

RJR pours money into city-county schools for Success Academy

By TRACY L. PROSSER
Chronicle Staff Writer

Students in the twelve Winston-Salem/Forsyth County middle schools will get a boost in school next year thanks to an intensive tutorial program available to at-risk students.

James W. Johnston, chairman, chief executive officer, and president of R.J.R. Tobacco Co., announced a \$300,000 grant from his company to the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County school system to be used for the formation of the R.J.R. Success Academy, which will begin operation in September.

Johnston said that although R.J.R. supports post secondary education, "We felt a more urgent need for improving the quality of K through 12 education.... Students on the class rolls today will be on our payrolls tomorrow."

"To be honest with you, I feel we have no choice," Johnston said. "If we don't pull together to resolve the problems, we will all suffer when we hand our country and its economic future over to ill-prepared successors."

A report prepared by the Carnegie Institute showed that middle school was the last best chance to reach at-risk students, Johnston said.

Earlier this summer, the Forsyth County board of commissioners voted to provide the \$1 million necessary to restructure all middle schools in the system. The new format is designed to help middle school students make the transition more easily from elementary to high school.

"Some students still need help on a short term or long term basis," said Larry D. Coble, superintendent of the school system.



Chronicle Staff Photo
James W. Johnston, chairman, CEO and president of R.J.R. Tobacco Co., announces grant for city-county schools.

"This is the period when academic habits become more defined. It is also the time when children can decide to drop out of school. We hope that by strengthening their skills we can make school less frustrating and more appealing, thereby reducing the drop-out rate," Coble said.

Basic skills, reading, writing and arithmetic, will

be emphasized in the tutoring program to give students the tools they need for repeated, continued success in the classroom, Johnston said.

Students will be recommended for the program by teachers, but can volunteer to participate if they wish. A parents can also request that his child enroll in the program.

Teachers, college students and volunteers will be trained as tutors. The students, who will come from Winston-Salem State University, Wake Forest University, and Salem College, will be paid.

There will be one adult for every two students tutored, and the program is anticipated to serve 360 students per week for an average of four hours per week.

Board member Mary P. Wood said, "One of the things I like best about it is that this is an after school program. We're not going to be taking students out of class."

A unique aspect of this tutorial program is parental involvement. Coble said that before a child begins the program, his parents must agree to attend one tutoring session per semester with the child. He said they will also be asked to follow up their child's lessons at home, which may entail tutoring sessions for the parents as well.

"Students do better in school if the parents are involved," Coble said.

The R.J.R. Success Academy was proposed by school system administrators to an education committee at R.J.R.

Johnston said the idea for this program was built on known successes of programs which involve participation of parents, schools, and community and which provide intense personal contact with students.

Brenda Gentry, last year's teacher of the year, will

be the specialist who will manage the program.

Although R.J.R. has only provided funding for one year of the program, Coble said the company has expressed an interest in continuing funding for the program over the two following years if it is successful in the first year.

"We are viewing this as a three year commitment," Johnston said. "We want to make sure the money is well-spent and that the results are there."

Both the tutorial program and the middle school program will be evaluated at the end of the 1990-91 school year. Although the programs will be considered separately, "You really can't separate them," said Elsa Woods, director of middle schools.

She said, "Children who participate in the Success Academies will be students who are having difficulties in some subject, students who still need additional help.... This is an extension of the middle school program."

R.J.R. has supported other programs designed to increase student performance in the school system: the homework hotline, teacher scholarships, computer science programs, administrator's programs, and SAT preparation classes.

"This is the largest private grant the school system has ever received," said Coble. "I believe that this program will make a real difference for many of our students. We cannot afford to let them fail, drop out, or waste their potential. The R.J.R. Success Academy will meet a critical need in our schools."

"This is a wonderful expression of the corporate world to come to the defense of public education," said Grace Efford, member of the board of education. She said she was happy that the school system was seeing tangible results from the concerns of the community.

Forsyth Tech starts construction on new health technology building

Chronicle Staff Report

Forsyth Technical Community College has begun construction on a new health technology training center in response to the increasing need for health care professionals in Forsyth County.

