WSSU rolls out strategic plan on campus in style

THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem State University rolled out its strategic plan in front of

nearly 2,000 students, faculty mem-

a n d alumni last Thursday

With performances for the Red Sea of Sound, and the cheerleaders, the event felt more like an homecoming football game than a strategic plan rollout.

Chancellor Elwood Robinson said he could have elected for the more formal approach but felt like the students needed to see the plan in action.

Throughout the event various students, profes-sors, and well-known alumni took to the stage inside K.R. Williams Auditorium to discuss the different aspects of the five year plan that will focus on

equality and social justice.

Major goals of the plan include providing a quality

education experience that helps students develop the intellectual and interper-sonal skills that transfer across careers and context, and gives students opportunities to engage impor-tant questions within their discipline, community, and society at large.

Along with strengthening liberal education, the plan also includes; an increase in financial resources which include scholarships and grants for students from low income households, as well continued investments in technology, infrastructure and staff development.

According to the plan the university will also provide faculty develop-ment for professors and other faculty members. The plan was approved by the WSSU Board of Trustees on Dec. 11. Implementation is set to

begin later this year.

Though it is resource

intensive, the university doesn't anticipate increas-es in tuition because of it. University officials said they will be looking for additional and expanding partnerships to help with

things like internships.
Robinson said, WSSU is a transformative university and has been one for over 123 years.

"This university has always transformed itself," he continued. "This university transformed itself from Slater Industrial College, Winston-Salem Teachers College and here

today as Winston-Salem State University. "It's in the DNA of this

institution; that's what we

Provost Brenda Allen said the plan is designed to build leaders and will create graduates who are, "free independent thinkers.

"This is the type of education that will help allow our graduates to do, or become anything that they choose."

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for December was 5.6 percent - higher than the national rate - meaning that about 270,000 people were actively looking for work.

In Raleigh, community activist Octavia Rainey said more than a dozen people came to her for help understanding letters saying they could lose their benefits. Rainey, the chair-woman of the Citizens' Advisory Council for her neighborhood, said people were confused about the timeframe and what the next steps were.

She says many in danger of losing benefits are

willing to work, but face obstacles. Some are felons who have trouble passing background checks. Others have sought work as janitors or dishwashers but can't work odd-hour shifts because of public transportation schedules.

Alan Briggs, executive director of the North Carolina Association of Feeding America Food Banks, said many people on food stamps already receive help from food banks, but food stamp rule change is likely to increase

"You're talking about the poorest of the poor. These folks are struggling anyway," he said.

In Johnston County

southeast of Raleigh, Rachel Ayers runs a foodassistance market affiliated with Interfaith Food Shuttle, More than 600 people, some of whom are already on food stamps, came to a distribution in January. She thinks the cuts are unfair.

"Don't take away the food until you get them a job. There's not a lot of jobs

around here," she said. In Raleigh, Rhonda Currie oversees a similar program that helps about 350 families per month.

Judie Holcomb Pack contributed to this report for the Chronicle

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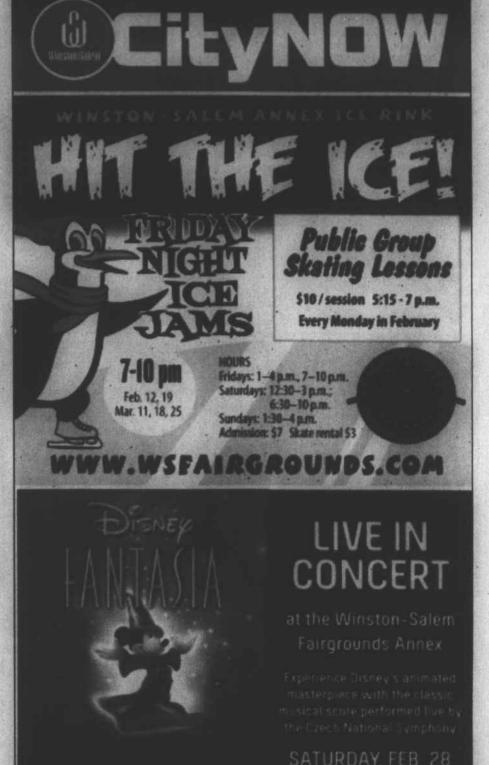
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