

Making myself at home is easy to do downtown

By Jacqueline Gardiner-Veal
DWSP Administrative Manager

Recently, I returned from a family vacation in my homeland of Australia. I grew up in Sydney which is home to 4.34 million people. Most Americans are not aware of how large Sydney is and how Americanized it has become. I was reminded while walking down a busy main street in Sydney that it is a hustling, bustling impersonal experience. It is a multicultural melting pot and in its own right, a highly successful corporate beacon best known for its Opera House, Sydney Harbor Bridge and part-time home to Hollywood royalty like Nicole Kidman and Russell Crowe.

I could never have predicted that a city girl like me, once a "corporate suit" sitting on a bus feeling like a robot, would find such peace and tranquility in a little place called Winston-Salem, unknown to me until eight years ago when I moved to the U.S.

My husband and I are proud owners of a 1940s fixer-upper bungalow in Ardmore and we are delighted at the ability to be able to walk to get groceries or buy a cup of coffee. We are equally thrilled to be only 10 minutes from our workplaces and that rush hour really does only last for an hour.

Admittedly, I didn't spend much time downtown until I started working for the Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership in November 2006. Now, I can't wait to get downtown! In fact, the day after I returned from my vacation in Australia, I had lunch with my friend at Hutch and Harris. On the way to lunch, we walked

by Mellow Mushroom, busy seating the first of their everyday lunch crowd, past Rush, with its lunchtime clientele rushing in for a quick workout. We enjoyed walking by Tonic, one of the most recently opened trendy establishments, and were delighted at the number of folks already sitting and enjoying a curbside lunch at Rana Loca (former site of Cat's Corner), which also just opened.



Gardiner-Veal

Once we reached Hutch and Harris, I said to my friend that I didn't realize how special Winston-Salem had become to me until I left it for a little while. I told them how much I loved to walk around downtown and wave to people I know at almost every corner; how much I love it when I go to any of the Summer Music Series events and the overwhelming feeling of warmth I get to be amongst all the locals and visitors enjoying the vibe that is rapidly making downtown Winston-Salem one of the community's favorite places.

One of the best memories I have is when I took advantage of a beautiful summer evening on Trade Street to check out the monthly Gallery Hop. Although flying solo this particular night, I caught myself smiling as I soaked in the friendly, fun, creative and eclectic atmosphere. I don't know why I was smiling, but aren't they the best smiles ever? I am just so happy I accidentally landed in one of America's best kept secrets — Winston-Salem, a city that makes me feel cozy and giddy all at the same time.

DOWNTOWN THE ♥ OF WINSTON-SALEM

Published monthly by the Niche Publications Department of the *Winston-Salem Journal*
418 N. Marshall St.
Winston-Salem, NC 27101
336-727-7293
Fax 336-727-7485

Editor
Tammy Holoman

Layout and Design
Karen E. Liparulo

Cover Design
Kyle T. Webster

Advertising Account Executives
Charlene Brown-Farris
336-727-7494

G. McGehee Brown
336-727-7403

Downtown: The Heart of Winston-Salem is produced by the Niche Publications Department of the *Winston-Salem Journal* in association with the Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership.

Rence Callahan, Chairman
Jason Thiel, President
Justin Gomez, Director of Marketing and Operations
Mary Charlotte Hinkle, Project Manager
Jacqueline Gardiner-Veal, Administrative Manager

305 W. Fourth St., Suite 2-E
Winston-Salem, NC 27101
336-354-1500
www.dwsp.org

Downtown: The Heart of Winston-Salem is published monthly and copies are distributed throughout the downtown area in select racks and boxes, ZIP zoned into the *Winston-Salem Journal*, direct mailed to Winston-Salem Partnership members, and inserted into *The Chronicle*.

CITYBEAT