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Annual conference helps Mass Comm students prepare for life

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Dr. Brian Blount resigns as Chairperson of Mass Comm

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# THE NEWS ARGUS

www.thenewsargus.com

Winston-Salem State University's Student Newspaper

Spring/Summer 2006

## Dr. Mary Frances Berry to be keynote speaker at graduation

ARGUS STAFF AND WSSU MEDIA RELATIONS

Professor, author, lawyer and human rights activist Dr. Mary Frances Berry once commented, "Civil Rights opened the windows. When you open the windows, it does not mean that everybody will get through. We must create our own opportunities." This is the sort of sage wisdom that Dr. Berry is expected to share when she gives the keynote address at Winston-Salem State University's spring commencement ceremony, Saturday, May 6, at 9:45 a.m. in the Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum.

Berry has been the Geraldine R. Segal professor of American Social Thought and professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania since 1987. She received her Ph.D. in history from the University of Michigan and *juris doctorate* from the University of

Michigan Law School. The 68-year-old Nashville, Tenn., native has a number of firsts to her credit: She was the first black woman to head a major research university, the first African-American woman to serve as the chief educational officer in the U.S. under President Jimmy Carter in 1977, and became commissioner and vice chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in 1980.

In 1984, Ronald Reagan dismissed her, along with other critics of his administration, from the civil rights commission. She sued for her reinstatement, which was finally ordered by the Federal District Court.

Berry is the second of three children of George and Frances Berry. Because of economic and other hardships, she and her older brother were placed in an orphanage.

And although poverty and racial prejudice marked her early years, Berry excelled as a student in the segregated schools of Nashville. She recalled in a *Ms.* magazine article that her mother would say, "You, Mary Frances! You're smart ... You can think, you can do all the things I would have done if it had been possible for me ... You have a responsibility to use your mind, and to go as far as it will take you."

Berry didn't prove her mother wrong. She earned a B.A. from Howard University in 1961 and an M.A. from Howard in 1962. Berry taught at Howard and the University of Michigan, where she received a Ph.D. in American constitutional history in 1966 and a law degree in 1970.

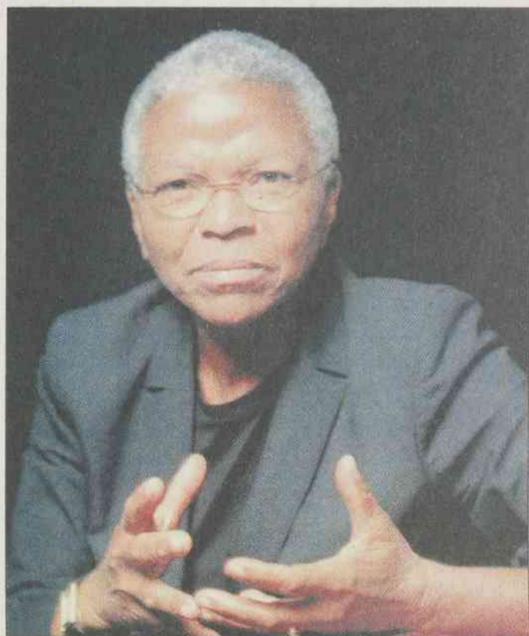


Photo courtesy of Media Relations

Among her many accomplishments, Dr. Berry was the first African-American woman to head a major university.

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## WSSU wants to build student union

By Argus Staff and WSSU Media Relations

Construction of a \$36-million student union building — complete with a bowling alley, small theater, food court, expanded workout area and a 200-car garage — could be in the works for Winston-Salem State University, if university officials get approval for the project from the board of governors of the University of North Carolina system, according to a March 29 report in the *Winston-Salem Journal*.

The *Journal* reported that the construction project is one of two the university is requesting as part of the UNC capital-improvement projects. The second request is a \$6-million renovation of Hill Hall, a now-empty science building.

University officials intend to ask the board of governors to pay \$14.8 million toward the new 90,000-square-foot student union building, which will be located on a hill south of the Thompson Center, the article said.

