

# Students to rally for Calvin M. Smith case

BY CASH MICHAELS  
FOR THE CHRONICLE

Students from Winston-Salem State University (WSSU), Wake Forest University and Salem College will continue their "Call for Justice for Calvin Michael Smith" tonight, Feb. 18, as the Silk Plant Forest Truth Committee charges that state Attorney General Roy Cooper is not being forthcoming in his handling of the case.

This evening at 6:30 p.m., students and members of the Silk Plant Forest Truth Committee will hold a rally in the Dillard Auditorium, Anderson Center on the WSSU campus. Before that, they will hold a march from the Donald J. Reeves Student Center at WSSU to the clock tower on the WSSU campus. It is scheduled to begin at 3:30 p.m., followed by the rally.

Kalvin Smith is a 44-year-old black man who supporters allege was falsely charged and convicted with the Dec. 1995 brutal beating of Jill Marker, a 33-year-old pregnant store manager at the old Silk Plant Forest store off Silas Creek Parkway. Even though Smith was reportedly nowhere near the store at the time and another suspect with a violent history allegedly had been in the shop shortly before, Winston-Salem police arrested and charged Smith for the crime.

Marker sustained traumatic brain injuries in the assault and is currently receiving care in Ohio. Smith is serving up to 29 years in prison.

Forsyth County prosecutors allegedly had exculpatory evidence they did not turn over at trial, Smith's attorneys charge, in addition to "false evidence" and tainted testimony by investigators. Marker's ability to clearly identify her attacker given her brain injuries has also been seriously questioned. A false affidavit suggesting that Marker's attacker was "a black man" has been at the center of intense controversy.

Several former law enforcement officials, including a former FBI director named Christopher Swecker, have reviewed the investigation and determined it to have been in error. Swecker issued a report after a 16-month probe saying Smith's conviction was "seriously flawed and woefully incomplete, thus calling into question whether the original trial jury rendered their verdict based on all the relevant facts and accurate facts of the case." A previous investigation by a Winston-Salem City Council committee, involving two former Winston-Salem police detectives, agreed.

Critics say based on the various inconsistencies in the evidence against Smith, his original conviction should be vacated and a new trial granted. Both a federal judge and the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals have denied previous defense motions to vacate the conviction.

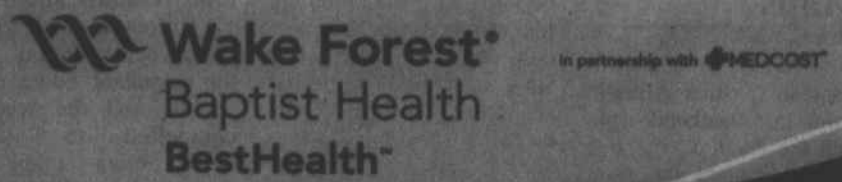
The case has been in the hands of the state Attorney General's Office ever since it took it over from the Forsyth County District Attorney's office based on a conflict of interest.

In an interview with *The Chronicle*, Rev. Kelly Carpenter, co-chair of the Silk Plant Forest Truth Committee, said that in a Feb. 10 meeting with the Ministers' Conference of Winston Salem and Vicinity, state Attorney General Roy Cooper was asked to meet with Swecker and two other former officers to hear his full report, in hopes that his office would join with Calvin Smith's defense in asking the court to vacate the original conviction.

Bishop Todd Fulton, chair of the Minister's Conference, told *The Chronicle*: "With our request, he didn't give us a yes or no. He said he would consider it, and that he would get back with us. So the ball is in his court. We are waiting for his response."

However right after that Feb. 10 meeting with Fulton and the NAACP, Cooper's office issued a press release acknowledging the meeting, but then stating, "... our office has previously reviewed the independent report and discussed it with Mr. Swecker. While we agree that there are systemic issues in the criminal justice system that must be addressed, our office has a duty to represent the state in this particular matter and no court has found cause to overturn the conviction despite numerous appeals."

And then, on Feb. 12, the Silk Plant Forest Truth Committee issued a statement saying, in part, "On Thursday, February 11, 2016, Director Swecker confirmed to the Silk Plant Forest Truth Committee he has no recollection of ever discussing the Silk Plant Forest case with Attorney General Cooper or anyone from the North Carolina Department of Justice."



