

Director Says New Resource Program Helps People Believe More In Themselves

BY SUSAN USHER

Avone Teadwell believes in people; the charge from watching them grow in confidence and skills keeps him motivated. He also believes in HRD as a tool for helping people learn to believe in themselves.

HRD is the acronym for Human Resources Development, a free, short-term service of the N.C. Department of Community Colleges that gives those eligible a boost into the world of work by setting them up for success, not failure. Participants must be 18 years of age or older, unemployed, underemployed or disadvantaged to qualify.

"Most people have skills but they don't know it, or they don't know how to make those skills work for them, how to relate those skills to work," says Teadwell. "I know what HRD can do. I've seen what it's done for participants in New Hanover and Pender counties."

"We are hoping to produce sharp, well-spoken participants for the job market."

Recently named director of the new HRD program at Brunswick Community College, his own job background includes working his way from dishwasher to assistant manager of a Wilmington restaurant. Teadwell is building the new program from scratch, and is anxious to see what works here.

"We're giving him the flexibility to develop something that fits Brunswick County," said Jerry Thrift, vice president of community and continuing education.

BCC's program receives automatic funding at start-up level, \$100,600, for each of its first two years. After that funding relates directly to its success in training participants for the work place and helping them find jobs.

The first class starts Jan. 23, and will include job search and job skills, motivation and orientation. The short, four-week cycle will help him "get a feel for Brunswick County," he said. "From there we will offer more components, such as secretarial brush-up and keyboarding." Some participants may also be channeled into college coursework.

"We're going to make available everything needed to make that person hold their head high when they come in for an interview," said Teadwell.

HRD participants may not realize the skills they al-

ready possess, or be aware of others they need, he said, such as how to fill out an application properly or handle a job interview. Often they're not aware of basic employer expectations such as arriving at work on time and calling when late or sick.

The program will help boost their job skills, work to place them in a job suitable to their skills, and then provide on-the-job follow-up. For at least one year after "graduation" participants can continue to receive support services such as job referrals and coaching even if not placed immediately in a job.

As he "feels out" the community and its needs, Teadwell is working out of borrowed quarters and scrambling for classrooms on a campus already squeezed for space even before the state legislature decided last summer to extend HRD to the four community colleges that didn't have it.

"I'm ready, I'm ready, I just want to do it," says Teadwell, who lives what he teaches as he pushes HRD students up and out: "You need to go out of here knowing and thinking, 'Given the opportunity I will rise to the occasion.'"

The Wilmington native has worked all of his life, "at just about every place there is to work in New Hanover County." He spent the past four years at Cape Fear Community College as an HRD instructor, adult basic literacy education and single parents/displaced homemakers coordinator and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) counselor for New Hanover and Pender counties. "I was pretty busy," he says modestly.

He's also worked as a juvenile court counselor, as a teacher assistant for at-risk students and as an assistant restaurant manager. It was at Tuesday's in Wilmington he started as a dishwasher in 1976 and worked his way up to assistant manager, supervising 75 employees before a job change in 1981.

A self-declared lifelong learner, Teadwell spends much of his free hours in class. He studied business administration at Cape Fear Community College, earned a B.A. Degree (graduating cum laude) in behavioral science from Shaw University and completed 18 hours toward teacher certification in special education. He has taken master's degree courses in guidance and counseling at N.C. Central University and is enrolled in Webster University's Myrtle Beach program.

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—Avone Teadwell HRD Director

