



TRULIENT AWARDED GRANT TO INCREASE COMMUNITY SERVICE INITIATIVES



Marjorie Rorie

means and those in need of credit unions' affordable services," he said.

Funding will be used to support Truliant's Tru-Opportunity Builder initiative, which includes an innovative credit building product, plus

Truliant Federal Credit Union has been awarded a grant of \$14,600 for their new Financial Opportunity Builder Initiative from the National Credit Union Foundation (NCUF). The Foundation awarded 14 applicants out of 37 requests, which, according to Stephen M. Delfin, NCUF Executive Director, "included many exemplary proposals for projects that credit unions are undertaking in their communities. We use a rigorous review process to select projects that will reach people of modest

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CONSUMER CASKETS OPENS LOCATION IN WINSTON SALEM



Jeff Hendrick & Ed Hairston

By Brooke Anderson Brown

The loss of a loved one is perhaps the most difficult time in an individual's life. This is also a time when most people are the most vulnerable and making well thought out and informed decisions can be the furthest thing from the minds of those

suffering from family loss.

This is why the partners of Consumer Caskets decided to go into the business of providing affordable caskets for consumers. When Ed Hairston of Winston Salem, NC lost his mother, he came to realize that funerals ranked among one of

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CHARLENE RUSSELL-BROWN: THE ENLIVENER



Charlene Russell-Brown

By: Dwight Jones

Within seventy-two hours of hearing of the demise of Charlene Brown five people of various backgrounds expressed the exact sentiment to honor her character: "all of the Russell's are nice people but Charlene was an exceptionally nice person."

Charlene was an exhilarator of cheer and hope. She set aglow the spirit of every person she encountered, especially among "the least of these." Her kindness rendered vivacity to the life of the down trodden while inspiring the high and mighty to reach greater heights.

Perhaps Rodney Carpenter a long time employee of the Russell enterprise best summarized her love for humanity by stating: "Charlene knew everybody - the fireman, policeman, sanitation man, drinking man and sober man. She also remembered their mother, grandmother, sisters, brothers, and children's names."

Charlene's presence began to influence my life more than fifty years ago beginning on Woodland Avenue. During those days as a teenager she spent a great deal of time near a kitchen window cultivating her skills as the future matriarch of the Russell clan. Below that window was a basketball goal attached to a cement staircase where her brothers Ed, Carl Jr., and Chris along with the Valentine twins and me plus many others would get too loud while competing. At that point Charlene in her playful yet authoritative manner would remind us of our close proximity to Kate Bitting Hospital.

More profoundly, Charlene is one of the cornerstones of my current existence. At the age of nineteen years old I was drafted into the U.S. Army. After

engaging in mortal combat during my tour of duty in Vietnam I returned to America a nervous wreck. Consequently I suffered a mental collapse and was committed to a couple of psychiatric wards. Upon getting released feeling worthless and full of shame I wasn't in the proper mindset to encounter any of my previous associates. But one afternoon as I was attempting to sneak in-and-out of a local A&P Food Store, then located on Bowen Boulevard, Charlene called me out "Dwight is that you?" ... "Is that Dwight Jones" she shouted. Unable to ignore her call I stopped and turned around. Moments later with moisture filling her eyes as maybe a half-a-dozen people looked on, Charlene embraced me while saying ... "Do you know how hard I've been praying for you?" ... "It's so good to see you!" After inquiring about my grandmother, great aunt, mother, father, sister, first cousins, second cousins, plus third and fourth cousins, she let go. When Charlene released me my spirit was resurrected. I was invigorated. To borrow a phrase from the Rev. Jessie Jackson "I am somebody!" ... Thanks Charlene Russell Brown - Emmanuel.

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