## March community health seminars, screenings and events

Visit [WakeHealth.edu/BestHealth](http://WakeHealth.edu/BestHealth) for class descriptions and other events. Events are FREE of charge and require registration, unless otherwise noted.



### SATURDAY, MARCH 19

**Resistance Bands \ 9 to 10 am**  
Wake Forest Baptist Health Medical Plaza—Country Club, 4610 Country Club Road, Winston-Salem

### MONDAY, MARCH 21

**BestHealth Wellness Challenge — last day to register!**  
Monday, March 21, is the last day to register for the BestHealth Wellness Challenge. Call 336-713-2378 or visit [WakeHealth.edu/BestHealth](http://WakeHealth.edu/BestHealth).

**Proper Footwear \ 5:30 to 6:30 pm**  
Fleet Feet, 278 Harvey St., Winston-Salem

### TUESDAY, MARCH 1

**Mike Wells on Elder Law Basics**  
1:30 to 2:30 pm  
Wake Forest Baptist Health Medical Plaza—Country Club, 4610 Country Club Road, Winston-Salem

### THURSDAY, MARCH 3

**Blood Pressure Screening \ 1 to 2 pm**  
**Exercises for Stronger Bones**  
2 to 3 pm  
Wake Forest Baptist Health Medical Plaza—Country Club, 4610 Country Club Road, Winston-Salem

**Cindy Silver on Amazing Flavor: Herbs & Spices \ 6 to 7 pm**  
Wake Forest Baptist Health Medical Plaza—Piedmont Plaza 1, Kitty Hawk Room, 1920 West First St., Winston-Salem

### SATURDAY, MARCH 5

**POUND: Rockout. Workout.™**  
9 to 10 am  
Wake Forest Baptist Health Medical Plaza—Country Club, 4610 Country Club Road, Winston-Salem

### MONDAY, MARCH 14

**Simple and Savory Fish \ 5:30 to 7 pm**  
Wake Forest Baptist Health Medical Plaza—Country Club, 4610 Country Club Road, Winston-Salem

### SATURDAY, MARCH 26

**Apples, Apples, Apples**  
1 to 2:30 pm  
Wake Forest Baptist Health Davie Medical Center, Cardiac Classroom, Plaza 1, Highway 801 N, I-40 (Exit 180), Bermuda Run

### MONDAY, MARCH 28

**Wellness Challenge: Orientation**  
5:30 to 6:30 pm  
Wake Forest Biotech Place Auditorium, 575 Patterson Ave., Winston-Salem

### TUESDAY, MARCH 29

**Blood Pressure Screening**  
4:30 to 5:30 pm  
**Vein, Vein Go Away!**  
5:30 to 6:30 pm  
Wake Forest Baptist Health Medical Plaza—Clemmons, 2311 Lewisville-Clemmons Road, Clemmons

**INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY:** If Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools are closed due to weather, BestHealth classes will be canceled.

To register, call or visit:

**336-713-BEST (2378) \ [WakeHealth.edu/BestHealth](http://WakeHealth.edu/BestHealth)**

## GO RED GAME For Heart Disease



# WSSU SOFTBALL VS. DAVIS & ELKINS

**DOUBLE-HEADER 12PM + 2PM  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19**

**AT TWIN CITY PARK, 2801 NEW WALKERTOWN RD**

# 2016 CIAA BASKETBALL GAMES

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

### FEBRUARY 20

**LIVINGSTONE - Senior Day 12 pm**

Join us as we say 'thank you' to the seniors of women's basketball, men's basketball and cheerleading teams

## MEN'S BASKETBALL

### FEBRUARY 20

**LIVINGSTONE - Senior Day 2 pm**

## Get Your Tickets!

LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE!

**February 22 – 27, 2016**

Charlotte, NC Time Warner Cable Arena



Support the Rams' Campus of Champions by purchasing your prepaid tickets directly from the WSSU Ticket Office.

### HOW TO PURCHASE TICKETS

- by calling the ticket Office at 336.750.3220 with a credit card, or
- at the Ticket Office Monday – Friday from 8.30 a.m. until 4.30 p.m. with credit card, cash or cashier's check.

WSSU will receive the tickets prior to the tournament. Your tickets will be sent to you via Express Mail.

Disclaimer: There are a limited number of tickets available in each section. Therefore, tickets will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. If your request cannot be met, you will be contacted by the WSSU Ticket Office.

### WSSU TICKET INFORMATION

Ticket Category	Price
Upper	\$50.00

