



Students from Wake Forest University came out on Tuesday, Aug. 18 to help bring the Kimberly Park Community Garden back to life. The garden is located at 1701 Cherry St.



Community volunteer James Anderson works on the Kimberly Park Community Garden on Tuesday, Aug. 18.

# Blank Space Project takes over Kimberly Park garden

## Students and volunteers help bring community garden back to life

BY TEVIN STINSON  
THE CHRONICLE

Earlier this year, after listening to community members in the Kimberly Park area, Blank Space Project (BSP) began a initiative to help maintain the community garden that was planted in the Boston Thurmond area.

The Blank Space Project (BSP) started as a local think tank that supports grass-roots ideas. The purpose of the project is to revitalize communities by including community members in the problem-solving process while also fostering creativity.

BSP works with communities to develop sustainable design projects that change the way neighborhoods look and feel.

Jessica Wilson, co-founder of the Blank Space Project, said they got started

on the garden after members of the community voiced their opinions on the upkeep of the garden.

Before BSP took over the garden in May, the garden had not been tended to for close to three years.

"After seeing the vacant garden and hearing some of the complaints from some of the residents, we thought we could bring some life back to this corner," Wilson said.

"Someone needed to jump in and initiate the beginning stages of the garden," said Wilson. "We saw the possibilities and started pulling together our resources."

Although the garden was started as a project for the students at Kimberly Park Elementary School, a sustainability project was never set into place, which is when BSP stepped in. After a number of conversations with Amber Baker, principal at Kimberly Park, Wilson and BSP got to work bringing the garden back to life.

Earlier last week (Aug. 18), a number of incoming freshman from Wake Forest helped to tend the garden. The students seemed eager to learn and get to work on

improving the community.

Carl McPhail, a freshman from Charlotte, said he had done similar work in his hometown but wanted to make an impact in Winston-Salem while he worked toward a degree in business.

"I heard about the garden through a program called SPARK on campus," said McPhail. "As a freshman, I really wanted to get out and learn more about Winston-Salem and work in the community."

Although many students had never even stepped foot in a garden before, according to Wilson they were all quick learners and really made an impact in the garden.

"The thing about it is they all were willing to learn," said Wilson. "None of them were afraid to get dirty, and they came right in and got to work."

Not all of the volunteers were new to gardening, James Anderson said he has been gardening for over 50 years and said he was proud to see the young people getting out and working.

"It gives me a good feeling to see these

young people coming together like this," said Anderson. "When I was growing up, things like this were unheard of. I'm just glad I could be a part of something that helps this community."

Anderson, a native of Mississippi, said he volunteered with the garden because his late brother was one of the community members who helped plant the garden.

"My brother helped to plant this garden before he passed away," said Anderson. "I wanted to come out and help the students in any way I could. I know it is what my brother would have wanted."

The community garden is at 1701 Cherry Street, across the street from Kimberly Park Elementary School.

The Blank Space Project has a number of other community events planned for communities in the Winston-Salem area. For more information on these projects or to volunteer, visit [www.blackspacespaceproject.org](http://www.blackspacespaceproject.org).

## Rivalry

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she will be in the stands representing the Yellow Jackets even though she is now a teacher at Parkland.

"Even though I do work at Parkland now, I will be sitting on the Carver side during the game," said Reeves. "I will always be a Yellow Jacket."

Reeves said she isn't sure why the rivalry is so strong, but at Carver you are just taught to dislike Parkland.

"As a Carver student, you are just taught to hate Parkland, and they are taught to hate us. It's just how it goes," Reeves laughed.

Although the game will not be played inside Bowman Gray Stadium,

Carver Athletic Director Michael Winbush is confident the game will draw a large crowd.

"I'm expecting a large crowd when we face off against Parkland," said Winbush. "We had a big crowd when we played Dudley as well."

Parkland head coach Martin Samek knows how big the game is for the city and is trying to keep his team focused on taking the season one game at a time.

"I know how big the match up use to be for the city, and I know it will be a big game for both teams, but most importantly, I'm trying to keep the team focused and take the season one game at a time."

The Mustangs are coming off a 29-7 victory over Northeast Guilford in the first game of the season.

Carver will be looking to regain its footing after falling 42-7 to Dudley at home last Friday.

Germane Crowell, head coach at Carver, is hoping to use the matchup with Parkland to gain momentum for the rest of the season.

"If we get momentum early in the season, I think we have what it takes to make a playoff run," said Crowell. "We aren't looking past anybody."

Last season, the Yellow Jackets finished with a 9-4 record while the Mustangs couldn't manage to put a mark in the win column finishing 0-11.

"I know both teams will come in prepared. The team who is the most disciplined will come out victorious," Crowell said.

## Local portrait artist honors playwright Garland Lee Thompson Sr.

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The National Black Theatre Festival (NBTF) honored the late Garland Lee Thompson Sr., a playwright, who died in November 2014. He was an integral part of the festival.

Winston-Salem artist Leo Rucker has painted a likeness of Thompson, who was a longtime supporter and good friend the late NBTF founder Larry Leon Hamlin. His tribute and homegoing event at the NBTF, Act III, was held on Aug. 6, at the Marriott hotel in downtown Winston-Salem, where Rucker unveiled his honorary artwork.

Rucker's project began immediately after a conversation with Aduke Aremu, producer, playwright and radio host. Upon their initial meeting at St. Phillips African Moravian Church in Old Salem Museum and Gardens in December

2014, Rucker then began to work through the thought process of how the composition of the painting would reveal itself.

During the NBTF event, Garland Thompson Jr. expressed that the likeness really captures who his father was outside of what people saw in his everyday life. The many friends and peers who attended the event agreed.

Rucker, for the past 25 years, has rendered over 200 portraits with 80 percent of them for Segment Marketing Services Inc. They are featured in Sophisticate's Black Hair Magazine. The column



Submitted photo  
Leo Rucker's painting of Garland Lee Thompson Sr. is shown.

Role Model features outstanding African-American women in various communities and professions.

For more information about Rucker's work, go to his website, [www.ruckerartstudio.webs.com](http://www.ruckerartstudio.webs.com) or email him at [lruckerart@yahoo.com](mailto:lruckerart@yahoo.com).

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