

# WFU chief needs votes for magazine honor

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Campus Safety magazine has named Wake Forest University Police Department (WFUPD) Chief Regina Lawson a finalist for its Director of the Year award.

The public decides the winner of the honor by voting at <http://go.wfu.edu/votela> until Feb. 15. The winner will be announced in mid-April.

Lawson has served as Chief since 1992, having joined the WFUPD as Assistant Chief in 1989.

The magazine has recognized her for:

- Helping to substan-



Regina Lawson

tially improve relations between the University and surrounding neighborhoods;

- Creating and expanding the school's community policing initiative, crisis management team, campus

assessment response and evaluation team, victim assistance program and more; and

- Ensuring that the Department was one of the first to complete the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators accreditation program.

Campus Safety exclusively serves campus police chiefs, security directors, IT personnel, emergency managers and executive administrators involved in the public safety and security of major hospitals, schools and universities in the United States.



Photo by Layla Garms

Back to Work Job Coordinator Ashlea Morrison (far left) and John Foxworth (far right), one of the program's directors, pose with Back to Work participants (from left) Danny Tucker, Alice Sherman, Martin Puente, Karen Austin, John Cooley and Kimberly Mitchell.

## Work

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ple."

Participants who meet the program's qualifications of having exhausted all unemployment benefits or being on unemployment for at least 26 weeks are eligible to enroll in a variety of Forsyth Tech programs - mostly short term training programs - free of charge. Back-to-Work staffers work with each participant to assess their strengths, identify possible careers, prepare resumes and brush up on their interviewing skills.

"We're making sure that they're not only learning the technical skills, but they're also receiving the soft skills that they need," said Anderson, an alumna of North Carolina Central University. "... Our goal is to turn out skilled workers."

Over 200 people are enrolled in the program to date, Anderson said. Training is offered in a variety of areas where jobs are available in the local market, from medical billing to HVAC repair, she explained.

"It really is focused on short term training that'll get people back to work in a short period of time," stated the Mocksville native.

Kimberly Mitchell, a former US Airways employee, said she has taken several classes related to the medical field through Back to Work. She said she is cautiously optimistic about her employment prospects.

"I'm in my 40s and I never thought that at this stage in my life that it would be hard to find work. I want to work. I don't want to draw unemployment, but I have to," commented the city native. "I'm hoping that this will give me the extra boost that I need to get on with a company."

After nearly 20 months of unemployment, Walnut Cove resident John Cooley said he jumped at the chance to get involved with Back to Work. He is currently working on his database management certification.

"It was definitely a godsend whenever I received the letter saying they had such a thing," remarked the grand-

father of three, who formerly worked in test engineering and programming. "I saw that, and I started it immediately."

Rochester, NY native Martin Puente was already enrolled in a qualifying Back to Work course when the program began, and became the program's first local graduate when he completed his facility maintenance certification last month. Puente, a former property manager, is working part time at Home Goods while pursuing his HVAC training.

Alice Sherman had worked in business administration and higher education for a decade when she said her job opportunities evaporated a year and a half ago. The Kernersville resident said returning to school wouldn't have been an option if not for Back to Work.

"I couldn't afford it, so I kind of put it on the back burner," said Sherman, whose 19 year-old son is also a student at the community college. "...Back to Work really means to me possibility, a new start. I wanted to go back to school to try and get my career started again. I'm hoping that I do very well in the program and it's going to lead to employment for me."

For Austin, being a part of Back-to-Work could lead to an even brighter future than the one she anticipated when she was gainfully employed.

"Since I was in security, there were no retirement benefits, and I'd been thinking about it over the years that I needed to stabilize myself," related the 52 year-old. "With this program, I will have a chance to retire in 20 years - 30 years, God willing - and I'll have something to lean back on when I get older."

Austin, who will begin working on her medical unit secretary certificate next month, said Back to Work has given her hope.

"I'm very grateful," she declared. "It's given me hope to get my life back on track and that means more than anything in the world."

For more information about the Back to Work program, visit [www.forsythtech.edu](http://www.forsythtech.edu) or call 336-734-7630.



Green Street UMC Photo

Members of the Green Street United Methodist Church family.

# UMC MLK gathering to feature Johnson

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church will host its annual celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Winston-Salem this year.

Green Street United Methodist Church, 639 South Green St., will host the gathering on Saturday, Jan. 19 from 10 a.m. - noon. A lunch will follow and special musical guests will perform before the service. The multicultural congregation at Green Street is known for its actively-engaged ministries that serve the poor and welcome the marginalized.

The keynote speaker for this event will be Monique Johnson, who has been called small in stature but large in spirit. Only two-feet tall because of an extreme form of dwarfism and scoliosis, Johnson has not let her physical challenges limit her dreams. A talented painter, she graduated with honors from N.C. A & T State University before entering Elon School of Law, where she earned her law degree last



Photo courtesy of M. Johnson

Monique Johnson holds her Elon Law School degree.

spring. As a young adult overcoming challenges, Johnson will share an inspirational message on the theme of the day, "Following the Drumbeat of Justice."

The celebration will begin at 9:30 a.m. with music by Green Street's jazz group, Sabbath Indigo, the a capella group Whosoever and The Enrichment Center Percussion Ensemble. The formal service will begin at

10 a.m., with special music, inspirational testimonies, Drumbeat for Justice Awards and lots of drumming.

The Healing Force will also play during the worship service and will lead the gathering in a Harambee after the luncheon. All are welcome and encouraged to come. Those eating lunch will be asked to help with the cost by making a \$5 donation.

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