

THE DECREE

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NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE, ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA 27804

December Graduates Ready to Move into 'Real World'

By Tiffany Brown & Trinity Carter
Decree Staff Writers

Just before stepping into the "real world" and establishing careers in their desired fields, December graduates reflected on their time at Wesleyan and offered advice to underclassmen.

The fall commencement, held December 13 in Minges Auditorium, featured Wesleyan alum Carson Saunders ('82), a Virginia state judge and the former college roommate of President Dewey Clark.

In his address, Judge Saunders urged graduates to be true to themselves in setting their goals, which, he said, should be "based on what you want to accomplish, not simply to appease or fall in line with what society might expect, or what would be societal norms."

He added that graduates will need "to reach deep to find the determination, courage, and endurance to accomplish their goals."

The judge encouraged graduates to continue to grow, underscoring that education should be a life-long pursuit. "It could be through formal education," he explained, or just by reading regularly and widely. "We either continue to grow, or our significance diminishes."

Judge Saunders stressed that Wesleyan's reputation begins with its graduates. "How we perform in all we do in life and how we speak of our school have a major impact on the college," he said, adding that alumni should always "place the college in a positive light and encourage others to consider Wesleyan for their education needs."

Following his address, Judge Saunders received an honorary degree from the college, recognition that he said "humbled and thrilled" him.

During the ceremony, 207 students received their diploma, with 175 coming from the college's growing adult degree program, ASPIRE. Tina Lassiter, a psychology major, graduated with transfer honors, becoming the first graduate of the new Washington campus.

Before graduation day, in interviews with *The Decree*, students shared memories—positive and negative—from their time at Wesleyan.

On the negative side, many grads expressed regret that they had not taken their studies more seriously, especially at the outset of their college career. Offering a common sentiment, Aneesa Le Blanc said she wishes she had skipped fewer classes and taken more detailed notes.

"If I could go back in time, I would have taken class more seriously at times," she said, telling younger Wesleyan students: "Don't skip class because you're feeling lazy."

Ebony Nolen uttered a similar lament. "I regret not going to class during freshman year and being nonchalant about it," she said. She added that it was difficult for her to bring up her GPA and that it took "what seemed like forever."

Despite the regrets—and a few of the usual criticisms lodged by college students (cafeteria food, dorm rooms, parking, a lack of "fun" activities)—the students leave Wesleyan with warm feelings and life-long friendships.

In the following paragraphs, graduates describe their career aspirations as well as their fondest memories and other impressions of the college.

Danyelle Rube

Rube plans to work in residence life at a college. To begin, she would like to get a job as manager of apartment complexes that lease to NC State or East Carolina students.

"Hopefully this will help me gain experience to see if I want to work in residence life," said Rube, a psychology and sociology major. She plans to take a trip to Iceland post-graduation for a few weeks of exploration before returning to her home in Raleigh.

Rube leaves with a lot of memories at Wesleyan. Her best experience was being a part of Delta Phi Epsilon. "I love my sisters more than anything; it was my family when I was homesick," she said.

She shared an experience she had with her sorority. "This past year two sisters and I went to Disney for a convention and it was amazing networking with hundreds of other sisters from the U.S. and Canada," she said.

Although that was a great memory for Rube, it was not her favorite. Her favorite memory is playing lacrosse and winning a match last spring against Agnes Scott College. "We had nine women—including myself—who had never played the sport before," she said, "so it was a huge deal to win that match, with only a few recruits."

Rube said that her favorite thing about Wesleyan is the small class sizes and how the faculty and staff take the time to truly get to know students. "I have so many mentors here at Wesleyan that I'm sad to leave," she said.

Not everything was pleasant for Rube. She said she didn't like when students would bash the school. "Students don't get involved or show school spirit," she said, "and then they want to talk about how much Wesleyan sucks. Until students start having more pride, it's going to continue to be boring."

Deborah Everett

Deborah Everett is a Rocky Mount resident with a major in criminal justice. She would like to teach at a local community college. She plans to attend Nash Community College and receive her Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) certification.

