

WSSU Graduate Battles Leukemia; Donors Sought in Bone Marrow Drive

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BMW and no relation to Juan Wilson. "We just want people to take a blood test and put them on the national registry for bone marrow donors." Healthy adults age 18 to 55 are encouraged to participate in the event.

Juan Wilson, a native of Wilmington, graduated from WSSU last May with a bachelor's degree in computer science.

"The entire WSSU family is involved with the bone marrow drive," Juan Wilson said.

The event is being sponsored by seven black fraternities and sororities as well as two student organizations at WSSU.

Juan first noticed that he was

ill when he began losing weight earlier this year. After losing 38 pounds, he now weighs 185 pounds and stands 5 feet six inches tall.

Leukemia is a disease that is characterized by an abnormal and persistent increase in white blood cells and the amount of bone marrow, with an enlargement of the spleen.

"He has two job offers since he graduated," said Reginald Wilson who learned of Juan's illness during a recent bone marrow donor drive. "But he is unable to work now."

The Juan B. Wilson Bone Marrow Transplant Fund has been established to raise money for his transplant operation that will cost nearly \$100,000. He will

undergo the operation at N.C. Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem.

His mother, Linda Wilson, said that her son was in good spirits.

"He is a very strong man, and he keeps us going," she said. "We are hoping and praying that the bone marrow transplant will happen soon."

Juan Wilson has put his faith in God, his mother said. "He knows that everything will be all right," she said. "He knows to have trust in the Lord."

His fight with leukemia highlights the lack of African Americans who donate bone marrow. The Bone Marrow National Registry only lists six percent of its 1.7 million donors as blacks.

More than 3,000 blacks in North Carolina have been added to the national registry.

"It is too small," said Reginald Wilson, a recruiter for the National Bone Marrow program. "There is a lack of education. Fear is also a big factor. When we educate, the barriers come down."

There are 6,000 new cases of leukemia among African-Americans. "I want to stress the fact that African-Americans must get involved in bone marrow drives," Juan Wilson said. "There is a lack of education, and I was guilty of that myself. But now it has hit home."

Linda Wilson said that many blacks that have leukemia need bone marrow transplants to survive.



Reginald Wilson

"It really hit us hard when Juan told us he had leukemia," she said.

"You realize that this disease is very serious."

His parents, John Wilson, a retired school teacher, and his mother, Linda, a owner of day care center, are supportive of their son.

"We trust that everything will be okay," Linda Wilson said. "We trust in the Lord."

Donations can be made to the Juan B. Wilson Bone Marrow Transplant Fund by contacting John or Linda Wilson at (910) 763-4466 or Reginald Wilson of the Bone Marrow Wanted Inc. at (704) 545-2083.

"We believe in the Lord, and that has kept us going," Juan Wilson said. "I'm being strong. We have a strong knit family."

Federal Cuts May Hurt Legal Aid Society; Agency May Lose 50 Percent of Services

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considering the Legal Aid Act of 1995, which would abolish the Legal Services Corp. and provide the states with the money to fund block grants for legal services. Under this bill, the corporation would be eliminated in six months and the grants would be made to states according to the poverty populations.

It is likely that the agency's budget will be reduced from \$944,131 in fiscal year 1995 to \$516,676 in fiscal year 1996. This reduction represents a 54 percent reduction its annual bud-

get. "I don't know what they are thinking about in Congress," House said. "It's the government's job to make the courthouse available to poor people."

Because of the expected cutbacks, the Legal Aid Society is planning to layoff seven of its 17 staff members - attorneys and paralegals.

The layoffs will be effective Dec. 31, 1995. "It's an awful thing for them to lose their jobs," House said. "The staff is more concerned about what is going to happen our clients than to them."

The Legal Aid Society han-

dled 2,000 cases last year. Because of the reduced funding, the agency will be able to deal with 1,000 cases in the fiscal year 1996-97.

"We will do the best we can," House said. "We will be too busy keeping people off the streets to deal with cases involving unemployment benefits or unfit housing conditions."

The agency's board of directors approved the staff reductions at its recent meeting.

"It was not a pleasant board meeting," House said. "They were distressed about the loss of client services."

U.S. House of Representatives approved this summer the proposed cuts in the Legal Services Corp. as part of its \$9 billion of cutbacks in federal spending to balance the nation's budget.

"There is an awful lot of poor bashing in Congress," House said. "They believe that poor people want to be poor. People are poor because life keeps hitting them in the face."

Hazel Z. Mack of Winston-Salem is the agency's managing attorney who will lose her job because of the expected federal cutbacks.

"The cuts are real, and the public should have a righteous indignation into what Congress have determined for the poor in the legal system," Mack said. "Congress has decided that if you are poor, you shouldn't have equal access to justice."

A staff member who requested anonymity said that layoffs were unfair.

"There are some people who have long service and a obvious commitment to this type of work who are being asked to leave," the staffer said. "Others with less experience and skill level will be left to serve the clients."

The Legal Aid Society provides legal services to poor residents in Forsyth, Stokes, Surry, Iredell, Davie, and Yadkin counties.

There are 72,884 financially eligible resident those counties. The agency was founded in 1962 by the Young Lawyer's Division of the Forsyth County Bar Association.

It gets most of its funding from Congress through the Legal Service Corp. The Legal Aid Society also receives funding from the N.C. General Assembly and through fund raising efforts among lawyers.

County Seeking Ways to Improve 911 Services; Malloy Express Concerns to Commissioners

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at their bi-monthly meeting, Monday night.

"We think this is something the County Commissioners and other citizens should be made aware of," said Anthony McDowell, a community resident.

After describing the events, which took place Mc Dowell and other residents told Commissioners that "911 Sucks".

Alderman Nelson Malloy also addressed the commissioners concerning the delay in 911 service.

