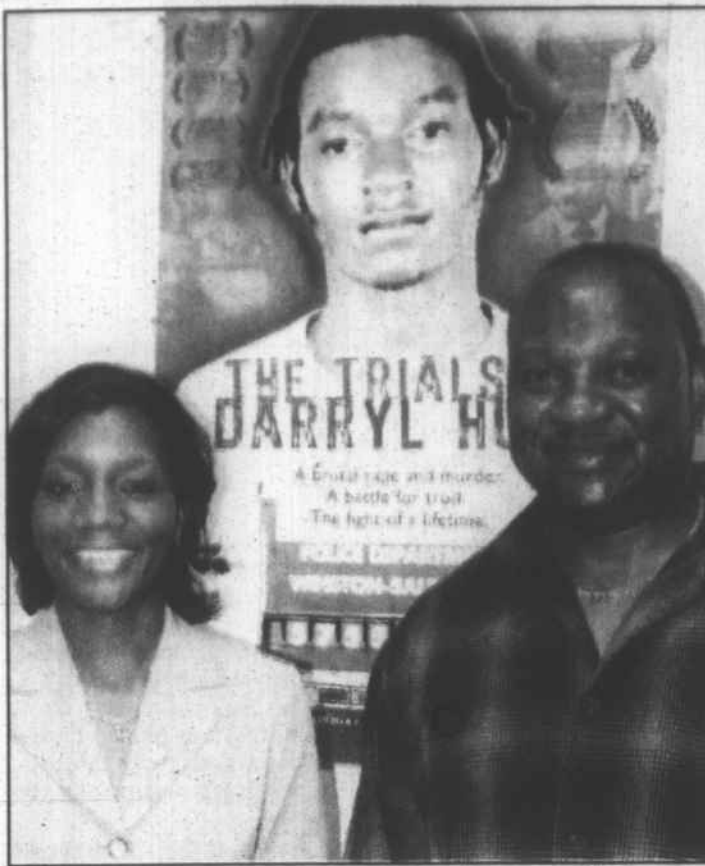
Peoples-Joyner is the new executive director of the Darryl Hunt Project for Freedom and Justice, which helps ex-offenders reintegrate into society. The Project also provides assistance to the wrongly incarcerated and advocates for judicial reform. It was founded by Darryl Hunt, who was in prison himself for 18 years for a murder he didn't commit.

Peoples-Joyner says the waiting room is usually full Monday through Thursday. It only empties on Friday when the office is closed to the public for administrative work.

Ex-offenders being helped by the project are called associates.

"It's busy," said Peoples-Joyner. "My first month here, we accessed 174 new associates (who) walked through the doors here."

Peoples-Joyner said her passions in life are teaching and



Pam Peoples-Joyner with Darryl Hunt.

Photo by Todd Luck

helping others.

"When you have a passion for something, a passion for helping people, you just can't let it go," she said.

She's been teaching part-time at Winston-Salem State University since 2003. Her other passion has manifested itself through her work with non-profits. She holds a bachelors degree in sociology from WSSU and a master's in adult education from N.C. A&T State University.

After college, she became a staffing manager for a temporary employment agency. She says she found that the agency tended to shy away from clients with criminal records, so she decided

to find a job more in tune with helping others.

She found that in 2000 at the Winston-Salem Urban League. She was the organizations' employment specialist, helping the underemployed and unemployed find new opportunities. She served as a juvenile reentry coordinator with the Winston-Salem State University Center for Community Safety before joining the Hunt Project in January.

Peoples-Joyner, who also has volunteer positions with the Human Relations Commission and the Winston-Salem Service Corps, said she made the leap to the Hunt Project because she felt

she was ready to be an executive director after her many years at non-profits.

Hunt, who works at the project he founded, agreed that Peoples-Joyner was ready to spread her wings. He says she has already excelled.

"She has done an outstanding job of really pulling this office together," said Hunt. "She's been on the job a month and a half and has already obtained a grant for a job placement (employee to help at the office). I can't ask for nothing better than that."

Peoples-Joyner says that she has had good teachers over the years who have shown her how to get things done. She credits her know-how to the tutelage of Delores "D" Wylie, former CEO of the Urban League; Reginald McCaskill, Service Corps director; and Rev. John Mendez, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, which she attends.

As executive director of the Darryl Hunt Project for Freedom and Justice, Peoples-Joyner runs day-to-day operations. She also makes sure the non-profit gets the money it needs to keep going. Grant-writing is a large part of that. She too is excited about the grant that will allow the agency to hire another staffer.

"We're constantly trying to be creative and innovative to find employment opportunities

for associates and that's why I'm so excited about this new grant to hire a job developer," said Peoples-Joyner.

Currently, the project refers those who have completed job training to employers in local job listings. However, many of them may have a problem with hiring people with criminal records. Plans are for the job developer to form relationships with local employers and job agencies so they'll be more inclined to hire associates.

Those who have been in prison often find their biggest challenge is finding a job. Forsyth Technical Community College, Project Reentry and Goodwill Industry all offer job readiness training to the project's associates.

"Ninety percent of people who come to our agency are seeking employment opportunities," said Peoples-Joyner.

The project also works with ex-offenders by providing housing assistance and substance abuse and family counseling.

Peoples-Joyner is married to firefighter Robert Joyner and they have one son, Robert III.

Darryl Hunt Project for Freedom is located at 8 W. Third St. Contact the office at 336-831-1912.



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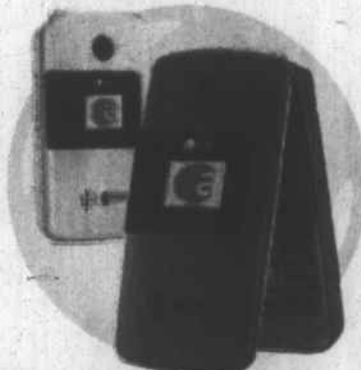
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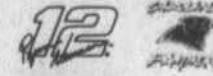
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