



Carver senior signs with NSU

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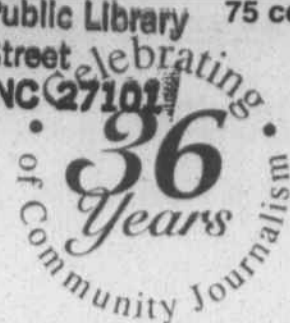
Students to spend summer at Duke

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Line dancing party held at park

-See Page B1



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THURSDAY, June 2, 2011

FROM AFRICA TO AMERICA

Women overcome challenges to earn Salem College degrees

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Many of the new alumnae at Salem College's May 21 commencement ceremonies had come a long way to make it to their graduation day, but few had traveled as far as Ama Serwaa Frimpong and Belinde Swenson, both natives of Africa.

Frimpong, 21, came to the U.S. in 2003 from Accra, Ghana to be with her father, an accountant and her brother, who had emigrated the year before to attend school in America.



Photo by Jason Pitt

New Salem College alumna Benilde Swenson.

Charmed by the campy images of the "Home Alone" and Disney movies she had grown up on, Frimpong says she was thrilled to make the move.

"Growing up, I really thought America was the place to be," she related. "My parents made the decision but I didn't protest. To me, it was like 'Oh my gosh, life couldn't get any better - I'm going to America.'"

Finding her way in the U.S. proved to be far more challenging than Frimpong had anticipated. "Being the new face and not just being the new face but being someone who was from elsewhere was not the most pleasant experience," she commented. "It was very difficult for me the first couple of years, just trying to adjust."

Frimpong's mother would come to visit her in the US, but Frimpong didn't return to her native land for four years. When she did finally make it back to Ghana for a visit, Frimpong found she had become more American than perhaps even she realized.

"I definitely experienced a culture shock when I went back, but oh my gosh, I loved it," she said of her first trip home. "I can't wait to go back; it's just so free. It is home for me and that's really where a huge part of my heart is. That really makes all the difference in the world to be surrounded by people who love you and whom you love."

That same year, Frimpong made another defining step in her life's journey: she enrolled in Salem College as a recipient of the coveted Lucy Hanes Chatham Scholarship, which

See Graduates on A2

Photo by Tanja/ Billie Holiday Theatre

Actors Nathan Purdee and Patrick Mitchell in the acclaimed play, "The Legend of Buster Neal," which will be staged at the 2011 NBTF.



Stellar line-up for '11 NBTF

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Amid much anticipation from members of the local community and theater lovers nationwide, the North Carolina Black Reparatory Company has announced its slate of plays for the upcoming 11th Biennial National Black Theatre Festival, slated for August 1-6, 2011 in Winston-Salem.

The Black Rep is bringing 35 plays to the Mainstage this year and staging 123 performances in 17 venues across the city throughout the six-day



Robinson

See NBTF on A10



Photos by Layla Farmer

HARRY Founder Ciat Shabazz (third from right) poses with HARRY volunteers and cookout attendees.

Pride & Patriotism

Black vets recall service, honor the fallen at low-key Memorial Day event

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Veterans from Winston-Salem and the surrounding areas paid homage to their fallen comrades during the second annual HARRY VCOS (Helping 2 Advocate 2 Research 2 Respond 4 You Veteran Community Outreach Service) Memorial Day Picnic at Granville Park Monday.

"It gives the vets an opportunity to share camaraderie of different branches of the military and see that people still recognize their service," said Ciat Shabazz, who founded the organization in honor of her brother, the late

Harry Smith.

For Vietnam era veteran Reginald Fullard, the picnic was right on time to cure his blues. Fullard, who was disabled by severe injuries he suffered during the four years he was enlisted in the Army, says he happened upon the celebration by accident. He said he was hopeful the HARRY organization could help him obtain some assistance from the government, and the picnic helped to lift his spirits.

"I actually went to the store to get a pack of cigarettes and something just told me to come out here," related the father of two.

"...It got me out of the house and put me in a



Reginald Fullard

See Veterans on A5

Local teacher earns national honor



Photo by Layla Farmer

VIF Teacher of the Year Jessica Bendeck Yanez poses outside Ashley IB Magnet Elementary.

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Ever since she was a child teaching language arts and arithmetic to her stuffed animals in her home, Bogota, Colombia-native Jessica Bendeck Yanez has dreamed of doing two things: becoming a teacher and "conquering the world" as an international traveler.

For the last three years, the 27 year-old has brought her two loves together for the benefit of the students in her classroom at Ashley IB Magnet Elementary School. Bendeck Yanez, one of a handful of internationally-born educators at Ashley, teaches first grade in the school's DIME! (Dual Immersion: Inglés más Español) program. Through the program, native English speaking and native Spanish speaking students come together in an educational environment where instruction time is split between the two languages.

"I love it; it's fascinating," she said of DIME. "I teach them not just to read and write but about the world around them."

For Bendeck Yanez, who graduated from Wake Forest

See Teacher on A5

REMEMBERING



Photo by Todd Luck

Wayne Falls, a member of the American Legion Honor Guard of Lewisville, was one of many who took part in the City's Memorial Day ceremony Monday. Read more on A3.

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