

Coronation 97: Wright takes the throne on a night of pageantry, magic, masks

by Chenay Beamon

"I want to be a Christian example and friend to those who are reaching and searching for happiness in an unhappy world."

Miss ECSU, Delicia Antionette Wright, used these words to announce the primary goal of her reign on Coronation night held Oct. 3 in Williams Hall.

Wright, who wore a white fitted gown with a long train, said her second goal was to "demonstrate excellence" in representing her university.

Wright expressed "thanks, glory, honor, and grace to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for blessing me with this opportunity to represent the University. "I thank God everyday for the blessings that I have" continued Wright. "I pray everyday he will lead me, guide me, and strengthen me. Without him I am nothing. With his guidance I'll do the best I can."

As Wright spoke, the decorations in the gym captured the theme of her coronation, "A Royal Masquerade." Gold streamers circled the top of the gym, and purple, gold, and green balloons hovered above. Fuchsia and gold palm trees lined the stage behind her. Tragic-comic theater masks were outlined in gold against a black background.

The men of the Royal Court wore either black or gold masks throughout the entire masquerade ball; the women carried colored masks in their hands.

After the Royal Court honored the queen, Mistress of Ceremonies Hope Jones introduced Wright's mother, Vicki Ann Liddell, who lives in Arkansas. "A mother's love creates, nurtures and molds a child's life," said Jones.

The mother of the queen, said that her daughter "kept Jesus her center and focus."

After Wright's mother spoke, eight of Wright's nine siblings showered her



Eugene O'Neal photo

Delicia Wright, Miss ECSU for 1997-87, sits on her throne with her scepter and masks on Coronation Night. She was crowned queen Oct. 3 in Williams Hall.

with flowers, gifts, hugs and kisses.

Wright gave her mother flowers and expressed her happiness at having her celebrate the occasion with her. The new queen said the coronation marked the first time since high school that her mother had seen her on stage.

Wright also thanked Chancellor Mickey Burnim for supporting her and the Chancellor's wife, LaVera Burnim, for being the "epitome of women" and serving as a role model for Wright. She also thanked Billy Hines, Director of the University Choir, for being a "father figure" and helping her "grow not only musically, but also socially, academically, spiritually, and emotionally."

Wright expressed her gratitude to several friends "who were there for me when everyone else turned their

back on me." Her true friends were always there as "spiritual leaders" to lift her up and to pray with and for her, she added.

During the Chancellor's charge to the new queen, Burnim said Miss ECSU "represents the entire University community-- students, faculty, and staff. "Miss ECSU should be poised and talented, articulate and energetic." Burnim continued. "She should be intelligent and graceful and compassionate."

Burnim encouraged Wright to "adhere yourself to your fellow students." He concluded by congratulating Wright and charging her to reign as a queen "with dignity and pride and to uphold the Viking tradition."

After Chancellor Burnim's charge to Miss ECSU three students, Raylisha Mercer, Wanda Morris, and Tamika Whitehead, performed a dramatic presentation of Paul Lawrence Dunbar's poem "We Wear the Mask."

A ten-member dance troop performed a hip-hop rendition of Dr. Dre's "Been There, Done That." The student dancers elegantly dipped, twirled, and circled the floor.

The University Concert Choir and the Essence of Praise Gospel Choir also performed tributes to the new queen. Wright's friends, Todd Peterson and David Scott Gibson, sang "I Can Be Only Me" as a special tribute.

Gibson was the master of ceremonies. Shaunell McMillan and Samuel Norman assisted the Mistress and Master of Ceremonies by announcing the Royal Court.

Also in attendance were former Miss ECSU '94-'95, Lynette Jordan and Vanessa Vincent, second attendant '96-'97.

Latonya Wilson and Fredricka Simons were first and second attendants to the queen, respectively.

Mr. ECSU, Kelsey Lodge, a senior Criminal Justice major from Rocky Mount, NC, gave a personal tribute to the queen. He encouraged her to keep striving for success because "God will keep everlasting love around you."

The queen's procession included Tanisha Williams, the lady in waiting; Larry Wilson, sash bearer; Charles Butler, cloak bearer; Michelle Lewis, scepter bearer; Donald McClain, mask bearer; and Brian Snow, crown bearer.

Wright, a senior Music Education major from Charlotte, NC, is member of the University Marching Band, Gospel Choir, Choral Ensemble, NAACP, the New Generation Campus Ministries, the Student Leadership Academy, Alpha Chi National Honor Society, and the University Concert Choir.

POETRY

Keep Me Near

Engage in the world and what it has to give.
Live life for a meaning, not just to live.
Keep goals set high and try to reach them all.
If you ever need help, give a brother a call.
Because I'll be there no matter what you do.
And for eternity I will always love you.
No matter the problem, whatever it may be
You can always count on and confide in me.
As I will you, "My true confidant."
Because, after God, you are what I want.
I want you to help me when in need.
Like a blind man, help me to read.
Like a deaf man, help me to hear.
And like any human, hold me in your heart and keep me near.

Ronel Brewer