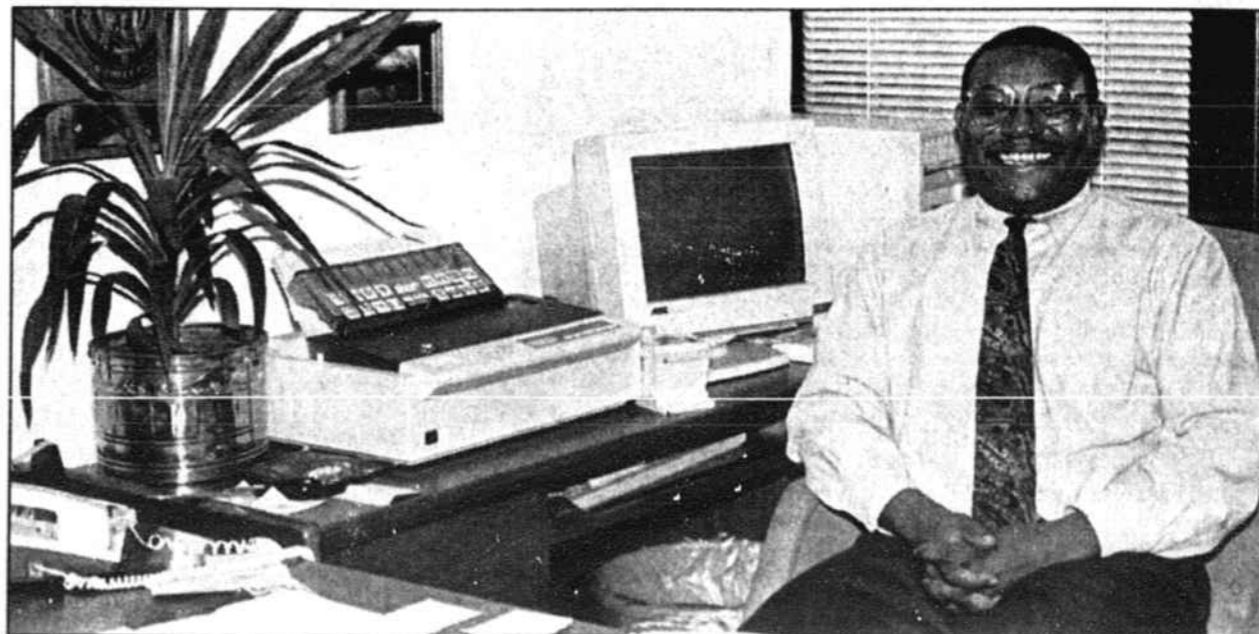


PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

AVONE TEADWELL's preparing to launch a new Human Resources Development program at Brunswick Community College. The free program prepares participants for the work place and helps find and train them for suitable jobs.

He's committed to offering "whatever it takes to get that participant from where they are to where they need to be"—including academics, transportation, child care and transportation. HRD has no funding for the latter two needs, but Teadwell believes in agency networking.

His long-range goal is to develop a center for "one-stop shopping" for HRD to become the starting point for referrals to other human service agencies. Teadwell sees it as a win-win arrangement. Such a center would draw to HRD a large potential pool of participants,

while also helping meet applicants' other needs and reducing duplication of effort by fellow agencies.

"I am not territorial and I hope I never get that way," says Teadwell. "The participants are my number one priority. Maybe HRD will be able to pull those resources together."

Individuals interested in applying for the Human Resources Development program can reach Teadwell at BCC's main campus near Supply at 754-6900 starting Jan. 2.

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SPECIALIST OFFERS HELPFUL TIPS

How To Shake Yuletide Stress, Depression

While you're checking that list twice this Christmas, take some extra measures to avoid holiday stress and depression, says a human development specialist at N.C. State University.

"Some days seem like Murphy's Law is the ruling principle," said Wayne Matthews with the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service at NCSU. "Around holiday times sometimes it seems like chaos and mayhem are the order of the day. From Thanksgiving to New Year's there is often a whirlwind of activity."

Matthews pointed to Christmas-card writing, crowded shopping malls, massive food preparation and children cooped up in the house as some stress factors.

"You may end up exhausted, fatigued, angry or depressed," he said. "Supposedly 'tis the season to be jolly, but some folks experience life's circumstances which diminish or destroy the sense of joy."

Stress increases because of unrealistic expectations, tremendous financial drains, disappointment over impossible family reunions, exhaustion and cabin fever, Matthew said.

He offers these tips for avoiding or reducing holiday stress:

- Set priorities. Don't plan to do more in a day than your time and energy allow.

- Learn to share responsibilities and don't feel guilty about it.

- Don't try to be a perfectionist. Be realistic about the demands you place on yourself. And don't try to be the perfect host.

- Allow yourself some private time. Be good to yourself. Try relaxation techniques.

- Don't expect to be happy every minute. But try to enjoy the holidays in the new and creative ways.

- Learn to simplify the holidays. For example, decide to write fewer Christmas cards this year or even none at all.

Then, after you reduce some of the stress, you may be faced with post-holiday letdown.

"Some studies show there's a little decrease in the number of suicides just before Christmas but an increase in January," Matthews said.

"Plan something for the day after Christmas or for New Year's Eve to avoid post-holiday blues," he suggested.

Relax, Rest, Enjoy!

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