The proposed 43,000 square foot building represents a unique joint venture of the college, Forsyth County board of commissioners, North Carolina Baptist Hospital, and Carolina Medicorp Inc. All have joined forces to construct the building on Forsyth Tech's campus to alleviate the shortage of trained health care professionals in Forsyth County.

The building is estimated to cost \$3.5 million. Carolina Medicorp and North Carolina Baptist Hospital will provide the initial funds which will be assumed by the county commissioners after construction is completed. Forsyth Tech will provide land for the facility and the operating funds for expanding the college's current health care training capability. The center will enable Forsyth Tech to double the number of students and graduates in nursing and health technologies and to add more programs to meet the growing demand.

Local PAC

From Page A2

and the master would receive the difference. After a satisfactory internship, the intern would be qualified to be a regular teacher.

"There is a huge group of people who would do a good job without education degrees," Robinson said. Corporate and military retirees are two groups that would be targeted by the program.

The fifth issue is increased parental involvement in school improvement committees. Robinson said this would decrease the money "soaked up" by bureaucratic office staff.

ESPAAC questions the wisdom of central planning in the North Carolina school system. Some choices made in the central office in Raleigh, such as the decision not to use Channel One in the classroom, would be better left to a local school system, according to Robinson. ESPAAC will address other educational issues as they arise, but the goal for the moment is to elect legislators who support these six points, Robinson said.

"Some of the things he (Robinson) proposed we are working for in certain ways," Carson said. "The most important thing is that all the schools are good, not only for children whose parents care enough to transport them or are knowledgeable and interested enough to make choices for their children."

"We are always pleased when people care about schools," Carson said. In the past, Robinson has presented some of these goals to the board of education but has not informed the school system of the goals of ESPAAC, she said.

"We are not in the position to evaluate his proposals," Carson said.

Dr. Bob H. Greene, president of Forsyth Tech, said that extensive planning sessions with local health care providers pointed to the need for increasing the number of trained professionals in this area.

"The employment opportunities exist, and potential students want to enter these programs. Money for a training facility and expanding the programs has not been available," he said. Instructional funds will most likely come from additional state allocations and from private sources.

Forsyth Tech currently enrolls approximately 400 students every year in health technology fields with an additional 200 students working on general studies requirements prior to entering the programs. More than 150 qualified applicants are on wait-

ing lists.

Dr. Jim Winning, associate vice-president and dean of health technologies at Forsyth Tech, said the type of care provided by health facilities in Forsyth County contributes to this increased need. "Forsyth County is a research and referral center. The diagnoses treated here are more acute than in other areas of the state. More health care professionals are required per patient than for routine illnesses," he said.

Seventy-five percent of Forsyth Tech's health technologies graduates are employed in Forsyth County. In addition to the hospitals and other primary care facilities, the county health department, public schools, insurance companies, private practices and local business and industry employ a great

number of Forsyth Tech health technologies graduates. "This variety of employment opportunities further limits the number of trained personnel for our hospitals," Winning said.

Because of the increasing demand, it is projected that the existing five health technology programs at the college will double in size and as many as nine new programs may be needed. Possible new additions include career programs in laboratory, rehabilitation, dietary and geniatrics.

Greene said the venture is a perfect example of the type of business and education partnership which was recommended in a report of the commission on the future of the North Carolina community college system. "Health care is a primary component of our area economy," he said. "This

venture unites the key players in local health care to accomplish what we believe will be a major contribution to the local economy."

IT'S SNOWING IN FORSYTH COUNTY.