Reading was a difficult task for Everett because she felt there so much to do for her courses. That was only downside to her college experience. Over all, she enjoyed the school environment. "It was great," she said.

Her favorite Wesleyan memory is the one-on-one relationships she developed with professors. One of her best experiences was learning how to write efficiently.

Everett would like to leave students with some advice: "Please take it serious, learn all you can and enjoy it."

Bishal Karanjit

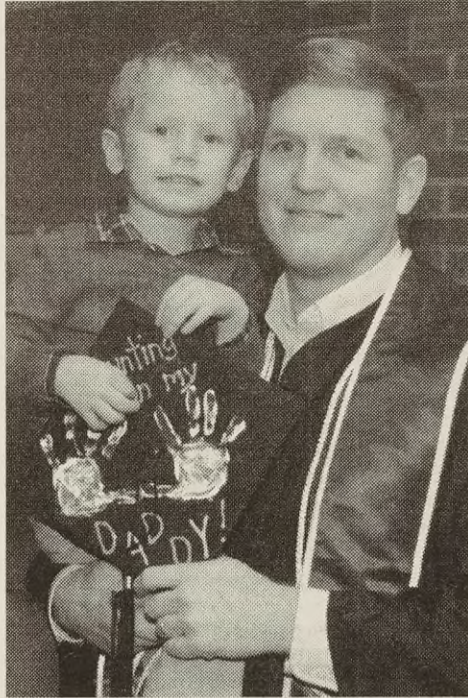
Computer information systems major Bishal Karanjit is a Nepal native but he plans to remain in North Carolina after graduation and attend grad school. The particular school is still to be determined.

Karanjit will leave Wesleyan with no loans. His best experience on campus was being a member of the Honors Program and Alpha Sigma Phi. He said that he also really enjoyed attending classes.

Teachers, friendly people, diversity, the campus environment, and the small class sizes were some of Karanjit's main likes. Low student participation in activities and the new visitation policy were some of his dislikes. Although he cited no particular memory,

Karanjit said he will miss the friends he made at the school.

Karanjit encourages all students to "be more active, take part in school activities, and make the best out your college experience."



Matthew Bedford, a student in the Goldsboro ASPIRE program, is congratulated by son Levi after the December graduation ceremony at the Dunn Center. Photo courtesy of NCWC Public Relations

Lisa Finch

Lisa Finch is an ASPIRE student and a psychology major who resides in Rocky Mount. Currently she is a respiratory therapist with experience in sales and marketing. Although she is not sure about her career plans after graduation, she loves working with the elderly and would enjoy helping dementia patients. "I would like to find a position that I can utilize my degree," she said.

NCWC Athletes Return from Enriching Trip to Spain

By NCWC Sports Information & Decree Staff Writers

On January 6th, the North Carolina Wesleyan women's soccer and volleyball teams departed on an overseas excursion to Barcelona, Spain. The seven-night trip featured two matches for each squad, and for many, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience the culture of this historic city firsthand.

To fund the trip, the athletes undertook several fund drives over the past few years and made up the rest of the expenses out of pocket.

Twelve volleyball players were on the trip, along with Coaches Vicky Gentile and Robin Pietryk, who called the trip an excellent opportunity to experience a different culture—from a new style of volleyball, to the churches and other "breathtaking" sights, such as the view from Mt. Montserrat. "I enjoyed the bonding that we were able to do, which can't be replicated during practices and games," she said.

Women's Soccer Coach Beverly Biancur, Assistant Coach Greg Ridout, and athletic trainer Timothy Donovan, led a contingent of 19 team members. Noting

that her athletes play "for the love of the sport," Coach Biancur stated that international travel represents a unique opportunity for a Division III program like Wesleyan's.

"I wanted to offer an academic component to instill the true basis of the student athlete in Division III," Coach Biancur said, noting that players completed academic work and earn one credit for a special topics class as part of the trip.

