



**Dr. Rahn Bailey of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center responds to a question from the audience concerning behavioral health issues during the public mental health forum at WSSU on Tuesday, May 12.**

## Panel addresses stigmas of mental illness in the black community

BY CHANEL DAVIS  
THE CHRONICLE

Residents, sorority and fraternity members took part in the 2015 Community-wide Mental Health Forum on Tuesday, May 12, so they could learn more about issues related to mental illness, especially when it relates to the African-American community.

Some on the panel talked about the stigma of mental illness in the African-American community, and panelists discussed ways to overcome the stigma.

The forum was held at Winston-Salem State University's R.J. Reynolds Auditorium and was sponsored by the Winston-Salem Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. and the Psi Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.

Kimya Dennis, an assistant professor and coordinator of criminal justice at Salem College, moderated the event.

The panel was comprised of psychiatrist Rahn Bailey, director of Behavioral Health from Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center; WSSU Nursing Instructor and Family Nurse Practitioner Daphne Sharpe; and Forsyth County District Court Judge Camille Banks-Payne, who sits on the

bench in the county's Mental Health Treatment Court. Others on the panel were Louise Whealton, president of Northwest Piedmont chapter of the National Alliance of Mental Illness, and Kathy Cunningham, an advocate and peer support specialist who was diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

Asked how they would define mental illness, panelists said that it includes all forms of brain impairment and social disorders that create conflicts personally, in the family or at the job. Cunningham said that for her, dealing with mental illness can be challenging.

"Because it attacks your mind, your physical body takes a hit because you are not taking care of yourself at all. You don't want to and you don't want to be bothered," she said.

Banks-Payne said that when your body is healthy, there are no limitations versus when it's not.

"You need your mind to be in a healthy state so you can function and be able to do the things that so many of us take for granted that if you're not mentally healthy, you would be impaired and not able to do that," Banks-Payne said.

Dennis broached the subject of how



**Dr. Kimya Dennis leads the discussion as moderator of the community-wide mental health forum on Tuesday, May 12, in the RJR Auditorium at Winston-Salem State University.**

Photos by Erin Mizelle for the Winston-Salem Chronicle.

African-Americans deal with mental illness and how everyone will say that they have that "crazy uncle." She said that she believes that it's part of the stigma of mental health and why many of those in the culture can't admit it so that they can get help.

All of the panelists agreed that there is a need to talk openly about mental health and use education to help everyone understand the illness or what that person is going through. They did have different ideas on how the thought process could be changed by bringing the issue to light and having others understand that it's serious.

Banks-Payne said the religious community should be used as a platform.

"I think that sometimes there may be this view that there's a lack of faith if you get mental health treatment, or if you have a diagnosis you may have a demon. Those type of ideas are just out there," Banks-Payne said. "The church is one of the main avenues we need to bring the subject up and bring some awareness because there are a lot of stigmas in the community about it."

Whealton, a former teacher whose husband of 26 years was diagnosed with bipo-

lar disorder, said that she feels that awareness about mental illness could be brought about in the school systems.

"I think if all people sat in a classroom and heard information, it would begin a generation of something else, like learning the symptoms of a stroke of how to know when your grandaddy's having a heart attack," Whealton said.

Sharpe said that it needs to become more common for both women and men to have routine mental health and depression screening when they go to their primary doctors.

Bailey said that having been the director of a behavioral hospital before, he knows firsthand that the government and legislators rarely fund those institutions to the point that it can create a positive impact and reverse the thought of it not being as important as other illnesses.

"I think were there adequate financing behind mental illness, the stigma would change," Bailey said.

**For more information on mental illness and programs in the area, visit the Mental Health Association of Forsyth County website at [www.triadtmentalhealth.org](http://www.triadtmentalhealth.org) or call them at 336 768-3880.**

## Duke professor defends views of blacks, Asians

BY JONATHAN DREW  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

RALEIGH — A Duke University professor criticized for an online post comparing blacks and Asians said Monday, May 18, that it's not racist to discuss what he sees as differences in how the groups have performed in the U.S. over the past few decades.

Political science professor Jerry Hough has been sharply criticized for a response he posted in the online comments section of the New York Times editorial "How Racism Doomed Baltimore," dated May 9. The 80-year-old professor, who is white, has been on an unrelated academic leave for the past school year.

In his online comments, Hough wrote that Asians have been described as "yellow races" and faced discrimination in 1965 at least as bad as blacks experienced. Of Asian-Americans, he wrote: "They didn't feel sorry for themselves, but worked doubly hard."

The posting goes on to say: "I am a professor at Duke University. Every Asian student has a very simple old American first name that symbolizes their desire for integration. Virtually every black has a strange new name that symbolizes their lack of desire for integration."

In an email Monday to The Associated Press, Hough defended his comments but said it's difficult to be subtle in a post on a newspaper's comments section with a limited word count.

Hough described himself as a disciple of Martin Luther King Jr. in the 1950s who supported integration. In his lifetime, he said, he's observed prejudice ranging from the World War II-era internment camps for Japanese-Americans to segregation in the South, and he's dismayed that more progress hasn't been made.

A non-profit organization, founded in 1970 (incorporated in 1971) to support families by helping them meet the developmental needs of their children from infancy through school-age. NWCD, Inc. is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors that consist of private and public citizens, and parents of three counties: Forsyth, Davie, and Stokes. Northwest has the capacity to service 700 children and families in community child care centers.

### CHARACTER, ETHICS, MORALS AND VALUES...

#### DEFINED

#### What is Character?

The action you take to carry out the values, ethics and morals that you believe in.

Consistency between what you say you will do and what you actually do.

Putting the ethics into action.

Defines, builds, or breaks your reputation.

Moral strength. It takes moral courage to do what is right when it may cost more than you are willing to pay.

Who you are and what you do when no one is looking.

"What is wrong is wrong, even if everyone is doing it. Right is still right, even if no one else is doing it." - William Penn

#### Ethics:

Define moral rights and wrongs.

Transcend culture, ethnicity, and are relevant to all socioeconomic conditions.

Are the should and ought of life.

#### Morals:

Are ethical principles

Founded on fundamental principles of right conduct rather than legalities.

Morals are always the same. Immorality varies from generation to generation.

#### Values:

Refer to all important beliefs.

Not all are ethical, some are neutral or non-ethical.

Stated; what we say, and Operational; what we do.

"Character is not reflected by what we say, or even by what we intend, it is a reflection of what we do." - Anonymous

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