



David Christison



Miranda Jones

WS/FCS photos

Planting seeds at Main Street Academy

BY KIM UNDERWOOD
WINSTON-SALEM/FORSYTH COUNTY SCHOOLS

At Main Street Academy, they planted seeds in people's hearts and then went outside and planted seeds in the dirt.

Main Street sixth-graders had been reading a book called "Seedfolks" by Paul Fleischman that tells the story of how a community garden brings people of different ages and different backgrounds together. On March 18, teachers Miranda Jones and David Christison invited people in the community from different backgrounds to come tell their stories to students as a way of planting seeds of connection and of unity.

"I hope it gives them the opportunity to see some of the aspects of these different cultures," Christison said. "When you're curious, you want to seek out that information."

After a lunch in the media center that included cuisine from such countries as Haiti, India and Mexico, everyone headed outside to plant vegetables in newly turned ground. Gardens at Main, as it's being called, is made possible by a \$3,000 Toolbox for Education grant from Lowe's Home Improvement.

"With gift of this grant," Jones said, "Lowe's has enabled me to literally and metaphorically demonstrate to my students the transformative power of sowing and reaping; of planting and harvesting - in our heads, hearts, minds, and our bodies too! From our little corner of South

Main Street, we are now officially Seedfolks. Thank you, Lowe's."

Jones and Christison called the celebration of gardens, of reading and of different cultures, "They Didn't Know We Were Seeds: A Celebration of the Reading of Seedfolks."

"We are using this event as a culminating activity for the book we have been reading," Jones said.

Inside the media center, Jones, Christison and others had set up tables representing such countries as Haiti, Liberia, Mexico, Romania, Vietnam, India, Guatemala and the United States. Some tables represented people in the book. Others represented people there to speak. An American Indian table served to honor Robin "White Star" Lynne, there to bless the garden.

Sixth-grader Jamari Morris was sitting at the Vietnam table. It represented a character from the book - Kim, a 9-year-old girl from Vietnam who was the first to plant something in the vacant lot that became the community garden.

After everyone was seated, Jones went from table to table, and the students sitting at each table shared some of the things they knew about the country.

Panelists then spoke about their lives and some of the things they had learned along the way.

The panel included:

***Aston King**, who grew up in Liberia and who now works for Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools.

***Nathaniel Calhoun** who was born in Mexico while

his American parents were there serving as missionaries. He and his two brothers now own a company that distributes Hispanic foods.

***Barbara Gateau-Carrington** was born and grew up in Haiti. She now works for Blue Cross/Blue Shield of NC.

***Sita Somara** is the vice president of the Indo-US Cultural Association. She was there with her assistant Beena Bhaskaran.

***Robin "White Star" Lynne** studies Native American practices and has a healing practice called Flower Eagle Medicine Lodge.

Along with the students and speakers, the day included a number of administrators who wanted to participate. Mary Todd-Allen, who is the director of middle schools for the EC (Exceptional Children) Division, was one of them. She works with Jones and spoke highly of her.

"She is a phenomenal EC teacher," Todd-Allen said. "She knows how to teach. Most of all, she knows the importance of relationships."

Others present were connected to Jones personally and served to illustrate how deeply she is connected to the wider community. Michelle Calhoun, who was serving food, was one of Jones' teachers when Jones was growing up. Jones' friend Shanna Duffy is a professional photographer, and she took photos of the event.

Many local businesses, organizations and individuals supported the Seeds program to help make the day an overwhelming success.

Red Cross asks for blood donations this spring

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The American Red Cross encourages eligible blood donors to donate blood this spring to ensure a sufficient supply for patients at approximately 2,600 hospitals across the country.



Donated blood is perishable and must constantly be replenished to keep up with hospital patient need. Red blood cells are the blood component most frequently transfused by hospitals and must be used within 42 days of donation.