I'm here to address the concerns of the residents of the Cherry Hill Apartments who are

also my constituents," Malloy said.

Malloy asked commissioners a series of questions concerning response times and procedures of the ambulance service.

Commissioners were not able to answer some of Malloy's questions, but said they will find out the answers and communicate them to him.

Malloy also asked if there was a residency requirement for the franchise personnel.

According to commissioners, drivers for the franchise services do not have to live inside the area they provide service to.

"I think this may be a hurdle

concerning the time lapse, because the drivers may not know where they're going," Malloy said.

"When we were on our way to the hospital, I heard the driver ask the other man how to get to the hospital," Lindsey said.

Lindsey, a diabetic and heart patient suffered from a diabetic coma, on Sept. 2, while washing her clothes.

"I was just sitting there in the chair, talking to a lady and then I blacked out," she said. "I've had problems with diabetes before, but this is the first time I ever blacked out."

McDowell made the first call

to 911 concerning Lindsey's illness.

"The first call came in at 1:36 p.m. and Forsyth Emergency medical was on the scene at 2:07 p.m.," Graham said.

"It was reported that it took 31 minutes, but I and other residents know that it took at least 45 minutes," McDowell said.

According to McDowell a total of eight calls were made to 911 before an ambulance arrived.

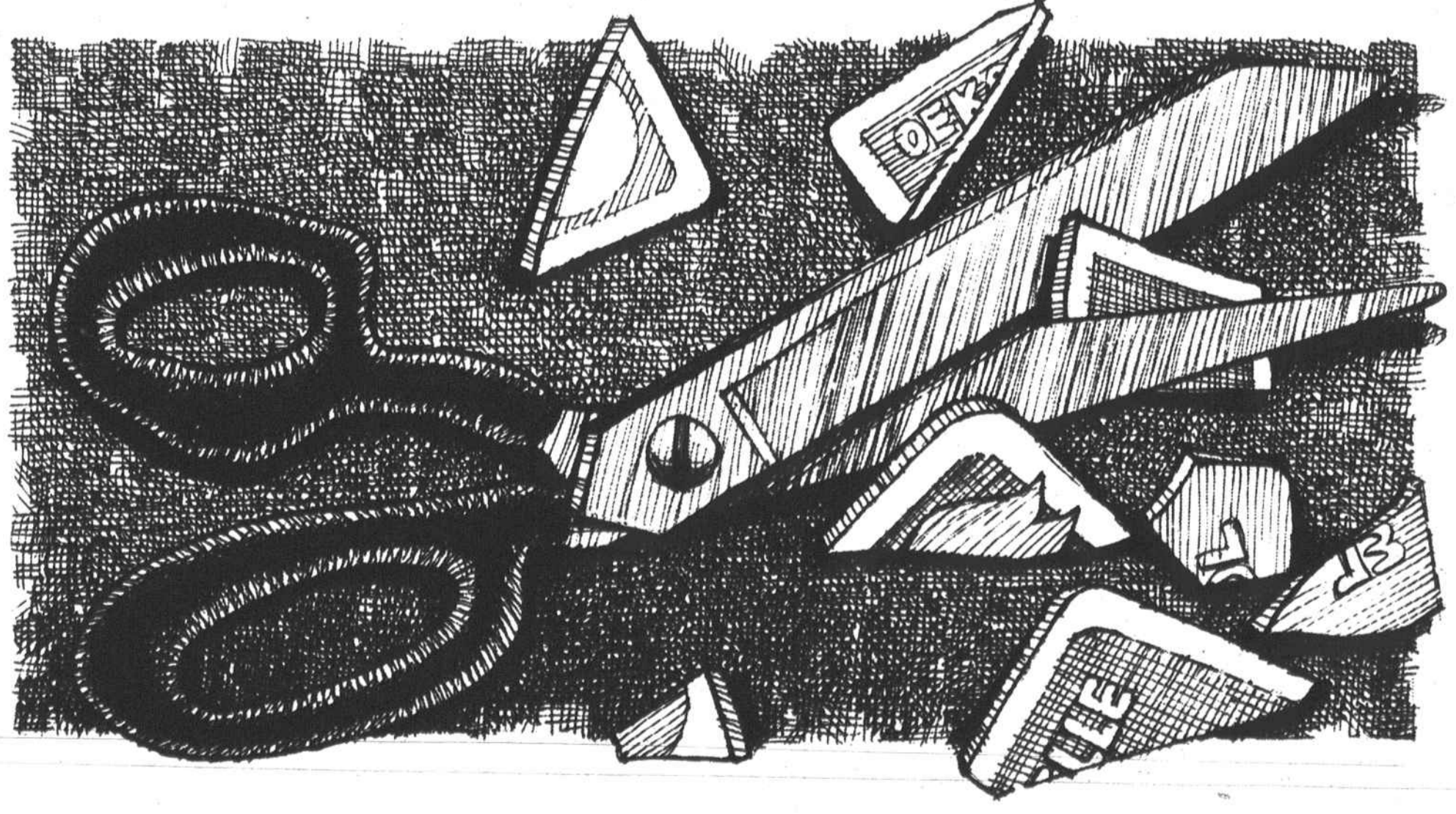
"I called them (911) three times, and they never came," said Carleta Hauser, a resident at Cherry Hill Apartments. "I said they must be coming from New York, so I gave up."

Other residents said they are not surprised, but fed up with the 911 service in their community. "I've seen the ambulance park in front of my house and wait for the police to come before they go any further up the street," said Marilyn Thompson, a community resident.

Graham said he never heard of that happening and it is not a procedure that drivers wait for police officers.

Lindsey said she still has faith in the ambulance service. "I haven't lost faith in them, I just wish they would come when you call them," she said.

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