Students will pay for the rest through a new debt-service fee of \$185 when the project gets under way. Jorge Quintal, the associate vice chancellor for facilities, was quoted as saying the fee will expire when the debt



Photo by Garrett Garms

According to an article that ran in the *Winston-Salem Journal*, the student union building that WSSU is seeking funds for would sit on the hill south of the Thompson Center

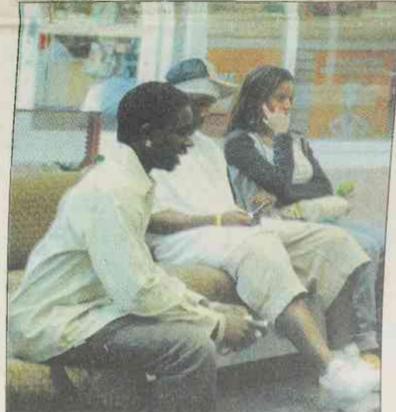
for the new building is paid, in about 30 years. Enrollment has increased at seven UNC system institutions that were targeted to improve low enrollment numbers, according to a report published last year in the *Carolina Journal*, a publication of the John Locke Foundation.

Since 1999, enrollment increased at the seven institutions, denominated as "focused-

growth" institutions, by 11,777 students, or 36 percent. More than \$28 million in state funds have been used to increase enrollment through the program, the *Carolina Journal* reported.

The *Carolina Journal* further reported that from 1999 to 2004, Winston-Salem State University had the highest percentage of increased enrollment at 72.4

percent. UNC-Pembroke's enrollment increased by 64.2 percent, followed by North Carolina Central University, 38.1 percent; North Carolina A&T, 36.6 percent; Western Carolina University, 27.6 percent; and Elizabeth City State University, 25.6 percent. Fayetteville State University's enrollment also rose, although the report did not say by how much.



Photos by Garrett Garms

ABOVE AND BELOW: When they have time, students like to hang out in the common area of Thompson Hall.



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## Seniors ponder future plans

By Lauren Boyce and Dreama Williams  
ARGUS REPORTERS

In less than 60 days, Brian "BDaht" McLaughlin will finally reach one of his cherished goals — earning his bachelor's degree in mass communications. "The anticipation of walking across the stage is the most exciting part about preparing for graduation," McLaughlin said. McLaughlin is one of scores of WSSU students who will walk

across the stage at the Lawrence Joel Coliseum on May 6. The 26-year-old native of St. Louis, Mo., said what he'll miss most about his university days is "seeing hundreds of gorgeous women, all in one setting, every single day."

According to 1998 graduation rates published online by the *National Center for Education Statistics*, 21.8 percent of WSSU students graduate in four years, 38.7 per-

cent within five years and 43.7 percent within six years. *Student Monitor*, which publishes nationally syndicated market research studies of the college student market, surveyed 1,200 full-time undergraduates at four-year colleges and universities to find out how many years it has taken to complete an undergraduate degree. The survey found that it has taken four years for 61 percent to complete their degrees,

five years for 26 percent, six or more years for 8 percent, 4.5 years for 3 percent and less than four years for 2 percent.

Shana Blair, a 21-year-old psychology major from Plainfield, New Jersey, said she hopes that a degree from a historically black college does not turn off certain employers. "I feel that many people will look at my degree and try to belittle it because it

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## Eight WSSU students share the same name

By Timothy Pulliam  
ARGUS REPORTER

Shout the name LaToya Williams, and you might find yourself surprised when eight different people answer. That's because there are eight — yes, eight — LaToya Williams' enrolled at Winston-Salem State University.

You might wonder if these eight individuals have more in common than their names. Do they know the same people? Share the same major? Or reside in the same hometown?

Well, two of the eight are from Bonlee, North Carolina. Two are from cities with the same name — Washington, DC and Washington, NC. And, all eight like their privacy. When asked to be interviewed, all said no.