After two days of travel, the Bishops enjoyed their first full day in Barcelona on Thursday, the 8th, beginning with a guided tour of the city and ending with soccer's first match versus Penya Blanc Y Blava.

Rebecca Staylor, an all-conference forward for the Bishops, said the competition was fierce, citing the fast pace of play and "the incredible foot skills" displayed by the opposition.

Commenting on the other team, she said, "I would say almost all of them could come to the states and get on the roster at a Division I or II school."

Despite absorbing two losses, Staylor said that she was delighted to tally her first international goal, with an assistant from close friend and former teammate Chelsea Laurens ('14), and in front of her family, who joined her on the trip.

The volleyball team faced the same opponent on Friday after a day exploring the seaside village of Sitges. As with their soccer counterparts, the volleyball team faced tough competition, losing two matches by 3-0 scores. But middle hitter Samantha Morton felt her team acquitted itself well, with vocal fan support from the soccer team. "We may have lost," she said, "but the other team will remember us by how hard we played the matches."

Saturday and Sunday featured two full days of sight-seeing, culminating with a chance to take in a La Liga Game featuring FC Barcelona and Atletico Madrid.

It was a treat, Coach Biancur said, to watch international superstars like Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar in one of the largest stadiums in the world. "We really experienced the passion Spain has for the sport of soccer," she said.

see SPAIN pg 2

As an ASPIRE student, she did not like the availability of classes and wishes that classes were offered more frequently. But she did enjoy her professors and small class sizes.

The professors, staff, and classmates encouraged her to finish her degree, making this a satisfying experience. She wants other ASPIRE and day students to know that graduating is possible, saying, "You can do this!"

Kimery Andrews

Kimery Andrews will be receiving a degree in computer information systems. The North Carolina native is not sure what she would like to do after graduation.

However, at Wesleyan she experienced some great things. Her best experience was working in the library doing shelving and desk work. She also enjoyed the small school atmosphere and the idea that it was not far from home. Andrews loved the professors here at Wesleyan. "They're available when you need them," she said.

Andrews would like to leave students with some wise words: "Always ask for help."

Bryron Johnson

Bryron Johnson is another computer information systems major who would like to pursue a job in the National Football League, post-graduation. If the Reidsville native does not get into the NFL, he would like to work in computer forensics.

Johnson's best experience was football practice. "Playing football takes stress off of you and you don't have to worry about anything else. And I got a chance to bond with teammates and coaches," he said.

Johnson liked his professors at Wesleyan, naming as favorites, Dr. Marsal, Ms. Carroll, Drs. Jackie and Carl Lewis, and Ms. Holland.

Lindsay Cicero

Lindsay Cicero, a double major in business administration and accounting, is working in her field as an accounts receivable specialist for Enterprise Rent A Car, which is just a foot in the door since her aspiration is to obtain her Masters of Business Administration (MBA) and become a Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

The Williamsburg native has been working while finishing her last semester through a series of online classes. "Having online classes gave me the opportunity to get out into my field earlier," she said, adding that she was grateful for such an opportunity.

Wesleyan Students, Staff Volunteer for MLK Day

By Diamond Allen
Decree Staff Writer

The NCWC community celebrated Martin Luther King Day in a special way by participating in service projects throughout the Rocky Mount community.

"We're celebrating a person that strived for equality," said freshman Travis Thompson.

Some 120 students and 10 staff and faculty volunteered around the area, according to Deontae Swain, a student government official. Volunteering opportunities consisted of painting at the local Boys and Girls club, delivering meals to elderly, and picking up garbage on local highways.

Through this volunteering experience, students were able to interact with various groups and community organizations. Students and staff members ventured to parts of the Rocky Mount area that they have never been to. For freshmen, it was a great experience to learn the surrounding area.

"It's very important to give back to your community and to the younger kids," said freshman Victoria Ingram.

Dr. Kim Martin, associate professor of psychology, served as a volunteer together with her husband, Curtis, and 13-year-old son Isaac. The three delivered boxes of food for the Meals on Wheels program. Dr. Martin called community service "a meaningful reminder of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision and sacrifice."

