



Kids play last week at the WSSU Child Development Center.

Photos by Layla Farmer

# Frowny Face

Closure of WSSU childcare center has many unhappy, upset

BY LAYLA FARMER  
THE CHRONICLE

The economic downturn has not been kind to constituents of the University of North Carolina system.

Universities across the state have suffered from budget cuts for some time now, and seemingly things are getting worse. In a statement issued in March, UNC President Erskine Bowles noted that the system's base budget was cut by a net amount of \$167.9 million, and that 92 percent of the budget cuts imposed by the state would be permanent.

"This is the toughest economic climate we have faced in North Carolina in my 63 years," Bowles said. "For that reason, I was not surprised that Governor Perdue had to make some very difficult decisions in order to balance her proposed state budget."

Those cuts are coming down the pipelines and drawing blood at all of the system's 17 constituent schools, including Winston-Salem State University. The institution is currently operating on a budget that is 15 percent below that of the previous year, according to Nancy Young, interim director of Media and Public Relations for the school. The UNC system had asked all campuses to plan for an additional 10 percent cut in the coming fiscal year, Young said.

One of the casualties of the school's restructuring efforts is its Child Development Center. Interim Center Director Terri Pickett says she is sorry to see the center go, but recognized that desperate times do indeed sometimes call for desperate measures.

"I think we're an important part of the university, but the rationale was to keep the students from suffering," she commented. "...I hope they can revive it (later). I think it's a really important part of who we are (as an institution)."

The center, which had a stellar five-star rating from the state, has been a part of the WSSU landscape for roughly the past three decades. It has served as a place for faculty, staff, students and community members to enroll their children for day and afterschool services, and a place for students in early childhood education and other disciplines to hone their skills, observe, and gain experience in working with young children. It is currently home to 35 youngsters.

The school hopes to find a nonprofit childcare provider to take over the building once it is vacant, Young said.

"We have folks working on an RFP (request for proposal) to go out to nonprofit child care providers. While I know we wish the timing could have been tighter, the goal is to hopefully get a quality provider in the center so the community and the campus doesn't lose those services,"



Parent Sandy Brown speaks.

she explained. "That way, the services can still be there but the university is out of the role of provider."

While Young says the university has determined closing the center, among other things, is the best possible way for it to weather the financial crisis, some alumni and community members remain unconvinced.

"I'm very dismayed and I'm very disappointed that the powers that be ... made the decision to close this facility," State Rep. Larry Womble, a WSSU alumnus said during a press conference held last Friday at the center. "... (Closing the facility) would be a tremendous loss to not only the university, but it would be a tremendous loss for the families and the community."

Forsyth County Commissioner Beaufort Bailey, also a WSSU alumnus, believes the school could absorb some of the cost of operation if it boosted its enrollment at the center.

"This place will hold about 90 kids," he said. "...if you marketed it, I think people would want to send their children here."

Sandy Brown said the center has been like a second home to her four-year-old son, Joshua, who she said has "flourished" at the center. News of the center's closing was disheartening, she said. Brown emailed Chancellor Donald Reaves right away to voice her concerns.

"It was just a bomb that was dropped ... we (parents) weren't given any consideration," she declared. "It was like we were an afterthought."

Former teacher Barbara Jordan made the trek from Fayetteville, where she now resides, to protest the closing of the center, where she taught for nearly a decade.

"It is a great place to work," said the now retired Jordan. "We are just like a family, and we teach the children as if they are our own."

Despite her misgivings, Jordan said she felt certain the university would be unswayed by the complaints of community members like herself.

"I think they ... made up their minds," she said.

## News Clips

Compiled from staff wire and submitted reports

### Bass named principal at Atkins

Former East Forsyth High and Parkland High Assistant Principal Rodney Bass has been named principal of Atkins High's School of Computer Technology.

The school board unanimously named Rodney Bass to be Computer Tech's principal. He will replace Brad Craddock, who is now the principal of Glenn High. Bass has been the principal of North Rowan High in Spencer for four years. His entire education career prior to that was spent in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System.

He also taught history for several years at North Forsyth High before becoming assistant principal. He earned his bachelor's degree and master's degree in school administration from Appalachian State University.

### Clinic offering free backpack checks for kids

George W. Lucia and his Lucia Chiropractic Clinic are helping local kids get ready to start school. During the months of August and September, the clinic will offer free backpack checks for students enrolled in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System. In recent years, studies have

found that kids who carry bags that are too heavy or improperly worn can cause damage to their backs.

