

Business Briefs

Making 'progress from within'

Training a well-developed workforce

By PATRICIA SMITH-DEERING
Community News Editor

More and more businesses are looking at employee training as a means of keeping their workforce up-to-date in an increasingly technological age. Helping them keep pace is Bessie Singletary, who in 1984, decided to do some personal reassessing of her career objectives. In the process of doing her self-evaluation, the former banker developed a concept that has grown from her own personal use to a training technique she now markets to both entrepreneurs and corporations.

Transforming her concept into her company, MYIC — Manipulating Your Intra-Conversation — into something that businesses would try took several years of fine-tuning and refining. "I went back to school, High Point College, and obtained a degree in psychology," Singletary said. Meanwhile, she prepared to leave behind a 15-year career in banking (4-1/2 years at Wachovia, 10-1/2 years at First Citizens) to bring her dream and her concept into a reality.

Singletary developed a manual based on goal-setting and techniques for achieving them and "tested" her concept. "I started with teenagers at the 'Y,'" she recalled, "with the Girl Scouts,

(and) I started using it among my friends." She had set for herself a goal of getting to own her own business and wanted to do the same for others. "I want to motivate people, to help them grow. It's not that difficult," she said, explaining the basis of MYIC. Starting in her home in 1984, she moved in 1986 to a location in Clemmons, then to the Business and Technical Center, and finally to her present location on Westgate Center Drive. In addition to MYIC, Singletary formed Banker's Assistance/Teller Training using the expertise she had gained during her years in banking. Describing her training and development business, she said her company offers teletraining, customer service and management training, cashier training, motivational workshops, and personal development training.

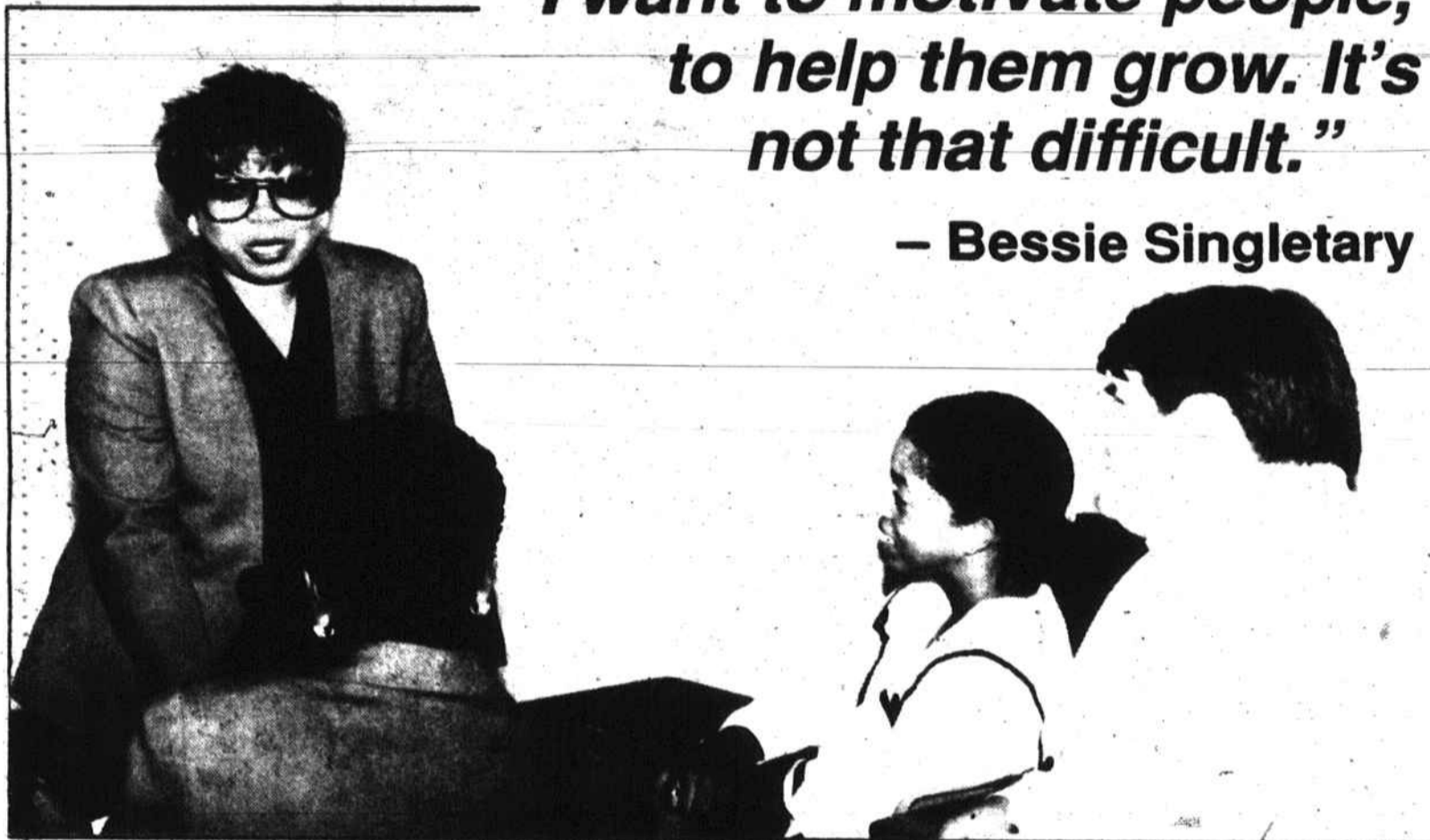
For her clients, which include such corporations as IBM and AT&T, she works with employees to "identify inner strengths, both one-on-one and in groups to find out what they want to do and how to achieve it," she explained. She points with pride to four people that she has helped to start their own businesses, going from the initial idea through implementation.

