

Smith Gives Language Majors Advice

by Marion Johnson

From assistant to **Dr. Hortensia Sanchez-Boudy** of Spanish during her sophomore year, **Cheryl Woods Smith (Cheri)** '69, is now the coordinator of a Spanish program and learning resource center at the Berean Institute in Philadelphia, Penn.

Upon entering Bennett, Cheri was an elementary education major with a concentration in Spanish. But during her sophomore year she decided to change to a Spanish major. Cheri had always wanted to work with Hispanic people. "Through Bennett's small classes, oral examinations and the individualization of instruction I received the confidence I needed," said Cheri.

After class Cheri worked in Dr. Boudy's office which aided her in improving her Spanish conversation. "It has been my experience to meet many language majors who can read and write the language, but cannot speak it," said Cheri.

Cheri began teaching Spanish in the Camden, New Jersey school system but realizing that this was not fulfilling enough she resigned and became a bilingual teacher in the Centennial school system.

"When reflecting on career goals and decisions Cheri remarked, 'I feel that it is important for a person to search his/her interests and strengths. In many areas, companies will sponsor Career Fairs. These are usually very informative and enlightening in terms of the current job market and talents that will be needed in the future. One should have a specialized area of study that can be used in non-traditional areas.'"

During the summers, 1965-1969, Cheri worked in the Philadelphia school system as a teacher's aide. Upon graduation from Bennett Cheri was offered a job because of her experience. When students prepare for a career, Cheri stressed the need to include everything of a positive nature on the resumé. Also once a person has decided on a career he/she should do adequate research into the field. This could be done through observation and reading.

If a student is preparing for a career in a field similar to Cheri's, she offers them this advice, "I would advise students first to learn to speak the language and be able to use it in every day life situations. Also, do not limit yourself to one category of your major. For example, a language major can become a teacher, professional translator, a professional tutor or enter into various other careers."

Being a Black and a woman has proved to be a handicap and a benefit for Cheri. "In my experience I have found my race to be both a handicap and a benefit. While working in an all-white school district as a bilingual teacher, I found myself having to stand up for Hispanic students and many times represent them and their community. There seemed to be a hesitation in listening to my suggestions. It is a very peculiar situation when you, as a minority, are expected to represent another minority."

Life at Bennett was filled with many heart-warming and touching experiences for Cheri. The most vivid of these memories is the 'fireside' chats given by **President Isaac Miller**.

"Throughout the meeting he had the ladies to tell about themselves and their goals. After finding out what we were all about, he opened the floor for questions and discussion. I stated that now he knew all about us and now it was time for him to talk about himself! It caught him off guard; however, he did respond. To this day, when he sees me he refers to the incident," said Cheri.

When asked if she would do it over again at Bennett, Cheri said without hesitation, "Definitely

yes."

In stating the things that have motivated her to become as successful as she has, Cheri says it is three things: her parents, her husband and herself.

"My parents are enterprising business persons who have always instilled in me to get ahead, to stay ahead and to get the 'bucks'. They taught me that there is no substitute for a job well done and

I have tried to manifest this in all my employment endeavors," said Cheri.

When speaking about her husband's role in her motivation, Cheri said, "My husband, being secure in his own professions (the ministry and real estate) encourages me to go as far as I can because it is not a threat to his masculinity but a complement to the "US" that we have created.

He lends a listening ear to my everyday frustrations and is always there for me to lean on."

In keeping with these remarks, Cheri believes it is possible to incorporate a career with marriage. "I think that two people who have the same goals can handle career and marriage. There are times when I have to completely separate my work and my family life. One must constantly keep in mind

that problems at work should not be brought home and vice versa."

The final source of Cheri's motivation comes from within herself. "My motivation to succeed also comes from within. For me it is not important that I be recognized or set apart, but what is important is that I know within myself that I am qualified, that the job is being done and it is being done well."

Special Education Major Happy in Field

Teaching, Marriage Good Combo

by Sheila Purnell

Is it possible to reconcile marriage with a career? **Denise Smith**, Educable Mentally Retarded-Learning Disability (EMR-LD) resource teacher who graduated from Bennett College in 1977, feels it is possible. "Teaching and marriage are ideal together because you're home on holidays and for the summer. It's a good career if you have children—while you are at school, so are they; and you still spend a great deal of time with them," said Denise.

Denise Smith's major at Bennett College was special education. She had planned to be a teacher while she was a student. She also

planned to go on to advanced study after college. Bennett helped her to prepare for her present career because of the field trips and role-playing in the classroom and the making of educational materials.

Jimmy Faison, instructor of special education, was very helpful to Denise while she was at Bennett. "Mr. Jimmy Faison inspired me the most." She said, "Whenever I had a problem, I would always go to him. He was always willing to listen and give advice."

Denise's mother and her husband motivated her to succeed. Her race or her sex were of no significance in her career. Denise

feels she was hired because of her experience and graduate courses in learning disability.

If Denise could do it all over again, Bennett College would be her choice. Her most vivid memory of Bennett is walking to Black Hall at 8 o'clock on cold mornings.

She has kept up with Bennett College and she would like to comment on a change that she thinks is a good one. "I am happy to hear that a new course will be added to the curriculum for special education. The course, Diagnostic and Evaluation, is badly needed for the students because it will give them an insight into the various tests used in diagnosing a child's learning disability."

Denise's philosophy of life that has guided her is something that her mother has always told her, "You can be or do anything you want to, if you really want to."

Denise advises all Bennett Belles "To select a career with a good future outlook. No college can prepare you for everything; therefore one must take some initiative. Do a lot of outside reading and attend meetings related to your career." She gave some very special advice to all special education majors that she thinks will help to prepare them for the career that she has now: "read all available sources of information dealing with Special Education."

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