

GED Grad Betty Keane To Inspire Basic Skills Award Winners At BCC

BY SUSAN USHER

It can take hard work, determination and motivation for adults to return to school and resume their education.

Betty Keane knows because she did it, in 4½ years moving from junior high dropout to master's degree recipient.

Keane will be the keynote speaker Thursday, Aug. 11, when Brunswick Community College honors GED program graduates and other achievers in the college's basic skills program at a 7 p.m. buffet dinner on BCC's main campus near Supply. The event is intended to recognize students' achievements and motivate and encourage them to set new goals to continue their education.

Keane, a native of Tigar Branch, Miss., dropped out of school in seventh grade because she needed to work. "It was important in those days for my brothers to stay in school," she recalled.

She reared three children, always stressing the importance of an education to them, sold real estate and "did a lot of things that it didn't take a GED to do," she said. "I never told

anybody I hadn't graduated. I never felt that I needed any more education at the time."

In 1986 Keane had just moved to Brunswick County. One of her children was just starting high school, another was in college and a third had finished college. She had a real estate sales license but wasn't sure that was what she wanted to do.

She checked at BCC about taking a course. "Les Turner was my advisor and he had me signed up for three classes before I could bat an eye," she recalled. "I had to say 'whoa,' and tell him I didn't have a diploma."

No problem. She studied for the battery of GED tests while taking speech communications, freshman English and developmental math courses. "I just had to take the GED before the end of my first quarter," she said.

Keane told her family the truth about her educational status and gained their cooperation and support.

"The children suffered a lot, so they have to be proud," she said, re-

calling nights when she closed her door in order to study without interruption. "I had forgotten how to study and how to take notes."

She passed the GED that first quarter, then earned an associate degree in general education in 1988. Transferring to UNC-Wilmington, she raced on to earn a B.A. degree in education in 1989 and a master's degree in reading in 1990.

Since 1990 the Yaupon Beach resident has taught English at South Brunswick High School at Boiling Spring Lakes, filling interim assignments for two years and receiving contracts the last two years.

In her classroom she tries to convey to her students the importance of those basic skills—how to study, how to take notes, the value of reading, she said. "I try to teach them how to learn."

"I owe so much to BCC. They didn't put any obstacles in front of me, nothing I couldn't handle. And BCC gave me my first job after I graduated from UNC-W, teaching developmental English.

"BCC has been very instrumental

in shaping my life here."

Presenting more than 100 certificates and awards as part of the program will be Catherine Godley, Gladys Wagenseil, Rita Ramphal, Sabra Barfield and Dean of Continuing Education Jerry Thrift.

Also on the program are BCC President W. Michael Reaves, Assistant Dean of Continuing Education Velva Jenkins, the Rev. Dwarka Ramphal and entertainers Gaye Fulford and Larry Joyner Jr.

This first basic skills awards program is being supported in part by a grant from the BCC Foundation.

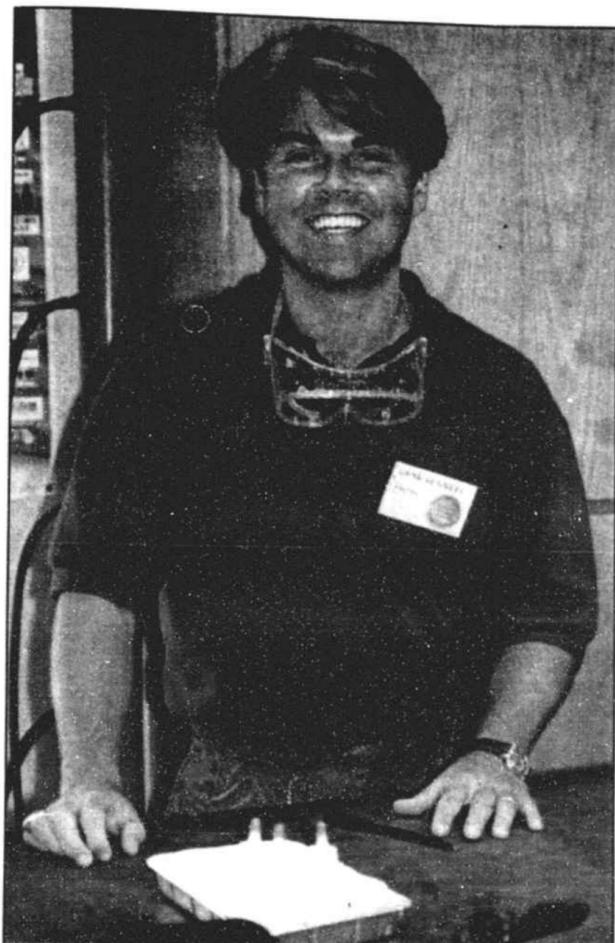


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Studies With Teachers

Gene Bennet, a teacher at West Brunswick High School, participates in the TORCH (Teacher Outreach) Program for Chemistry Teachers at the College of Charleston July 11-15. The institute is one of six funded by the Commission on Higher Education and the Woodrow Wilson National Foundation being hosted by the college's School of Sciences and Mathematics this summer.

Diabetes Support Group To Meet

Dosher Memorial Hospital's Diabetes Support Group will meet Thursday, Aug. 18, at 7 p.m. in the hospital conference room.

Eugene DesLauriers, registered physical therapist, will discuss the importance of exercise in the diabetic's regime and will teach ways to

incorporate exercise into the life-style.

The group will tour the hospital exercise area, and light refreshments will be served.

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