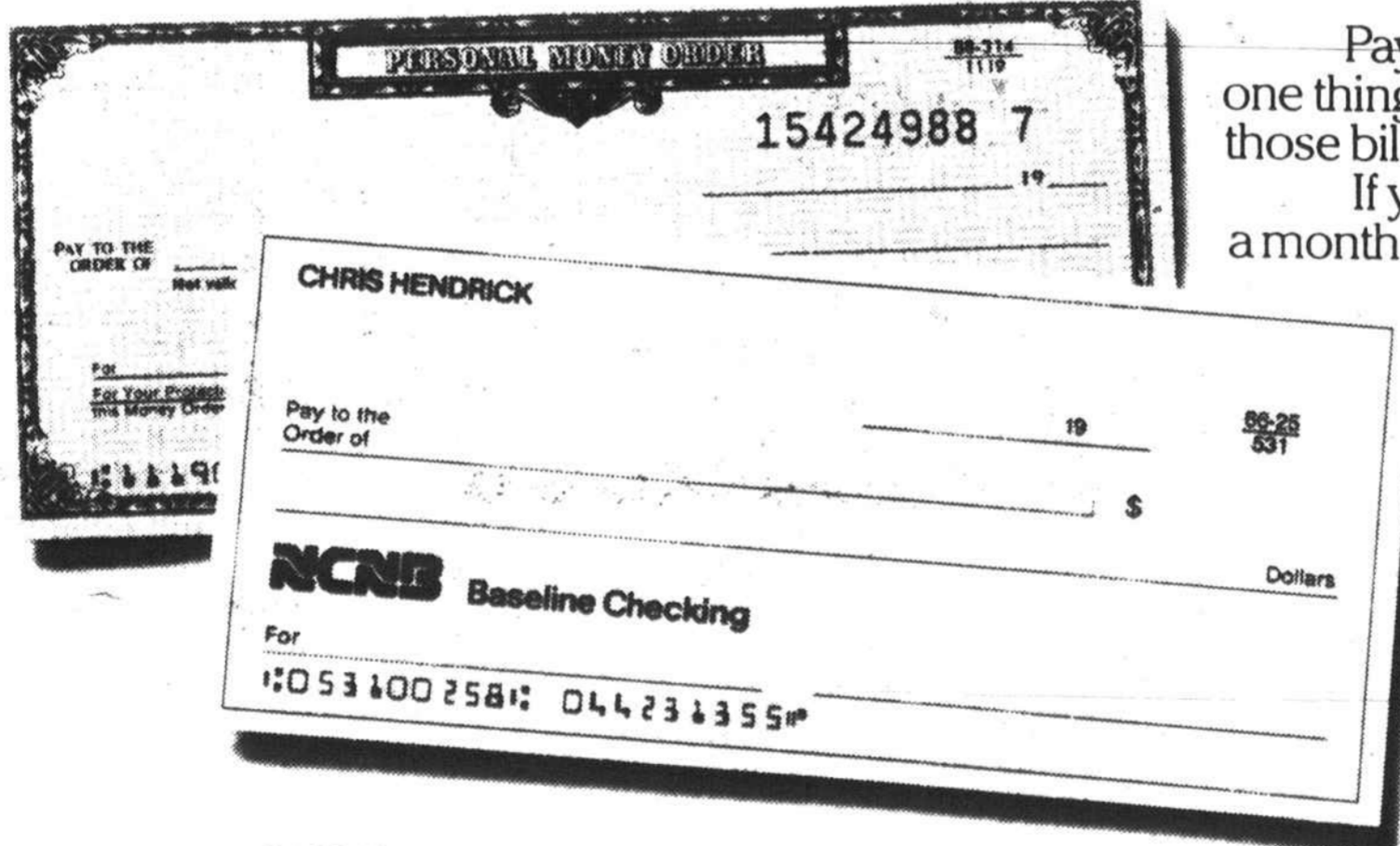
Cocaine is everywhere.

It's A Crime.

TOM KEITH
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Fig. - Pub. Adv. by the Tom Keith for District Attorney, Comm. John Mann, Treas. Winston-Salem, NC 27103

Stop Spending So Much Money On Your Money.



Paying your bills each month is one thing. Paying for the paying of those bills is another.

If you spend over three dollars a month on money orders and check cashing services, here's a wonderful way to save yourself a bit of time and money.

It's NCNB's handy Baseline Checking.

For three dollars a month, you can make up to eight withdrawals monthly, either by writing checks or withdrawing money from a teller machine. You'll receive

an NCNB 24 card that gives you easy access to your cash all over the South. You'll also receive a complete and easy-to-understand checking statement from NCNB each month, a convenient way to keep track of your finances.

And Baseline Checking doesn't require you to keep a minimum account balance. You just need an initial \$25 deposit, which can be drawn upon right away.

Best of all, a Baseline Checking account is easy to open. Just bring positive identification and the \$25 deposit to any NCNB office.

Once you've opened an account, you'll have the satisfaction of spending money without spending so much time and money doing it.

NCNB
A Big Bank Dedicated To
Something Even Bigger: The Individual.