

FEATURES

Brookshaw Travels to Salvador da Bahia

BY DOUGLAS B. CLARK
Managing Editor

Upon entering his office you cannot help but notice that his office is small, crowded and cramped; but this energetic man manages to maneuver around his office as though he has an enormous amount of space. Immediately a visitor to his office would notice his love for books due to the overflow of them from the shelves to the windowsills.

However, this WSSU professor discovered first-hand this summer how knowledge gained from experience is more exciting than the knowledge gained from books.

Dr. Michael A. Brookshaw, associate professor of Spanish at WSSU, traveled this summer to Brazil to present a paper at the ALARA Conference. This trip was pleasurable, informative and for professional growth.

"It was a very illuminating experience," said Brookshaw. "It was fascinating to see a strong African presence in the culture of Salvador da Bahia."

He really enjoyed having the opportunity to interact and exchange ideas about this Afro-Brazilian environment. "One reason why this is possible is because there are a lot of Africans who have settled in Brazil," said Brookshaw.

According to Brookshaw, "being able to observe others in a different country in their own surroundings will not only enlighten you, but it will also provide you with a sense of purpose for your own life."

"As people of African descent we share a collective consciousness regardless of language, culture or geography. We are a global interdependent community," he said.

Here at WSSU, Brookshaw an

expert in Afro-Hispanic studies, teaches World Literature and upper-level Spanish courses. He often tries to place emphasis on the interconnection of African peoples and the importance for all people to learn foreign languages.

"Specifically as African Americans we have an ancestral, cultural and practical responsibility to learn to speak more than one language," he said. "In North America, that language is Spanish - the second language of the United States."

On Oct. 10, Brookshaw will present a seminar, "Africans in the Americas: The Hispanic Connection," for students in the African-American Culture course.

The International Programs Committee will feature Brookshaw, Dr. Elwanda Ingram and Brooke Anderson-Linga in a seminar on Nov. 7. They will discuss their trips to Brazil, Egypt and Africa.



Dr. Michael A. Brookshaw

Alumna Returns To Work At Her Alma Mater

BY ANDREW MEANS
Feature Writer

A petite woman with a friendly face and beautiful smile welcomed me into the cramped office. Books filled the shelves while a computer was sprawled on the left table. Papers were visibly scattered, but in some type of orderly fashion, on the wooden desk. There was an immediate sense that much could be learned about this new WSSU administrator.

Dr. Barbara J. O'Neal, a 1976 alumna, is WSSU's new assistant vice-chancellor for Student Affairs. She will assist Dr. Francine Madrey, vice-chancellor for Student Affairs, in implementing a variety of programs and activities aimed directly toward improving the education and learning environment of students.

"I would like for students to become aware and take advantage of all the resources available here," said O'Neal.

O'Neal feels that administrators, faculty, and staff members need to be more accessible to students. "WSSU needs to enforce an open-door policy so that students can feel comfortable whenever conversing with their advisor, professor, or a member of the faculty or staff."

Before coming to WSSU, O'Neal worked in the Student Life Office at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. The university's enrollment was well over 20,000 and its resources were plentiful. "One main difference was that a computer room was set up in each dorm on campus making it easy for students to have access to a computer to type papers, etc." Also, "every student had an e-mail address."

O'Neal stressed the importance of having the necessary resources so that every student will be ready to compete in the next century. "It is extremely vital for students to become technologically advanced especially in the area of computers."

While at WSSU, O'Neal plans to help decrease the number of students that do not return to WSSU the following year. These are mostly freshman, but can include upperclassmen as well. Some of the reasons students give for leaving school include: grades, roommate differences, and living and food conditions. "There must be validity to student concerns if the same reasons are being used for leaving campus," she explained.

She would also like for more

interaction to take place between students, faculty, administrators and staff. "This," she says, "will help bridge the gap and make students feel better - especially if a problem arises."

O'Neal's other campus responsibilities include advising student groups. She serves as advisor to the Student Government Association (SGA) and the Pan-Hellenic Council.

SGA Vice-President Jeffrey Alston said that O'Neal "is a very hard worker and is a student-oriented person." SGA Executive Assistant Shanniska Smith says O'Neal "is a dynamic person and is moving WSSU in the right direction."

The Pan-Hellenic Council is comprised of representatives from each Greek-Letter organization on campus. "Dr. O'Neal is very supportive of the interests of students," said Enrico Leak, a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Fortunately, O'Neal is no stranger to WSSU. She worked in the Admissions Office from 1986-1988. "Recruitment is the vital component for this university," says O'Neal. "But once the students are here, it takes a collective effort to keep the students safe, happy, and culturally fulfilled."



Dr. Barbara J. O'Neal

O'Neal, a Winston-Salem native, returned home because, "I thought it was time to decrease traveling and settle back in Winston-Salem." She is also caring for her 6-year-old great nephew, Tare Walker, and "wants to be a positive influence in his life."

O'Neal received her masters degree from North Carolina A&T State University and her ED.D from Virginia Tech. She is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.