

TF Director keeps priorities in order

by Addie Tschamler

In the middle of a bright, spacious office sits a large, cluttered desk, alive with books, calendars, papers, and announcements. Classical music jingles softly through the warm, exciting atmosphere as if it were filled with an exploding energetic vitality. But anyone who enters the room becomes aware that the main source of energy comes from the woman this office belongs to - Dr. Mary Johnson.

Johnson is not only the dean of Meredith's graduate school and director of Teaching Fellows and Continuing Education, but she is also a member of the Joint Committee of Teacher Education, the Teacher Academy Task Force and the Jaguar Athletic Booster Club. She is awards chairperson of the PTSA at Athens Drive High, and the first woman appointed as chairperson of the Administrative Board at Macedonia United Methodist Church.

How would one describe her life in a single word? Busy? Hectic? Crazy? Well maybe it is best described by the Johnson herself.

"Wonderful!" Johnson said with a smile.

Although her day is filled with faculty meetings and committee gatherings, Johnson said her favorite part is interacting with students.

It is hard "juggling everything and creating harmony in life," Johnson said. That is her greatest challenge. And even though she enjoys her work at Meredith very much, she keeps her priorities in order.

Number one is family. Number two is Meredith, she said.

In addition to her career and social life, Johnson is first and foremost a mother to her two teenage sons, a junior at Athens Drive High School and a student at N.C. State University. Johnson admits that her children have changed her life in many ways.

"They can make you honest," Johnson said with a serious-minded look. "If you pay close attention to children of any age, you can learn lessons from life. Some are painful."

Johnson, who attended Western Carolina and Duke University as a psychology/communications major, says she would never return to life as a student now that she has her career.

In a capstone course she is currently teaching on Tuesdays and Thursdays entitled "Life Leadership for Everyone," Johnson recalls an exercise the class did to describe their feelings



photo by Jan Seate

Dr. Mary Johnson's greatest challenge is trying to juggle everything and create harmony in life.

as college students.

"One word that kept coming up was 'stress.' I don't ever remember using the word 'stress' when I was in school," said Johnson. Johnson feels that today students must cope with much more than she did when she attended school.

Johnson does not hesitate to recognize that her mother has been her great-

est influence in life. She was a very strong woman, Johnson said. "She never let us think there was something we couldn't do."

Johnson said her mother instilled within her many values and ambitions and always told her that "the sun may set today, but it rises tomorrow."

Being ambitious takes a lot of energy for Johnson and she doesn't try to pretend that her life is always easy.

"Sometimes I have to dig deep for energy," said Johnson. "Sometimes it takes just sitting by the lake or in the chapel, going to the movies alone, or going for a walk just to get back to myself."

Johnson has many responsibilities as a dean and director, including monitoring programs, monitoring policies, interacting with students, answering questions, and working with the Teaching Fellows Committee - a group of students, faculty, and staff that help advise the program.

But Johnson takes a keen interest in young people and loves to be around them. "The best part about my job is interacting with students," said Johnson.

In the past, she has been a teacher and a high school principal. She considers herself very lucky for getting her job at Meredith several years ago when she was appointed by Dr. Allen Burris.

"It's been good!" she said with a smile.

Career Connections

Events Schedule:

- **How to Sell Yourself in the Job Interview** Thursday February 2, 5:30-6:15 p.m. (CS)
- **How to Write an Effective Resume** Wednesday February 1, 10:00-10:50 a.m. (CS)
- **Meredith Majors Fair** Wednesday, February 8, 4:30-6:30 p.m. Wainwright Suite, Belk

Internship/Co-op Update:

- Northwestern Mutual Life
- UNC Center for Public Television
- Intersoly
- CIIT
- Cooperative Education is working at Burroughs Wellcome-Deadline: February 10

On Campus Recruiting:

Sign-up today for these companies:

- First Citizens
- Research Triangle Institute
- Omni Business Machines
- Hudson Belk
- People's Security Life
- Cacique

Employer Resume Review:

- NationsBank
- Central Carolina Bank

Employment Opportunities:

Summer:

- **Burroughs Wellcome** Clerical, research/laboratory, and administrative positions available. Application deadline-February 28!
- **Peace Corps** English, Education, and Business majors needed now!
- **NC Real Estate Commission** Five Renewal Clerk positions available.



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