

Governor helps UNCF further its mind-saving mission

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

Gov. Beverly Perdue on Friday urged a crowd of more than 150 people to support the efforts of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF).

She gave the keynote address at the Annual Governor's Luncheon, a UNCF fundraiser, at the Winston-Salem Marriott Hotel.

UNCF supports minority students' education and development through scholarships and other programs at its 38 member colleges and universities, including Bennett College in Greensboro and four others in the state.

Each year, UNCF supports 60,000 students in college. Perdue is the honorary chair of UNCF's North Carolina Campaign. Across the country, governors of all political persuasions have become honorary chairs of their state's UNCF campaigns and have held similar luncheons.

Perdue said education was one of the biggest battles of the Civil Rights Movement, citing the struggle to integrate schools and colleges. She said education is vital for equality.

"I believe fundamentally that education is the great equalizer," she said. "Education is the difference maker."

Perdue said she was reminded of that the previous day when she talked with a group of young black male participants in the Governor's Page Program. She planned to talk with them for only 10 minutes, but was so impressed with the group that she altered part of her schedule to chat with them longer.

Perdue, who talks with all her pages, said that typically only about half of the pages



N.C. Rep. Earline Parmon poses with Gov. Beverly Perdue at the luncheon last week.

plan to attend college, but that every single one of the young African American men were college bound. They told her they wanted to defy the negative statistics and change public perception about black men. One page told her that he saw college as the first step to raising his single mother out of poverty.

"Yesterday, as I listened to those young men, I wondered how many would have problems, challenges ... How were they going to pay for tuition and books and board and clothes and all the stuff we have to do to be somebody in North Carolina?" asked Purdue.

Delrish White, 20, a junior journalism and media studies major at Bennett College in Greensboro, told attendees that she can attest to the challenges of paying for a college education. White, a California native raised in the foster care sys-

tem, could have had her college expenses covered had she gone to a public college in California. But she said she wanted to go to a Historically Black College or University (HBCU), and California has none.

Bennett fulfilled her dream, but paying for school became a nightmare. During her freshman year, she had a \$5,000 deficit after taking out \$10,000 in loans. She got an emergency UNCF scholarship to help. By her junior year, she'd found UNCF scholarships that not only covered her tuition, but the costs of an off-campus apartment, transportation and a study abroad trip to Shanghai, China.

"If it weren't for UNCF, I'd have to withdraw from school or return to school in California," White said. "If it was not for people like you giving generously, I would not be standing here today."



Delrish White



Baldwin Richards

Marilyn Baldwin Richards, UNCF area development director, said White's situation is not unusual and that emergency student loans, which the luncheon proceeds support, help many students who are in danger of leaving school because of financial crises. She said UNCF scholarships are a "lifeline" for most students who receive them.

"Even in 2012, so many of our students are still the first ones in their families to go to college and no one wants to get to the finish line and then be denied a diploma because of lack of funds," said Richards.

Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian Burke and Cynthia Marshall, president of AT&T North Carolina, also spoke at the luncheon. AT&T is a major sponsor of UNCF.

Donations to UNCF's N.C. Office can be sent to 119 East 7th Street, Suite 1B, Charlotte, NC 28202.

Democrats to take part in forum

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Forsyth County Democratic Party will hold a candidates' forum on Saturday, March 31 from 12 - 2 p.m., but doors will open at 11:30 a.m.

The event will be held at Shiloh Baptist Church, 916 E. 12th St.

Every area Democratic candidate running for office this election season has been invited to speak at the forum. Each candidate will have an opportunity to make a statement. The audience will then be allowed to submit questions for the candidates to answer after the opening statements. The event is free and open to the public.



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The Chronicle (USPS 067-910) was established by Ernest H. Pitt and Nubisi Egemonye in 1974 and is published every Thursday by Winston-Salem Chronicle Publishing Co. Inc., 617 N. Liberty Street, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27101. Periodicals postage paid at Winston-Salem, N.C. Annual subscription price is \$30.72.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
The Chronicle, P.O. Box 1636
Winston-Salem, NC 27102-1636

Forsyth MEDICAL CENTER



fitfamilyfivek

Proceeds from the race benefit childhood obesity programs, Girls on the Run™ and the Forsyth Medical Center Foundation

Saturday, April 28, 2012

Register online at www.gotrforsoythnc.org.

RACE SCHEDULE

Saturday, April 28, 2012
8:00 a.m. One-Mile Fun Run Starts
8:30 a.m. 5K Starts

PRICING

5K
Register before March 30: \$20.00
Register between March 30 and April 27: \$25.00
Day-of Race Registration: \$30.00
T-shirts are guaranteed to participants that register before April 13.

ONE-MILE FUN RUN
\$10 per child. Parents run for free.

WHERE

William G. White, Jr. Family YMCA
775 West End Boulevard
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

PACKET PICK-UP

Participants can pick up their packets at the William G. White, Jr. Family YMCA during the following times:

- Thursday, April 26, 5 to 7 p.m.
- Friday, April 27, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Saturday, April 28, 6:30 to 8 a.m.