

Photo courtesy of W-S UL
Winston-Salem Urban League employees William Bailey, from left, Patricia Sadler and Brian Rowe at the Orlando conference.



W-S Urban League gets noticed at National Conference

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

A local delegation attended the recent National Urban League Conference in Orlando, Fla. earlier this month, led by Winston-Salem Urban League President and CEO Keith Grandberry.

Also in attendance were Garland Scarborough, the chairman of the local Urban League board; William Bailey, director of programs; PR Director Patricia Sadler; and Brian Rowe, director of Senior Employment.

The Winston-Salem Urban League was recognized by National Urban League

President Marc Morial during the opening ceremony, and Grandberry was hailed as one of the young dynamic leaders that represent the future of the Urban League.

The conference drew thousands of activists, professionals, celebrities and business leaders from around the nation and globe. This year's event was especially significant because the two top presidential hopefuls attended, each giving remarks at the conference.

Democrat Sen. Barack Obama and Republican Sen. John McCain presented their urban agendas to attendees. Morial took the opportunity to

secure pledges from each presidential candidate, asking them to promise to support the Urban League Compact, a comprehensive set of principles and policy recommendations set forth by the National Urban League to empower all Americans to be full participants in the economic and social mainstream of the nation. Grandberry was one of a select few chosen to meet with both presidential candidates to discuss their agendas.

Other notable attendees include Ambassador Andrew Young, Bishop Vashti McKenzie, Gov. Deval Patrick, songstress Nancy Wilson and Professor Henry Louis Gates.



Local delegates include (from left) Michael Flatow, Albert Porter, Denise Adams, Frank Dickerson, Susan Campbell, Bradley Hardy, Rep. Earline Parmon, Rev. Paul Lowe, Bette James and Jimmie Bonham.

Delegates

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about divisions between Democrats who supported Clinton and those who favor Obama. Adams says that is all nonsense if one is a true-Blue Dem.

"The real Democrats, we embrace the ticket, and that's what African-Americans have done since we became a part of the party," she remarked. "I hope that's what all Democrats will do. I hope that come November, we'll go out and vote for Obama, vote for change."

Delegates are responsible for their own travel, lodging and food expenses. Adams doesn't mind digging into her own pocket to pay for what she believes will be a historic occasion.

"This is history; just to be a part of that does something to you ...It'll be just like

when Bill Clinton ran but 10 times the enthusiasm and excitement," she said.

Few are better known or more respected in local Democratic circles than Albert Porter, who served as a delegate for John Edwards at the 2004 convention. Porter, now in his second term as 2nd vice chair of the Forsyth County Democrats, also expressed excitement at being able to participate in the process.

"I think this'll be a once in a lifetime opportunity to see a black man nominated for the president of the United States," he said.

Despite his fervor, Porter says he's concerned about the divide he still sees between Clinton and Obama supporters.

"I felt in 2004, there was more cohesion, and I believe this (convention) will be more divided," he stated.

Aware of fears and con-

cerns like those expressed by Porter, Obama and Clinton released a statement last week saying that the convention will feature an unprecedented roll call vote, during which Clinton delegates will get to publicly state their support for the former first lady.

Porter believes that the increased role of Clinton delegates could be positive or negative, depending on their willingness to support the likely nomination of Barack Obama.

Despite his worries, Porter is looking forward to a productive convention that he says will give him the ammunition he needs to keep fighting the good fight for his party.

"It kind of charges you up to come back and do what's necessary to turn North Carolina blue, from the president all the way down to the judges," he said.

State program called 'best thing to happen to education'

Series of programs give high school students college credit

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

State officials want residents to know about the advantages of an innovative program that allows high school students to take free college-level courses.

A statewide public awareness campaign began last week for "Learn and Earn" high schools, "Learn and Earn Online" and the EARN grants.

"Learn and Earn and the EARN grants are the best thing to happen to education in a long time, but they are also the best kept secret in education," Gov. Mike Easley said last week at a Raleigh gathering of superintendents and State Board of Education members. "Our job is to make sure parents and students know that every student in North Carolina can achieve their dreams and go to college for free."

Learn and Earn early college high schools allow students to jump-start their college education. A total of 60 schools will be open this fall, including the Early College of Forsyth on the main campus of Forsyth Technical Community College. Schools are located on a community college or university campus and allow students to take college courses, tuition free. After no more than five years of study, students earn a high school diploma and two years of college credit or an associate's degree.

High schools taking part in Learn and Earn allow students to earn both high school and college credit. This opportunity allows students to earn a community college associate degree, or obtain two years of transferable college credit to any state university by the time they graduate high school. Access to these courses is provided during the school day and in the evening.

The online program allows qualified students in every public high school in the state



Gov. Mike Easley

fully-implemented, the grants will provide 25,000 students from families earning less than 200 percent of the poverty level (about \$40,000 for a family of four), \$4,000 a year in assistance for two years.

Easley asked the superintendents to help promote the programs in their school districts. In addition, State Superintendent June Atkinson and State Board of Education Chairman Howard Lee will visit schools to assist with local outreach efforts. A series of public service announcements are also planned, and videos about the programs have been produced and distributed to teachers and guidance counselors so that they can show them to students.

For more information about any of these programs, visit www.ncllearnandearn.gov.

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