As her business developed, in 1987 Singletary worked at the Winston-Salem Urban League as youth counselor, then as an employment specialist, and finally as the League's director of education, a position she held until the first of the year when she resigned. All the while, she was adding to her skills' base and networking to develop clientele. Now, she is fully immersed in her businesses. "My goal is to move this business to a million-dollar business by the end of the year," she said optimistically, adding, "We're doing pretty good now." In addition to independent agents who provide training, her staff includes two people who specialize in teletraining, an education director, an administrative assistant, and an office manager.

"It wasn't easy," said Singletary, recalling the years of hard work and effort she has spent. "I've done a lot of crying. I started off with a small amount of capital . . . At one time I was carrying the business," she continued. "Now the business carries itself," she said. She has no regrets over her move. "I am in control of my own time, . . . my own destiny," she said, adding, "You can't do that working for someone else."

"I want to motivate people, to help them grow. It's not that difficult."

— Bessie Singletary



Bessie Singletary reassessed her career objectives and established MYIC and Banker's Assistance/Teller Training firms. Photo by L.B. Speas

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Thirty-seven years of library service

By PATRICIA SMITH-DEERING
Community News Editor

Quite appropriate for a celebration of Black History month is a remembrance of the one place that serves as a repository of black history in the East Winston community — the library. An important piece of history in the city's African-American community, the East Winston branch of the Forsyth County Public Library system celebrated its 37th anniversary in November 1990.

"Actually, it's the 63rd year of library service to the African-American community, but 37 years right here in East Winston," said Tim Jackson, head librarian. He recalled the first library was started by a group of African-Americans in 1927 who petitioned the Carnegie Library in Winston-Salem to begin library service for their community. The Carnegie Library, founded in 1906,

agreed to the venture and provided the support to start the service.

The first library for the African-American community was located in a room at the old YMCA, then on Chestnut and 8th streets. It was named for George Moses Horton, a slave poet whose book of poems, *The Hope of Freedom*, was published in 1829.

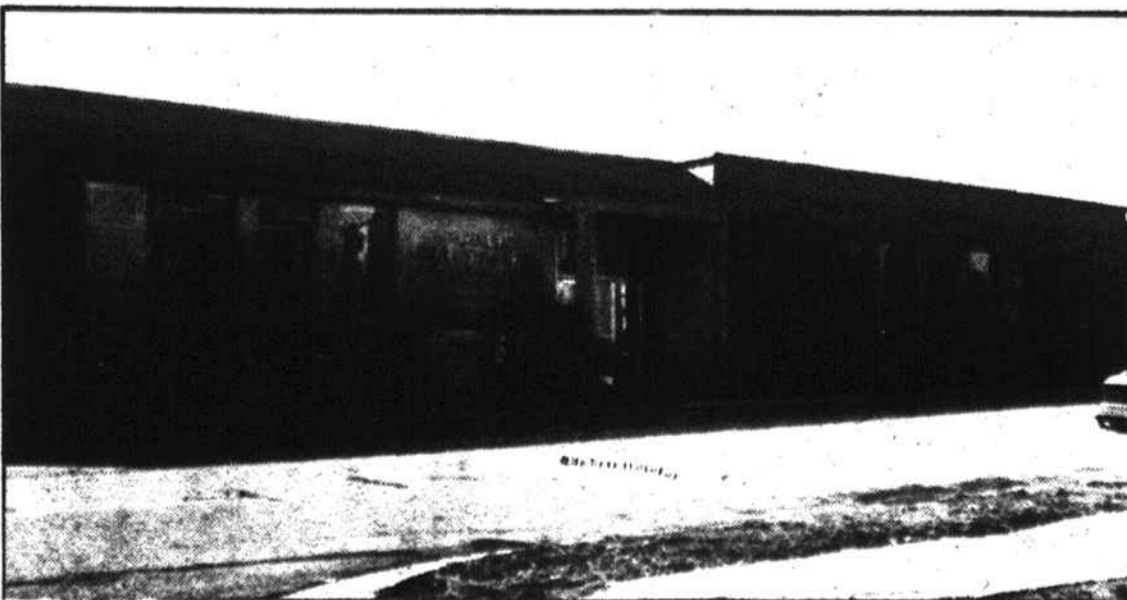
The Horton Library had an extension division. A bookmobile made stops throughout the city and

Happy Hill Gardens and Kimberly Park.

After outgrowing a subsequent location in the Bruce Building at the corner of 6th Street and Patterson Avenue (from 1931-1954), the library moved to its current site on 7th Street, across from what used to be Kate B. Reynolds Memorial Hospital, and the Horton Branch became East Winston Branch Library. Mrs. Nell Wright Alford, head librarian, and Mrs.

Mary Bruce who was in charge of young adult services, were two dedicated people who became familiar faces to countless library patrons, young and old.

Today, East Winston Branch Library remains a vital information resource center and a keeper of the community's history. By preserving that history, African-Americans can have a better sense of their past, the present, and what lies in the future.



East Winston Branch Library has served the African-American community through 37 years of changes.

For patients at Kate B. Reynolds Memorial Hospital, there was an outreach service which delivered books to the various wards. Mini-libraries were established at the city's public housing communities such as

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"Reinvestments in the Community" is a weekly column appearing in API publications throughout the USA.