

# WSSU holds Social Justice Week

BY TEVIN STINSON  
THE CHRONICLE

Although it was midterm season, many Winston-Salem State University students found time to take part in Social Justice Week.

Presented by the Office of the Attorney General and Political Action Committee last week, Social Justice Week was designed to give the students a chance to express their views on a number of social justice issues that are dividing the country.

The events were held Monday through Thursday, with a different topic being discussed every day.

During the opening day of Social Justice week, students and educators discussed mass incarceration, activism and impacting the community, but voter participation led the discussion.

According to Mona Zahir, attorney general of the Student Government Association, 2008 was the only time black voters had higher voting turnout rates than whites.



"Our ancestors fought for us to have this right to vote, and there is no reason why we shouldn't be voting every chance we get," said Zahir. "2008 was the only time black voters have had the highest turnout rate, and we all know why that was."

"I don't think we will ever have a voter turnout like we did in 2008," said Zahir. "Instead of voting for the candidates who look like us, we should do more research on what these candidates are about."

Deonna Cureton, director of student conduct, expressed how important it is to vote during mid-term elections. According



Cureton

Monell

to Cureton, most younger citizens don't vote during mid-term elections because they don't feel like they are as important.

"This generation doesn't pay attention to mid-term elections for what ever reason," said Cureton. "Mid-terms are the most important election for making change. We have to do something better; advocacy is about working together."

The topic of mass incarceration sparked a number of constructive talks as well. Dr. Jack Monell, a professor of history and politics at WSSU, said mass incarceration is the new slavery.

"Mass incarceration is the new slavery. A lot of black people say Bill Clinton was the first black president, but what they don't know is that under Clinton, more African-American males were arrested than ever before."

Monell has a lot of experience working for social justice before becoming an educator. He worked in a number of different fields, including Federal Community Corrections, Juvenile Justice & Delinquency, Family Preservation and Child Welfare.

"I have worked in the justice system at a number of different levels. For us to stop this modern day slave trade, we must educate each other," said Monell. "We have to make sure our brothers and sisters are educated on the laws."

To wrap up Social Justice Week on Saturday, Oct. 10, over 100 students from WSSU took a bus to the 20th anniversary of the Million Man March on Washington.

Zahir said it is important that the younger generation be about the movement and not the moment.

"It's important that we have these discussions and keep them going," said Zahir. "We need to find the real leaders who are willing to take that first step to transform the way we live our lives."

## North Carolina attorney general kicks off run for governor

BY GARY D. ROBERTSON  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ROCKY MOUNT — North Carolina Attorney General Roy Cooper began his long-planned bid to become governor Monday evening,



Cooper



Spaulding

telling a crowd of supporters the state has traveled down a path of income inequality and poorly-funded public education under Republican Gov. Pat McCrory's leadership and it's time to turn things around. Speaking

to several hundred Democratic luminaries, friends, relatives and interest group advocates at a kickoff event in his native Nash County, Cooper said if elected he would re-stake North Carolina's claim to be a leader in the South,

particularly in education and raising up the middle class.

"It's time for a governor who measures our state by the success of regular working folks," Cooper said at Nash Community College.

"The truth is Gov. McCrory has the wrong priorities for North Carolina, giving away the store for those at the top at the expense of the middle class and our schools."

Cooper first must win the March 15 Democratic primary before he can take on McCrory.

Ken Spaulding of Durham, a former legislator and state Board of Transportation member, announced he was a Democratic candidate for governor in August 2013.

In a statement, Spaulding said: "This will be a meaningful primary. The primary voters will have a choice between Roy Cooper, the status quo, and the establishment's hand-picked career politician who through his office has sided in court with the Republicans against the voting rights of all North Carolinians, and a candidate in me, who will never take the voters for granted and who is willing to work hard for the people's respect and support."

Spaulding was mentioning Cooper's work as attorney general defending a 2013 GOP-supported election law that scaled back early voting and ended same-day registration.

Earlier Monday at a Wake County DMV office, McCrory avoided directly responding to reporters' questions about Cooper's entry into the race and said he'd kick off his own re-election bid soon. He talked instead about fulfilling a promise to improve Division of Motor Vehicles operations.

## Forsyth's O'Neill launches attorney general campaign

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Forsyth County district attorney said Monday that he's running for attorney general because he has the experience to handle the job.

"If you're going to be the top prosecutor in North Carolina, you should be an actual prosecutor. You should be qualified, tested and ready on Day One," Forsyth County District Attorney Jim O'Neill said.

He becomes the second GOP candidate to enter the race. GOP state Sen. Buck Newton has already announced his candidacy.

Four-term Attorney General Roy Cooper, a Democrat, is planning to run for governor next year, opening the post. Two Democrats have said they're running for Cooper's seat: state Sen. Josh Stein and Fayetteville attorney Tim Dunn.

A Republican hasn't been elected as North Carolina's attorney general in more than 100 years. Cooper has been state government's highest ranking Democrat since Republican Pat McCrory became governor in 2013.

O'Neill has been Forsyth County district attorney since 2009, when then-Gov. Bev Perdue appointed him to serve out the term of a retiring prosecutor. He ran unopposed in 2010 and 2014.

He said he won't attack other candidates — even Cooper. Instead, he said he'd focus on his strengths as well as the issues.



O'Neill

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