

Scholarship will help legally blind student enter the architecture field

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Samantha "Sammy" Holsinger may be legally blind, but that has not stopped her from pursuing a profession — architectural technology — that most people with her disability would not consider. She is particularly interested in eco-friendly, sustainable design.

Holsinger, the first recipient of the Frank L. Blum Construction Company Scholarship for the Construction Trades, is currently on disability, but looks forward to the not-too-distant future when she can support herself. She expects to graduate in May 2009 from Forsyth Technical Community College with an associate's degree in architectural technology. She currently earns straight A's in the program, which involves intensive use of AutoCAD software to produce three-dimensional images of a project.

The Frank L. Blum Construction Company Scholarship for the Construction Trades was established at Forsyth Tech in 2008 by Frank L. Blum Construction Company, a Triad commercial contractor, to celebrate its 85th anniversary. One recipient will be designated each year; the scholarship will pay full tuition and fees through the duration of the program as long as the student maintains good academic standing. The company established a similar scholarship at Guilford Technical



Blum Construction President Drew Hancock with Samantha "Sammy" Holsinger.

Community College, when the first recipient will be selected this semester.

Creativity is apparently in Holsinger's DNA. Her grandmother was a trained architect, except for taking the final exam, and designed her family's adobe house in New Mexico, where Holsinger remembers playing as a young girl. Holsinger plans to follow in her grandmother's footsteps by designing a house for her and her fiancé as well.

Holsinger also holds a bachelor of fine arts degree in creative writing from St. Andrews College in Laurinburg, N.C. She still enjoys writing in her spare time and has written poetry and fiction.

"I have things written, but not published — yet. I will one day," Holsinger said. In the meantime, she is serving as president of the Forsyth Tech Writing Club, which meets on Wednesday nights at Chelsea's coffee

house. Meetings are open to the public, she was quick to add.

After graduation, Holsinger will be looking for employment, probably in a small, close-knit design firm where she can be mentored — ideally by someone who is also interested in eco-friendly projects. She is especially interested in designing residential and community buildings such as schools, churches, playgrounds and libraries.

"New Beginnings" for local AARP chapter

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Forsyth Chapter # 1797 of AARP has adopted the theme "New Beginnings" for the year 2009. "New Beginnings" will include: a new meeting location, new meeting time and a new program/project ideas.

Meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of each month at

from 12 -1:30 p.m. This is a new meeting time that will provide a more flexible schedule for persons who are working to attend meetings/programs during the traditional lunch period.

The program for the month of January will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 13. The program will emphasize the benefits of an AARP membership. The guest

speaker will be Robert "Bob" Jackson, AARP North Carolina State Director.

A variety of community service programs and projects will be undertaken during the year that will represent the chapter's motto, "To Serve, and Not to Be Served." They will include: A Red Cross Blood Drive; a Health Fair; CarFit

Senior Services Fundraiser; and a Salvation Army Bell Ringing Event.

All meetings and programs are open to the public. Persons age 50 and older are eligible and invited to join the local chapter. For additional information, contact Nancy Hall at 765-2215 or nancappy@msn.com.



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Hampton alumni and their families at the recent party.

Local Hampton alumni celebrate the holidays

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Members of the Winston-Salem Alumni Chapter of Hampton University enjoyed fun and food at their annual Christmas dinner at the Piedmont Club on Dec. 6.

It is the mission of the chapter to perpetuate the legacy of Hampton University through service to the community, recruitment of qualified students and fostering the bonds of friendship, fellowship and support among all Hamptonians.

This year, members participated in the Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) sponsored by the Department of Social

Services. Alumni members donated many gifts that were given to a deserving family in the community.

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