

CAREERS

Briefly

Keith Pigues named to mortgage settlement board

Keith Pigues, dean of the School of Business at North Carolina Central University, has been named to the board of directors of the Office of Mortgage Settlement Oversight (OMSO). OMSO, was established early this year as a result of a national mortgage settlement. In February, the federal government, attorneys general of 49 states (all but Oklahoma), and five major banks and mortgage servicers reached an agreement to create new servicing standards, provide loan modification relief to distressed homeowners and provide funding for state and federal governments.



Pigues

Pigues is one of five members of the board of directors that will oversee OMSO business operation. The board will have no direct role in overseeing the mortgage settlement. He was appointed by Joseph A. Smith Jr., a former North Carolina banking commissioner who is the monitor of the settlement.

The mortgage settlement calls for the five participating financial institutions — Bank of America, Citi, JPMorgan Chase, Wells Fargo and Ally/GMAC — to provide at least \$25 billion in consumer relief. At least \$17 billion will be in the form of principal reduction and loan modification for homeowners who need help to avoid foreclosure.

Other funds will provide refinancing for "underwater" homeowners who are current on their mortgages but owe more than their homes' current value.

The settlement also establishes first-ever nationwide reforms to mortgage servicing standards. These standards require better communication with borrowers, a single point of contact, adequate staffing levels and training and appropriate standards for executing documents in foreclosure cases.

Black accountants honor A&T's Ronald Campbell

Dr. Ronald Campbell, an assistant professor of accounting in the School of Business and Economics at North Carolina A&T State University, was honored during the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) Inc. National Convention and Expo that was recently held in Phoenix, Ariz.

He received the National Achievement in Education Award. Campbell has served as the faculty advisor for the NABA student chapter at N.C. A&T since 2000.



Campbell

Romney names Black Leadership Council

Romney for President has announced its Black Leadership Council.

The campaign says that in the months to come, this group will help facilitate dialogue between Mitt Romney and respected leaders who provide unique expertise, experience and knowledge on a range of issues impacting black American communities.

"I am proud to have the endorsements of so many leaders in the black community," said GOP presidential nominee Romney. "They know all too well that the economic downturn that has continued to hammer our country has been even more devastating for black Americans. Together, we will work to end that downturn, and we will not rest until all Americans have the jobs they need, the quality education they are owed, and the opportunities they deserve."

Council Member U.S. Rep. Tim Scott, a Republican from S.C., says that President Obama has failed blacks.

"Many black Americans across the country cheered when Barack Obama was elected president," said Scott. "Achieving this milestone was a great moment for civil rights, one that reflected the best of this country. But we judge President Obama by his policies, not his promises. Those policies have been a disappointment. Black Americans are falling into poverty at an alarming rate, and unemployment rates are rising. We need a leader in the White House who knows how to turn this economy around. Mitt Romney has a plan to do just that, and we need him now more than ever."

Florida Lt. Gov. Jennifer Carroll, another Council member, added, "Mitt Romney is a man who has the experience and understands how the economy works and how to create jobs. With black unemployment at 14 percent, Mitt Romney's job creating experience is exactly what we need to turn the economy around. Until we reform our education system, make a commitment to train skilled workers for the jobs of today and encourage more black American small businesses, we will continue to see higher unemployment and poverty rates throughout our community."



Kathy Najimy

Actress to keynote Salem conference

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Salem College will host its inaugural women's conference, "Developing Emerging Professionals," on Saturday, Sept. 29.

The day-long event will provide students the opportunity to learn and practice many of the skills critical to building a successful career in today's highly competitive and ever-changing marketplace.

"While women have made great strides in professional achievements over recent years, inequality among many of the top leadership positions still prevails," said Alyson Francisco, Kimbrough Professor of Business and Economics at Salem and director of the school's Center for Women in Business.

"As a professor at Salem College, nothing gives me greater pleasure than to work with bright young women who will become future business leaders around the globe."

The conference will culminate with a keynote address by critically-acclaimed actress and activist Kathy Najimy, who has appeared in more than 20 films, including starring roles in the "Sister Act" movies, "Hocus Pocus" and "Hope Floats."

A Lebanese American, Najimy is an outspoken advocate for women's issues, especially those regarding the image and confidence of young women.

In accepting Salem's invitation to speak, she said, "This is exactly the kind of venue I seek, to speak to young women who want to change the world."

The keynote address will be offered free of charge to the public. A nominal registration fee of \$20 will be required of conference participants.

Registration is available online at www.c4wnbconference.com. Questions can be emailed to c4wnb@salem.edu.



Francisco

Duo receives high marks in business competition

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Winston-Salem State University's Tyler Kendrick and Rachael Creekmur won third place in the 105 Voices Emerging Business Leaders competition for their business plan "Focus Finish Tutoring," which focused on a tutoring program for inner-city school children.

