



## Johnson named vice chancellor of academic affairs

By Nicole Ferguson  
Argus Reporter

It's official. Winston-Salem State University welcomed a new Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Dr. Melvin N. Johnson.

Johnson, a Savannah, Ga., native, is a graduate of North Carolina A&T State University where he earned a B.S. in Economics and a title of Distinguished Military Graduate in 1968.

From there, Johnson entered the U.S. Air Force as a 2nd Lieutenant and served for 22 years. Johnson received a M.A. in Economics from Ball State University, and continued to earn an M.B.A. and D.B.A. in Business Economics at Indiana University, Bloomington, where he earned a fellowship. The accomplished scholar and leader was also selected to teach at the Air Force Academy.

Johnson retired from the Air Force in 1990 and chose to continue teaching, this time at the University of Colorado. Then came an offer to become a professor at his alma mater, North Carolina A&T State University.

"I figured it (the job) was something I needed to give back," said Johnson of his decision to return to A&T. "The challenge brought me there."

Johnson spent six years at A&T as the department chair of Business Administration. He moved on to become the graduate school dean and soon after, the associate vice chancellor for academic affairs.

Harold L. Martin, WSSU's interim chancellor at the time, had recently made a move from A&T to WSSU, and he had an offer for Johnson.

"[Then] Dr. Martin challenged me to join him at WSSU in July of 2000," said Johnson.

From that point on, Johnson took on the position of interim vice chancellor of academic affairs.

"Before a permanent appointment is made to the job, you're asked to stand in an acting position," explained Johnson. "You're still a candidate for the permanent position."

Johnson went through a number of stages that were included in the selection process for the permanent position of Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs.

"First, a search committee comprised of faculty, students and staff make a recommendation and the position is advertised in a national magazine," said Johnson. "Then there's an interview session and the chancellor makes a decision and a recommendation of a candidate."

Once the recommendation is made, Johnson explained, it continued on to the Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors of the University System.

### Johnson's Vision

*Nil sine magno labore.*

"Nothing without great effort," Johnson translated the latin term he lives by. "Anything you perceive as a challenge is something you must make every effort to see results in."

As Johnson takes on a new role at WSSU, he explains its importance.

"This role is historic for the institution. It is the first time there will be a provost at WSSU."

In the absence of Chancellor Martin, the day-to-day operations of the university will fall into Johnson's hands. As provost, he will preside over the other vice-chancellors. As vice chancellor of academic affairs, Johnson will oversee enrollment management operations to include admissions, recruitment, information technology, the registrar, Lifelong Learning and Professional Development, Graduate Studies, and all deans.

Johnson's visions include structuring divisions of planning, poli-

cies/procedures, communications, incentives for faculty and staff, and other key components that shape the university.

"It'll be a different type of institution," said Johnson of WSSU.

"We are moving from a primarily baccalaureate university to one of graduate studies."

Johnson plans to see this vision come into shape by attracting outstanding faculty and staff and graduates with honors, broadening research opportunities, and conducting critical reviews of programs, leadership and facilities to name a few.

"In the next five years, \$60 million-plus will be spent in building," said Johnson of the university's five-year plan. "It'll be spent on F.L. Atkins addition and renovation, a computer-science facility, a new physical and life sciences complex, the Anderson Center addition and renovation, a new health center."

Johnson added that the new residence halls slated for an August 2002 opening were a part of the plan, but with financing outside of the state system.

When posed with questioning of whether or not all these buildings and renovations would really come through in the five-year time period, Johnson responded confidently.

"Hold us to our fire."

Just as Johnson would like stu-

dent to hold him to his fire, he envisions and expects students to hold to their fire.

"You as a student need to encourage others to think of WSSU as a serious place to enter to learn and depart to serve," said Johnson of students' roles in enhancing WSSU.

According to Johnson the same holds true to faculty.

"They need to push you," said Johnson. "I don't apologize for academic rigor. We owe our students much more."

Outside of Johnson's passion for education and Winston-Salem State University, he explains another aspect of his life.

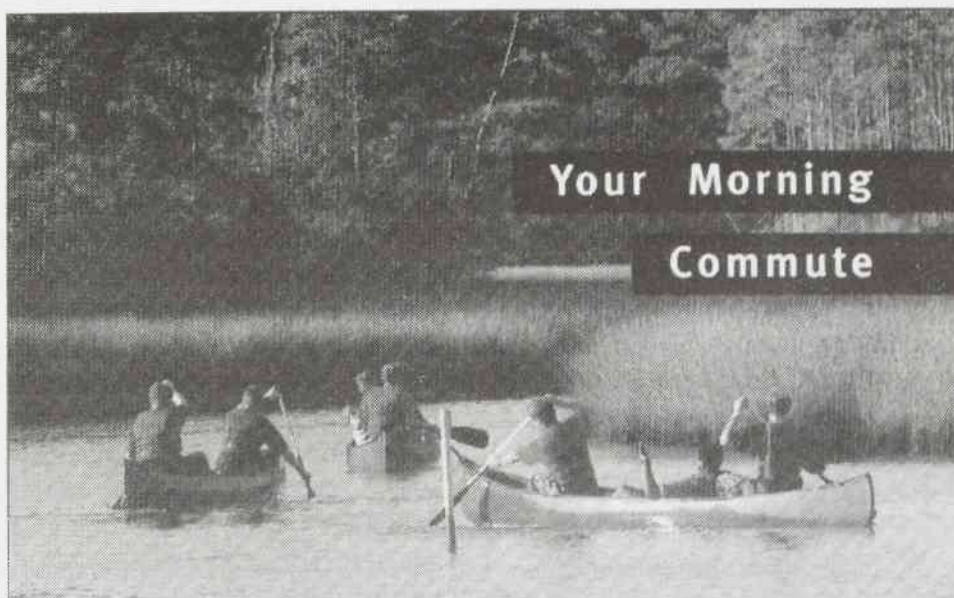
"Family is what I'm most proud of," beamed Johnson.

Johnson is married to his childhood sweetheart. They have three adult children, all of whom attended North Carolina A&T State University, and two grandchildren.

One of his twin daughters went to law school at Indiana University, and the other works for Bank of America. His son is a software engineer.

As Johnson prepares to carry out his vision at WSSU, he carries with him a favorite quote spoken by Eric Hoffner.

"In times of change, the learners will prosper, whereas the learned will be dealing with a world that no longer exists."



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