She said that she liked connecting with members of the Rocky Mount community, adding that participation in MLK Day activities allowed

Cicero says that she leaves the college with many great memories and a close-knit family. "Some of my best memories are with my friends I met here," she said. "I remember having Uno tournaments and just going outside to chill in the gazebo."

She advises undergraduates to keep moving forward. "Just stick with it," she said. "As much as you don't want to be here or don't want to attend class, a degree is better than nothing at all, no matter what your GPA is."

Cheyenne Green

Cheyenne Green is graduating with a major in business administration and a minor in accounting. She doesn't have any major aspirations but her plan is to work at a job that fits both her major and minor.

Originally from Brooklyn, Green wants to stay in North Carolina for now. She also leaves NCWC with many fond memories. "My best memory was getting to meet new people and loving the fact that I got close to a few," Green said.

The advice Green leaves is to enjoy college. "Enjoy it as much as you can because time goes by faster than you think," she said.

Ebony Nolen

Beaufort native Ebony Nolen, an accounting major, hopes to start her life working at a bank or pursuing something in the finance field but she wants eventually to get her real-estate license.

Her Wesleyan highlight is a water balloon fight held during her freshman year in 2010. "Anyone could've been a target but it was all fun and games," she said.

Aneesa Le Blanc

Aneesa Le Blanc is graduating with a double major in psychology and criminal justice. She plans to start a career as a probation officer.

The New York City native doesn't plan on staying in Rocky Mount too much longer. "I feel like I might have a better opportunity with my career back home," she said.

Le Blanc leaves with a few solid friendships from Wesleyan. "Some of the people I met here are amazing and the connections I've made will last a lifetime," she said.

D'ante Nichols

D'ante Nichols is receiving his degree in both criminal justice and psychology. His plan is to go back home to Virginia Beach and start looking for careers relating to his major.

Nichols' best Wesleyan memory was playing football. "I got close with a few of my teammates," he said. "Most of them have already graduated but there are plenty of times to look back on."

The advice Nichols gave to undergraduates is to make the best out of it. "Life is too short to dwell on the negatives all the time," he said. "Sometimes you just gotta take life for what it is and deal."

her to model civic engagement for students.

"What better way is there to communicate the importance of community responsibility and concern than to join with students in community service?" she said. "Trite as it may sound, actions often do speak louder words."

Samantha Godsey, a math instructor and professional tutor, did yard work at the homes of elderly citizens in her hometown, Roanoke Rapids, joining other members of First Christian Church. "I think the day is to honor a great man who made our country what it is today, although not perfect," she said. "He played a strong role in our laws moving toward equality."

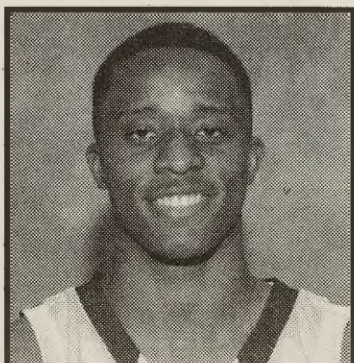
Since the holiday was established in 1986, Dr. King has influenced millions to volunteer their time. When asked why he volunteered, sophomore Stefan Peoples said, "I heard it was an opportunity to help and serve others."

Because Dr. King's goal was to bring together Americans of all races, in recent years the Wesleyan community has strived to duplicate his dream by holding events like the MLK Day of Service. With such a diverse campus, Wesleyan gives the opportunity for students of different cultural backgrounds to learn about the progress of civil rights.

Wesleyan students and staff observed MLK Day holidays in many ways, not just by volunteering. Some spent the day listening to the MLK "I Have a Dream" speech.

Others, like Atyah Spells, watched Greensboro's parade on TV with her daughter, Serenity, 13. Then the two took in the

see MLK DAY pg 2



Adrian Moore showcased his versatility in recent wins against Maryville and LaGrange. Turn to page three for hoops and other sport coverage.

SI photo