

## Overcoming:

Ronald Williams is beating the odds

page 4

## Getting Ready:

Bobby Collins named new had basketball coach

page 6

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## Dr. Martin moves on to position with UNC system; Dr. Michelle Howard-Vital new interim chancellor

By: Erin C. Perkins  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

For the last six years, Dr. Harold L. Martin Sr. has served as chancellor of Winston-Salem State University. He was recently named senior vice president for academic affairs of the 16-campus University of North Carolina system by UNC Board of Governors on the recommendation of UNC President Erskine Bowles. However, the loss of former chancellor Martin is bittersweet.

At the same time WSSU has lost an honorable and notable leader, it has gained another outstanding leader and educator: Dr. Michelle Howard-Vital, who became interim chancellor on July 17.

Prior to her role as the 12th chief administrator of WSSU, Howard-Vital was the UNC system associate vice president for academic affairs. She worked on a team responsible for program planning and coordination across the 16 campuses of the UNC. Among other duties, she also provided leadership to post-secondary institutions seek-

ing state licensure for degree programs.

At first glance, Dr. Howard-Vital might strike a visitor as being strictly business, but her cordial and personable nature is an easy invite for a friendly chat or a heart-to-heart conversation.

Perhaps that is why — for the students who have yet to meet her — Howard-Vital wants them to know she has a devoted “love for teaching and learning,” and she encourages students “to feel free to stop and tell me about themselves.”

Her attraction to Winston-Salem was not only because it is an artsy city, largely diverse and continuously growing, but also because of the overwhelming “beauty and cleanliness” of the WSSU campus.

It was just the “right size,” she adds.

Howard-Vital envisions WSSU as a growing university with substantial potential. “I want to push beyond current boundaries.” She said there is land surrounding the campus that would be ideal to purchase. “I want to continue to pursue



Howard-Vital (right) steps in as new interim chancellor

our centers of excellence, to attract good faculty and in turn attract more students.”

Attracting more students may be a challenge the new chancellor will face, Howard-Vital said. “We need to redesign the enrollment management system. We need to be more attractive to higher-achieving students,” she said.

Howard-Vital is also aware of the current staggering and slow financial aid process many students are enduring.

“We need to make the financial aid process more user friendly, it is not as fast as it could be. The staff needs to remember that

the student is a customer.” She added that, although a staff person may have a long day, it is important to have “patience and treat each student like the first student.” She continues, “There needs to be an institutional change. Book vouchers should be given the first week, if not before. The entire administration wants to work on this.”

Another challenge facing WSSU's new chancellor is balancing growth with resources. According to Howard-Vital, the expected student population in 2012 will be 8,000. This is a significant increase from the current population of approximately 6,000. She

also suggested continuing with progression in sports and more staff for Division I athletes. She also thinks there should be a program implemented to work with K-12 students to pipeline them to encourage admission.

With all the challenges that might face the new chancellor, is it possible that Howard-Vital might apply for the permanent position and put her suggestions into actions?

“That's the question everyone wants an answer to,” she said. Her answer? A simple “maybe.”

In addition to tackling the many issues and challenges she endures from day to day as interim chancellor, Howard-Vital is not “all work and no play.” To wind down from her hectic schedule, she relaxes through various leisure activities.

“I garden because I love plants and flowers,” she said. “I roller skate with my family.” As a matter of fact, she and her husband, Geri R. Vital, met in a roller rink dancing on skates, she added. She not only stays

mentally strong, but also physically strong. “I enjoy working out as well,” she said.

As a woman in a unique position, Howard-Vital offered a few words of advice for any student seeking high-profile business careers:

“Be mentored by a woman or man in your profession. Always be persistent; sometimes you don't get what you want when you want it.”

She also encourages students not to worry about sexual stereotypes.

“Maneuver stereotypes; they are others' problems, not yours.”

A native of Chicago, Howard-Vital holds a doctorate in public policy analysis from the University of Illinois-Chicago campus. She also earned master's and bachelor's degrees in English language and literature from The University of Chicago.

She and her husband have one daughter, Madelyn.

## Saturday Night Lights

In football, Rams beat Aggies in renewal of 'I-40 Showdown'

Steven J. Gaither  
NEWS ARGUS SPORTS EDITOR

The renewed rivalry between Winston-Salem State University and North Carolina A&T, got off to a great start for the Rams. In front of 21,500 screaming fans in Aggie Stadium, the Rams defeated the North Carolina A&T Aggies 41-14. It was the first time the two schools had met on the football field since 1999.

The Rams took the opening kickoff and drove down the field, capping the drive with a 28-yard field goal by Marvin Umanzor to take a 3-0 lead. After forcing a fumble deep in Aggie territory, Tionti Powell went around the defense for a nine-yard score, giving the Rams a 10-0 lead. Brandon McRae ended the first quarter with a 38-yard touchdown run.

The Aggies' finally got on the board with a 5-yard touchdown run by Michael Caldwell. The Rams closed out the first half with a field goal and a 31-yard touchdown pass from Monte Purvis to wide out Josh Crawford, giving the Rams a 27-7 lead going into the half.

The second half got off to a promising start for the Aggies as they drove down the field and



Coach Blount and the Rams take the “I-40 Showdown” trophy back to WSSU.

second string quarterback Wayne Campbell connected with Andre Garth, making the score 27-14. Unfortunately for the Aggies, that was the last time they would sniff the end zone. The Rams continued to pound the ball on the ground, closing out the game with scoring runs by McRae, and Herman Blount.

The Ram defense dominated the Aggies', holding them to less than 200 yards of total offense. The Aggies only made it

into the red-zone twice and converted on just two of seven third-down conversion attempts. The Rams offense, anchored by Powell (92 yards, 1 td, 7.1 avg), and McRae (81 yds, 2 yds, 6.8 avg), gained 282 yards on the ground.

“Their backs ran with a lot of authority and they were more physical up front,” said A&T, coach Lee Fobbs Jr., who suffered his first defeat as a head coach. “They smacked us in the mouth,”

Winston-Salem native and A&T quarterback Herbert Miller said.

The win was significant for a number of reasons. For one, it evened WSSU's record at 1-1. It also was the Rams first win as a member of Division I-AA. The win also marked the first time WSSU defeated the Aggies since 1991.

Coach Kermit Blount reached a personal milestone as he defeated A&T as a head coach for the first

time in five tries. “We played a good team, they'll be a lot better by the end of the season” said Blount, who defeated the Aggies twice as quarterback for the Rams in 1977 and '78. Blount admitted that, while defeating the rival Aggies felt differently from the sidelines as opposed to the field, there was a little nostalgia in the air.

“Seeing 33-14 (in the 3rd quarter) on the scoreboard, I had a flashback to 1977,” he said.