The competition was part of the 105 Voices of History organization, which brings together singers from each of the nation's historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) for an annual concert event. The mission of the competition is to increase the business development knowledge of 105 Voices choir members and increase the scope of 105 Voices beyond just singing.

Kendrick, an accounting major, and Creekmur, a history major, are both members of the Singing Rams choral music program at WSSU, under the direction of D'Walla Simmons-Burke. As a finalist, the WSSU team presented their project to a panel of Wells Fargo employees in Charlotte. The panel awarded the duo third-place and \$150 each.

The National Association of Black Women in Construction got the teams ready to present their business plans by conducting sessions that focused on how to coordinate, organize and produce a complete business plan.

Georgia's Fort Valley University won first place and Huston-Tillotson University of Texas finished second in the competition. North Carolina A&T University, Lincoln University and Bowie State University also participated.



WSSU Photo by Garrett Garris
Tyler Kendrick (left) stands with Rachael Creekmur.

Sheetz to create 254 N.C. jobs

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The popular convenience store/gas station chain Sheetz Inc., announced last week that it will establish a distribution and food manufacturing facility in Burlington. The facility is expected to create 254 jobs by the end of 2018 and invest more than \$32.8 million in the state's economy.

To help facilitate this new operation, the company has been awarded a grant of up to \$800,000 from the state's One North Carolina Fund, which assists the state in industry recruitment and expansion by providing financial assistance through local governments to attract business projects deemed by the governor to be vital to a healthy and growing state economy. One North Carolina Fund grants require a local match, and this grant is contingent upon approval of local incentives.

"Companies like Sheetz recognize that North Carolina is a great place to thrive because of our top-notch business climate, well-trained workforce, and a strong logistics network that fits the company's needs," said Gov. Bev. Perdue. "We're going to keep leveraging North Carolina's tremendous assets as we continue our focus on job expansion."

Sheetz Inc., founded in 1952, is a family-owned convenience store chain based in Altoona, Penn. The company operates more than 425 locations in N.C. and five other states — Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio and West Virginia — and employs more than 14,500 employees.

"We appreciate the support we received from the Department of Commerce, Alamance County and the City of Burlington throughout this process," said Stan Sheetz, president and CEO of Sheetz, Inc. "North Carolina's winning mix of a strong labor force, financial assistance and excellent location will enable us to better serve our customers and expand our offerings in North Carolina and Virginia."

The Burlington facility, operating as Sheetz Distribution Services, will support the company's growing retail base in Virginia and North Carolina. Sheetz continues to transform its business model from a traditional gas station/convenience store concept to include offering "kicked-up convenience" such as baked goods, made-to-order sandwiches and salads, and other restaurant items.

Compensation will vary by job function, but the average annual payroll will be more than \$7.4 million plus benefits. The state Economic Investment Committee also voted to award a Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG) to Sheetz. JDIGs are awarded only to new and expanding businesses and industrial projects whose benefits exceed the costs to the state and which would not be undertaken in North Carolina without the grant.

For more information about Sheetz, Inc., including job opportunities, visit www.sheetz.com.



Whitaker celebrates national honor

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Whitaker Elementary School is one of just 269 U.S. schools honored as 2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools.

Schools could be chosen based on their overall academic excellence or for making progress in improving student academic achievement levels. Whitaker, one of nine schools in North Carolina nominated for the award, was honored in the Exemplary High Performing category for schools recognized as being among their state's highest performing schools, as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests.

"We're just so excited," said Whitaker Principal Brenda Herman. "It's a great affirmation of the good things that are happening here with the parents, students and staff."

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced this year's Blue Ribbon Schools last week at Arlington Traditional Elementary School in Arlington, Va. The announcement was streamed so that people at other schools could tune in. Herman wanted to let everyone in the school know about the honor at the same time, and she thought watching the announcement would be a good way to do that. So she had teachers bring Whitaker's 600 or so students into the gymnasium.

"I was sworn to secrecy and could not tell anyone until 10 o'clock this morning," she told them. "You have worked so hard. We have the best boys and girls. We have the best teachers ... We're the best of the best and we have a lot to celebrate."

In November, Herman and one teacher from Whitaker will go to Washington for the recognition ceremony. In its 30-year history, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has recognized nearly 7,000 schools.



In Search of Commonality



Photo by Kevin Walker

Billionaire John Paul DeJoria and his wife, Eloise, make their way through the news media center at the Time Warner Cable Arena during last week's Democratic National Convention. Best known as the co-founder of the Paul Mitchell hair care line, DeJoria traveled to both the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Fla. and the DNC in a vintage rail car to promote bipartisanship.