

HISTORY

WOMEN'S MONTH

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THURSDAY, March 14, 2019

City has Confederate statue removed

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

After weeks of protest, heated conversations at City Hall, and ongoing conversations on social media, on Tuesday, March 12, the Confederate statue located at the corner of Fourth and Liberty Streets in downtown Winston-Salem was removed.

The statue, which depicts a Confederate soldier holding a rifle, was dedicated on October 3, 1905, and sponsored by the James B. Gordon Chapter #211 of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and wealthy business and landowners in the area. The dedication

speech was delivered by Alfred M. Waddell, a white supremacist who served as mayor of Wilmington and led the violent race riots of 1898.

Talks about the removal of the statue have been floating around for about two years now, following two separate incidents where the statue was vandalized. In August of 2017, shortly after white supremacists marched in Virginia, two sides of the statue were defaced with a black "X". Then on Christmas Day last year, officers with the Winston-Salem Police Department (WSPD) responded to a call that the monument had been defaced again.

Upon arrival, officers found the words "Cowards & Traitors" in permanent marker.

In response to the vandalism, City Attorney Angela Carmon issued a letter to the UDOC demanding that the statue be removed by Jan. 31, 2019, or face legal action from the City. In the letter, Carmon said the removal of the statue was about public safety.

As the deadline for removal drew closer, those in support and those against the city's decision to remove the statue met several times at the busy intersection to ensure their voices were heard. Lillian Podlog, an organizer for Hate Out of Winston, a group that was formed to keep the pressure on city officials to remove the statue, said the statue needed to come down because it represents hate. During a rally in early January, Podlog said, "... Yes it is history, but we must ask what that history is. That statue was put up in 1905 by a man who murdered black people and went on to become mayor of Wilmington. That's the history we're talking about here," said Podlog. "If you want to honor history, let's be clear on what that history is. It's not about honoring a soldier like they say."



The Confederate statue was removed from the corner of Fourth and Liberty Streets earlier this week. Submitted photo



Photo from City of W-S Government Facebook page

Those opposed to the removal of the statue told The Chronicle that the Confederate statue in downtown Winston-Salem and others across the country had little to do with slavery and the oppression of black people. While defending the statue, an individual from Davie County said, "... I studied that time period

for 18 years and the sad truth of it is there's so much ignorance about what that war was about. It was not about slavery, it was about tariffs and money. It was a political war."

Although January 31 came and went without much action, the City of Winston-Salem kept their promise and removed the

statue before noon on Tuesday, March 12. The statue is expected to be relocated to the Salem Cemetery where more than 30 Confederate graves are located.

It is unclear if the United Daughters of the Confederacy will face any legal action.

Financial expert tackles state's Economic and Financial Literacy Act

If approved, Senate Bill 134 would require high school graduates to pass personal finance course

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

The North Carolina General Assembly is considering a bill that would make it a requirement for high school students to pass financial literacy course before they graduate.

Senate Bill 134, or the Economics and Financial Literacy Act, would require high school students to complete an economics and personal finance course before they are eligible to graduate. If adopted as currently written, the course would include instruction in several focus areas including: true cost of credit, choosing and managing a credit card, borrowing money for a large purchase (automobile, etc.), home mortgages, credit scoring and credit reports, and planning and paying for post secondary education.

The bill also includes

professional development courses for instructors who will be teaching the course. The State Board of Education will review the high school standard course of study to determine the grade levels the new course may complete.

While the Financial Literacy Act is a step in the right direction, during a recent interview with The Chronicle, Gregg Murset, a certified financial planner and founder of BusyKid.com, a chores app for kids that teaches financial literacy and responsibility, said kids need to learn the basic principles of finance before they reach high school.

A father of six, Murset, who is a graduate of Arizona State with a degree in finance, said BusyKid came to be when he was looking for ways to teach his kids financial responsibility while keeping up with their chores and weekly allowance at the same time. He said he faced an issue that every parent goes through at some point. He said his plan was to make the process easier for everyone involved and today, BusyKid has more than 25,000 subscribers.

Murset said, "The way I describe BusyKid is simple. It's your kid's first job with direct deposit."

BusyKid allows children to receive their allowance from their parents' bank account directly to their BusyKid account. By dividing the money into three different categories - saving, sharing, and spending - students learn responsibility, accountability, and smart money decisions.

"... If you think about it, that's exactly what we do as adults. We go to work, we earn some money, we put some money in a savings account or 401K. We give some to charity or church and we spend the rest. So we're reinforcing Finance 101 with kids in a very hands-on way," Murset said.

Murset said he believes state lawmakers are missing the point with the high school financial literacy course. He said students should begin learning financial responsibility as early as elementary school. Murset said in a point in time where money is usually transferred with the touch of a button or swipe of a card, it's hard to teach children the fundamentals because they don't physically see the money.

"I think they're missing it because this really needs to happen in elementary and middle schools so kids can start



Submitted photo

learning the basic fundamentals earlier. I think one of the things that's hard these days is that parents are trying to teach their kids about something they don't see," continued Murset. "I call it invisible money because you don't hand your kids a bunch of coins and cash anymore. We swipe our card or tap our phones, so parents have a hard thing to teach kids about invisible money."

"... And let's be honest, teaching it in class and taking a test at school

is one thing, but the actual practical application is really where it's at. That's what BusyKids is, it's that practical tool that gives parents the opportunity to help their kid learn by doing because I think that's the best way to learn by doing stuff."

Currently only 17 states require high school students to take a course in personal finance. In the 2017 Financial Report Card from Champlain College's Center for Financial Literacy, based on their efforts to produce

financially literate students, only five states received an "A" for their efforts. Those state were; Alabama, Virginia, Tennessee, Utah and Missouri.

If approved, the Financial Literacy Act would cost taxpayers about \$2 million. That money will be used for professional development for teachers. If the bill passes, the course will be added to the curriculum during the 2020-2021 school year.

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