Over the next two months, the clinic is also accepting school supplies and backpacks on the behalf of the school system's Buddies Fund Program. Those who donate a backpack or any school supplies will receive a free spinal health screening.

The Lucia Chiropractic Clinic is at 3275 Robinhood Road. Call 336-768-8338 or go to [www.luciachiropractic.com](http://www.luciachiropractic.com) for more information.

### Salem signs articulation agreement with community colleges

Salem College has entered into an articulation agreement with the North Carolina Community College System that will benefit both transfer students and the institutions involved.

The announcement was made by Dr. Ann McElaney-Johnson, vice president of academic and student affairs and dean of the College.

The agreement allows eligible students graduating with an A.A. or A.S. degree from a North Carolina community college to enter Salem College as juniors, having satisfied their general-education core requirements. The articulation agreement, which goes into effect this fall, applies to both the traditional-aged female student transferring

to Salem College, and to the men and women ages 23 and up who transfer into Salem's Fler Center for Adult Education.

Interested applicants may contact undergraduate admissions (336-721-2621) or the Fler Center for Adult Studies admissions office (336-721-2669) for more details.

### Stimulus funds awarded for Forsyth County highway project

Gov. Roy Perdue announced last week that 15 contracts totaling \$29.3 million have been awarded for highway and bridge projects across North Carolina, including seven projects funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

"These projects will stimulate economic growth by creating and maintaining jobs as we enhance safety and keep our people traveling," Perdue said.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, every \$1 million spent on transportation creates 30 jobs, and according to the construction industry, every dollar invested in transportation generates \$6 in economic impact.

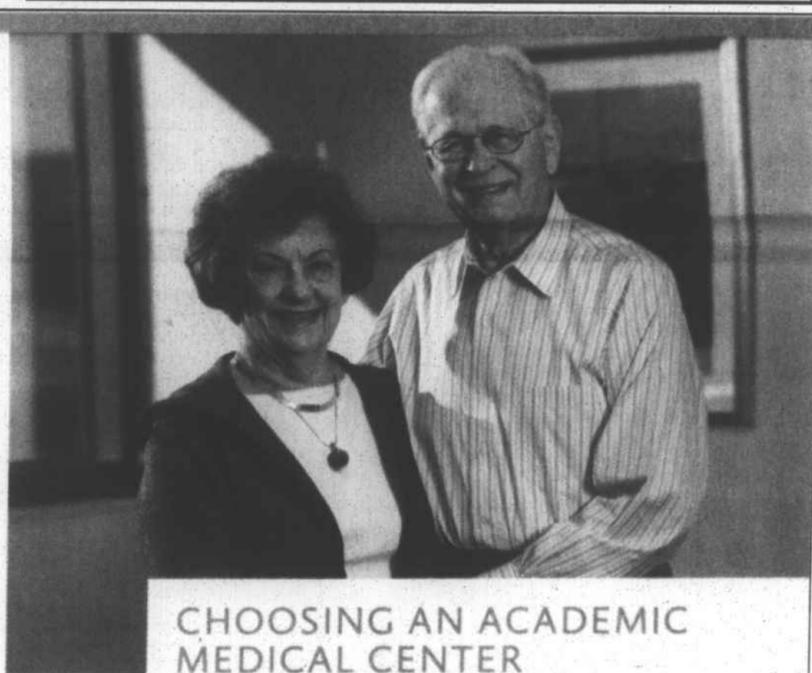
Forsyth County received one of the seven recovery projects awarded. The \$3 million contract awarded to Yadkin Valley Paving Inc. of Winston Salem is to mill, resurface and reconstruct the shoulders along 4.6 miles of I-40 from Jonestown Road to Harper Road (State Road 1101). Work can begin as early as Aug. 31, with final completion set for June 15, 2010.

- Anesthesiology
- Cardiothoracic Surgery
- Cardiology
- Dermatology
- Emergency Medicine
- Endocrinology
- Family Medicine
- Gastroenterology
- General Surgery
- Geriatrics
- Hematology/Oncology
- Infectious Diseases
- Internal Medicine
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Neurosurgery
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopaedics
- Otolaryngology
- Pathology
- Pediatrics
- Plastic Surgery
- Psychiatry
- Pulmonary Medicine
- Radiation Oncology
- Radiology
- Rheumatology
- Urology

#### VASCULAR SURGERY

Brent Kincaid and his wife, Kathryn

Since 1993, Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center has been consistently ranked as one of America's best hospitals by U.S. News & World Report.



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