

My Sister's Keeper WSSU women new mission, new motivation

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Some Winston-Salem State students were able to take a Wal-Mart trip off their to-do list after attending Grocery B-I-N-G-O sponsored by My Sister's Keeper in Dillard Hall this month.

My Sister's Keeper is an organization that was introduced to the campus spring semester and is working with female students.

The first MSK Collegiate chapter was established in September 2002 at the Tennessee State University.

The Winston-Salem State chapter of My Sister's Keeper is the first chapter outside of Tennessee and the only chapter in North Carolina. This chapter was started by Courtney Dubose, Miss WSSU of 2009-2010.

The visionaries of My Sister's Keeper are Cece Winans, Kiwanis Hockett, and Demetrius Stewart. My Sister's Keeper is an organization that focuses on the needs and development of college women.

The mission statement is "To educate, motivate and inspire young women to live whole and complete lives in spirit, soul and body."

Their colors are silver/grey, representing the word of God; purple, representing royalty; and pink, representing "new life".

"Our goal is to counteract influences that negatively impact the lives of young women during crucial transitional periods in their lives — teen and college years," said Valerie Able, president of My Sister's Keeper.

Able is a senior business management and finance major from Charlotte.

"My Sister's Keeper changed me in the aspect of becoming more outgoing and not being scared to take a stand for what I truly believe in," said Sandra Sturdivant, secretary of My Sister's Keeper.

Sturdivant is a senior exercise science major from Burlington.

My Sister's Keeper adopted Moore Hall for direct mentorship with those residents prior to its closing.

"The objective of adopting Moore Hall was to establish an ongoing relationship with the ladies of this female dorm, welcome them to WSSU and assist them in their crucial transition," Able said.

Door hangers were placed on each resident's door in Moore Hall, Dillard Hall, and Atkins Hall that read "MSK Welcomes You."

Program activities are designed to create a support network to nourish healthy self-esteem and to instill the qualities of grace, character, integrity and humility.

"Although Moore Hall has closed, mentoring cannot stop. We will continue our interactions and hold specific programs in Dillard Hall, and everyone is welcome to attend," Able said.

The organization sponsored two events this month. The Grocery B-I-N-G-O was one. The organization collaborated with Campus Fitness for Cardio Kick.

Grocery B-I-N-G-O was open to all students and took place in Dillard Hall. Some of the prizes included gift

baskets and individual items of toilet tissue, bottled water, chips, fruit cups, fruit snacks, popcorn, feminine products, razors, bath soap, deodorant, lotion, juice, cookies, cans of Sprite, and hand sanitizer.

Kardio Kick, a program of aerobics, boxing and martial arts combined, took place in Thompson Center. At the conclusion of the Kardio Kick, the organization circulated My Sister's Keeper bookmarks with health tips and scripture on them.

"The purpose of this event was to make WSSU's campus aware of our organization and begin to bond with some of the ladies on campus," Able said.

"It could be a positive influence on the young women of the campus to inspire them to live whole and complete lives in spirit, soul, and body," Sturdivant said.

Able said the organization will focus their upcoming events on the prospective members that attended this month's interest meeting.

WSSU offers programs, nutrition options to help fight obesity

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With growing obesity rates, it seems as though the freshman 15 has become the freshman 40.

According to Adebola Ilesanmi, assistant director of the A.H Ray Student Health Center, Winston-Salem State has seen an increase in weight-related health issues amongst young students.

Problems such as hypertension, diabetes, arthritis and muscular problems due to excessive weight are diagnosed more frequently. Healthy eating habits and proper exercise are recommended for people diagnosed with weight related health issues.

"There are many wonderful programs available that encourage people to live

healthy; however, the turnout for those programs has been very low," said Ilesanmi.

Obesity is defined as a body mass index of 30 or greater. BMI is calculated from a person's weight and height and provides a reasonable indicator of body fat and weight categories that may lead to health problems.

During the past 20 years, there has been a dramatic increase in obesity in the United States. As people take in more calories than they can burn off, they gain weight. This applies especially to college students, who are away from home and lacking the cash for the more expensive healthful foods.

The Donald L. Evans Fitness Center, on the ground floor of the Thompson Center in suite G-01 can check BMI. The Fitness Center also boasts seven different group exercise

classes that are suitable for all fitness and skill levels.

Their newest addition is the Masala Bahangra Workout, an Indian-style dance-themed workout that strengthens as it tones your whole body. Other classes include Zumba, Kardio Kick, Yoga, 30-minute Abs, Body Blast Boot Camp and Conditioning Combo.

The instructional classes are Monday through Thursday and are free with no registration required.

"We have an array of fitness opportunities," said Vanessa Hood, director of campus fitness and certified personal trainer.

"I am always looking for ways to keep it fresh and trendy to attract students to come to the Fitness Center."

A study done by the Center for Disease Control comparing the obesity rates of African Americans to Caucasians

shows that the rate of obesity is much higher for African Americans with 35.7 percent, whereas Caucasians have an obesity rate of 23.7 percent. Making it very important for African Americans to try and maintain a healthy lifestyle complete with diet and exercise.

How people eat and how active they are as well as biological factors affect how the body uses calories and gains weight.

Some people may inherit a tendency to gain weight. And family also helps form eating and lifestyle habits, which can lead to obesity.

"I don't think that the food on campus is very healthy," said Shalonda Davis, a sophomore English major from Thomasville, N.C.

Kennedy Dining Hall has made many modifications to help students make healthier

food selections including a Campus Dish nutritional information kiosk, healthy choices charts, pamphlets, food allergy awareness stickers, and nutritional information about the daily entrees.

Whole grain options and made-to-order pastas also give students more of a say so in what they choose to eat.

Students may not be aware of the choices that are available to them on campus.

Knowing is half the battle. Getting motivated to live a healthier lifestyle isn't always easy, but it is a necessity for a longer more prosperous life.

"We try to give students multiple options for a healthy diet," said Catherine McCoulam, supervisor for Kennedy Dining Hall.

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