

**NAACP**

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Dr. Derick Smith, a political science professor at N.C. A&T State University, explained some of the recent bills, including voter ID laws to prevent what Smith says is a nonexistent voting fraud issue.

"You don't really have to look too deep to figure out what's going on in our General Assembly - our government has been hijacked by a group of lobbyists," declared Smith, whose students were among "the first foot soldiers" in the Moral Mondays movement. "...I believe that it's time to reclaim democracy for the citizens of this state."

Last week, Republicans killed the Racial Justice Act, a law sponsored by local Democratic lawmakers that gave death row inmates an opportunity to win a reduced sentence if they could prove that racism played a part in their sentencing.

Winston-Salem Branch NAACP President S. Wayne Patterson told the diverse group of attendees that solidarity is the key to the movement's success.

"We can come together as a unified body," Patterson said. "Black, white, Hispanic, old, young, male, female - it doesn't make a difference because we are all citizens of North Carolina."

McCrorry and House Speaker Thom Tillis have refused to meet with NC NAACP President William Barber II and others to discuss the current legislative session and have allowed peaceful protesters at the General Assembly to be arrested. Tillis has been caught on tape "literally running away from Rev. Barber and a group of people who tried to engage him," Stephens said.

"It reflects the public policy that they're pushing through to ignore people," he said.

A handful of attendees had firsthand experience with the Moral Mondays protests. Six men, Rev. Steve Boyd, Patrick Donnelly, Dr. Carlton Eversley, Norman Hill, Rev. Ron LaRocque and Smith, shared their experiences of being arrested and detained for as many as 12 hours as part of the Moral Mondays movement.

LaRocque, the pastor of Metropolitan Community Church, said his attendance was "simply a matter of faith."

"Bills that further marginalize some of the most vulnerable citizens of our state, that is the very definition of injustice," he intoned. "My faith requires me to raise my voice against injustice until God's righteousness comes back into our state."



Photos by Layla Garmis  
**Rob Stephens holds Democracy NC's Legislative Report Card.**

Despite being arrested, Donnelly described his participation in the effort as "a wonderful experience."

"I got involved because I see what's coming down the pipe from Raleigh and it truly upsets me - I'm outraged," he said. "They're focused on voting rights and everyone's rights to vote. There's nothing more fundamental than that, I think, to being American."

Hill, a math instructor at Davidson County Community College, accompanied Donnelly at the June 3 protest, where more than 150 were arrested for civil disobedience. Hill railed against cuts in education funding and

programs, especially pre-kindergarten programming, which he says has been a key factor in the state's ability to increase its graduation rate.

"Education is something that's really important to me," Hill said. "Nothing's more important to me than education, and I see that under attack."

State Sen. Earline Parmon has been with the protesters, whom she affectionately refers to as "jailbirds," every step of the way, even waiting outside the jail until the wee hours of the morning to greet them and thank them for their efforts. Parmon, a Democrat who represents the 32nd District, told attendees that Moral Mondays are making an impact on her conservative foes. She urged all those in attendance to also lend their support to the movement.

"God told us what He requires of us, and that is to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God," she proclaimed. "We cannot be a part of the conspiracy of silence. If you do, you are a part of them."

To receive NAACP news and updates via text message, text "NAACP" to 46988.

The Chronicle (USPS 067-910) was established by Ernest H. Pitt and Ndubisi 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

# ROCK-SOLID ADVICE

*Mother of actor/comedian speaks to local students*

BY LAYLA GARMIS  
THE CHRONICLE

Comedian Chris Rock's mother, Rosalie "Rose" Rock, visited Kernersville Monday.

Rock, an educator and host of the weekly Myrtle Beach, SC radio program, "The Mom Show," addressed students and parents at Sedge Garden Elementary School on June 10 - the next to last day of school - during the Fifth Grade Celebration.

Rock is a veteran parent. She and her late husband Julius Rock reared 10 children and 17 foster children. The family has roots in South Carolina, where

Chris Rock was born, and Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, where the family relocated when Chris was a child. The wisdom of Rose Rock's experiences is chronicled in the 2009 book, "Mama Rock's Rules: Ten Lessons for Raising a Houseful of Successful Children." Rock addressed both the rising middle schoolers and their parents in her remarks. She advised the youngsters to make wise choices about the company they keep.

"Companions are just like elevators - they can take you up or they can take you down, so you be very, very mindful of who you're hanging with," she said. "Because if you're the smartest person in your group, then you're in the wrong group. Look out for people who you want to emulate."

Rock, whose book is billed as "a kicky blend of maternal spirituality and a 'don't mess with me or you won't get old' sense of authority," told parents to remain vigilant as their children move into middle school and the teen years.

"Your living room is the first and the best classroom. What you teach at home is what they bring into this environment," stated the former teacher. "You are the first, and you should be the best teacher, but now your job's going to get harder because they're going out into another world."

Rock touted the importance of a sound education, a luxury she says American



Photos by Layla Garmis  
**Efreida Dixon (left) with Rosalie "Rose" Rock.**

children too often take for granted.

"Teachers come bearing gifts," she told the students. "They give us the gift of an education, they give you the gift of a future, if you want it."

Rock's visit was facilitated by Efreida Dixon, a fifth grade teacher who has a special connection to the Rock family.

"I lived around the corner from the Rocks, before they were 'The Rocks,'" related Dixon, who babysat for Chris Rock when he was a youngster. "They're a beautiful family... they're just down to earth, good people. Fame has not affected them at all."

Dixon says she has remained in close contact with the family, and has

marveled, watching Chris, whom she described as a quiet and reserved child, rocket to stardom. A veteran educator, Dixon said she felt Mama Rock's message would resonate with the audience.

"She is such a brilliant woman," Dixon said. "And she's family oriented - she's all about the children."

Principal Ramona Warren said she felt privileged to have Rock as a guest.

"I was in disbelief when Frieda Dixon first told me that she would agree to be our speaker," she said of Rock. "This is something that just doesn't happen, to have someone of her wisdom and her stature speak to our students."

Rock was joined onstage by student speaker Theo Howard, a former Sedge Garden class presi-



**Theo Howard speaks.**

dent. Theo, now a freshman at Glenn High School, offered some words of advice to the Class of 2020 as they prepare to enter middle school. He told the students to respect their teachers, avoid negative influences and, most of all, put their schoolwork first.

"I just want all of you to do a great job in middle school," commented Theo, whose younger brother Jason Redmond is a member of the fifth grade class at Sedge Garden. "Make sure you handle your business... I wish you all good luck."

Rock, whose eldest child has used his comic wits and acting ability to become a household name, told the students that the future is their responsibility.

"I want you to go out there with vim and vigor with your minds open and your hearts open to be the best that you can be," she declared. "Success is a decision. You decide right now where you want to be in life - that is your decision."

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*Saturday, June 15*  
**The Kruger Brothers "Appalachian Concerto"**  
**Jim Lauderdale and The Amigos Band,**  
**with special guests from Muscle Shoals**  
 7:30 pm | Performance Place Freedman Theatre  
 \$25 Adults / \$20 Students\*

*Sunday, June 16*  
**David Holt, The Branchettes,**  
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