Eligible donors can give red blood cells through either a regular whole blood donation or a double red cell donation, where available. During a double red cell donation, two units of red blood cells are collected while most of the plasma and platelets are returned to

the donor. Double red cell donors must meet additional eligibility criteria, which will be determined at the donation appointment.

Debbie Cody-Nabors is a blood donor who gives double red cells. Her mother received transfusions twice a week during treatment for aplastic anemia. "I donate blood as often as I can in memory of my mom," she said. "Please donate blood if you can to

help save lives as you never know when you'll be on the receiving end."

Donors with all blood types are needed, especially those with types O, A negative and B negative. Whole blood can be donated every 56 days, up to six times a year, and double red cells may be donated every 112 days, up to three times per year.

To make an appointment to give blood, download the free Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Upcoming blood donation opportunities:

*American Red Cross Winston-Salem Blood Donation Center, 650 Coliseum Drive Monday, 1:30 to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday, 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Thursday, 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

*Winston-Salem:

Today, April 28: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Wake Forest Innovation Quarter, 575 N. Patterson Ave.

Today, April 28: 2 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., Calvary Baptist Church, James B. Sechrist Building, 5000 Country Club Road

Prayer breakfast honors social fellowship

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Swing Phi Swing Social Fellowship Inc. founding members were honored at a prayer breakfast held at Goler Memorial AME Zion Church.

Four founding members, Anita Chase Watson, Lorraine Watkins Phillips, Ellen Tomlinson Carter, members of the Rukiya Busara Piedmont Triad Graduate Chapter ("RuBu") in Winston-Salem, and Beverly Dorn Steele, a member of the Charlotte Graduate Chapter, were in attendance. Also in attendance was Winston-Salem State University Chancellor Elwood L. Robinson.

The prayer breakfast, one of many scholarship fundraiser events that will be held throughout this year, was organized and led by Antoinette Ball, Vanessa Diggs, Victoria Graves-Cade, Phyllis Jeter Nunn, Rose Lockhart, Elise Rodney and Candace Stowe, also known as the Line Sisters of Sankofa 7.

The Line Sisters of Sankofa 7 will be celebrating their upcoming 10th anniversary of Swing Phi Swing and are all graduates of WSSU and members of the RuBu Chapter.

The keynote speaker on April 2 was Rev. Coretta Sharpless, the principal at

Northside Elementary School in Chapel Hill. Vernetta Y. Martin served as the Mistress of Ceremonies. All proceeds from the year-long scholarship fundraiser campaign will be endowed to Swing Phi Swing's philanthropic and humanitarian arm, The SHE Foundation Inc., and awarded to WSSU.

Swing Phi Swing, a social fellowship women's organization, was founded on April 4, 1969 on the campus of WSSU.

The organization's core principles are academic excellence, social and political change awareness, consciously uplifting women, and being on the front line and forefront of community service activism. Just recently, Swing Phi Swing was featured on the TJMS's website and was recognized and highlighted as one of the "Little Known Black History Fact."

To make a donation to support the Line Sisters of Sankofa 7's scholarship fundraiser campaign, please submit your donation to Swing-Phi Swing Social Fellowship, Inc., Rukiya Busara, Piedmont Triad Graduate Chapter, c/o Line Sisters of Sankofa 7, P.O. Box 1251, Winston-Salem, NC, or visit their website at www.linesistersofsankofa7.org.



Submitted photos

Line Sisters of Sankofa 7 of Swing Phi Swing Social Fellowship Inc. (L-R): Rose Lockhart, Antoinette Ball, Phyllis Jeter Nunn, Candace Stowe, Victoria Graves-Cade, Elise Rodney and Vanessa Diggs.



Winston-Salem State University Chancellor Elwood Robinson and the founders of Swing Phi Swing Social Fellowship Inc. (L-R): Beverly Dorn Steele, Anita Chase Watson, Chancellor Robinson, Ellen Tomlinson Carter and Lorraine Watkins Phillips.