

M/WBE

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"I'd say we're right there with each other," Smith stated.

Four city employees work in Greensboro's M/WBE program, while there is one full-time staff member in Winston-Salem's M/WBE office. A clerk works part-time for Derwick Paige, Winston's M/WBE coordinator.

In addition to his M/WBE duties, Paige also handles the city's small business loan program and works with the "Sister Cities" effort to link Winston-Salem with an international city. (Currently, the city is looking at cities in South Africa, Italy and the Czech

gets an opportunity to make money, particularly minority and women businesses," said North Ward Alderman Nelson Malloy. "Some folks are being shut out, either unintentionally or deliberately, because of miscommunication."

Contractors are required to send letters and make telephone calls to a "reasonable number of specific M/WBE's." The M/WBE office checks on the good faith effort by randomly selecting and phoning about 10 percent of the contractors on the list, said Paige.

However, some minority and women contractors change addresses without updating their status with the M/WBE office.

expand the parking deck project, increasing costs from \$4 million to \$6 million. Out of this figure, only \$21,310 went to Rose Concrete, a minority firm. A little over \$9,000 went to female contractor Laura Associates.

The work involved in the Fourth Street project contributed to the low M/WBE participation, Paige said. First, not as much subcontracting was involved as in other major projects because the parking deck design called for prefabricated materials. Second, no minority or woman-owned firm specialized in the type of electrical and plumbing work needed for the project.

"There's a big problem with not having the M/WBE firms able to do the projects," said Paige. Another problem is utilization of the M/WBE program. Many contractors aren't aware of how the program works, or how they can make the program work best for them.

Most projects, like the Brown Douglas Recreation Center, come close to meeting the minority/women participation

goals. Paige set a goal of 12 and 2.7 percent minority and women-owned firm involvement, respectively.

"In the end, we made 11.83 percent minority and 5.77 percent women [participation]," said Paige.

Though Malloy sits on the finance committee, which reviews contracts before they go to the board, neither he nor any other alderman know the M/WBE percentages before voting to award a contract.

If an alderman knew the percentages met by contractors, it might influence his or her vote. By law, city officials have to award municipal contracts to the lowest bidder.

"Minority firms are not always the lowest bidders," said Paige.

There may soon be more minority-owned businesses to choose from, though. According to the National Foundation for Women Business Owners, the national trend among minority women-owned firms looks healthy.

Minority women-owned businesses are growing three times faster than the overall rate of business growth. There are over a million minority women-owned firms in the country, employing almost 1.7 million people and generating \$184.2 billion in sales.

The greatest growth of these businesses has been in non-traditional sectors, such as construction, where the most government dollars are available.

However, Smith of the Greensboro M/WBE warned against placing all eggs in one basket. She encouraged contractors to pursue opportunities in the private sector.

"You can't depend solely on government contracts," Smith said.



Larry Leon Hamlin, center, stands with corporate sponsors at the National Black Theatre Festival press conference June 23.

FESTIVAL

Wise. People would still be drawn to Winston as the birthplace of the festival, he added.

Losing the Festival altogether is another story. The event offers a week of break-neck business during a typically slow period.

"By no means is it a small little piece of business," said Wise. The Adams Mark, which is the Festival's hotel headquarters, has 475 rooms booked for the event's peak night.

Others in the industry agree. When asked if the Festival's departure would hurt business, Ramada Ltd. manager Pat Bryan summed it up in one word: "Definitely."

The celebrities scheduled to perform Aug. 4-9 include Ella Joyce, Barbara Montgomery, Dick Anthony Williams, Micki Grant and Ntozake Shange. Twenty-six theater companies from the United States, Europe, the Caribbean and Africa will appear. More than 90 shows will

be performed at sites around Winston-Salem. Veteran Broadway performer

fiscal duties if the Festival is held in Richmond every other year. Cost of operation would

chair the event.

This year, the Festival is expected to draw about 50,000 people. The Festival nets millions of dollars for the local economy, and Hamlin feels the city's financial commitment doesn't match up.

Hamlin asked the city for \$150,000 this year. He received \$100,000 less than his request.

"One hundred and fifty thousand to bring in millions doesn't seem like a dangerous investment," said Hamlin. He added that since his organization, the North Carolina Black Repertoire Theatre, moved to Winston-Salem in 1979, it has generated \$40 million for the city.

City funding for the National Black Theatre Festival has crept up from the first year. Initial support was about \$25,000, half of this year's funding.

Richmond's government has offered to handle the majority of

half a million dollars.

The cost of producing the Festival, \$1.5 million, is carried by corporate sponsors. R.J. Reynolds leads with \$125,000 in donations to the Festival. Wachovia Bank donates \$75,000, while Nations Bank has pledged \$55,000 in support. The Coca-Cola Foundation recently joined the Festival's list of sponsors, matching the city's commitment.

The Festival based its fiscal policy on that used by these corporations. Representatives of the sponsoring corporations also sit on the Festival's steering committee.

The Festival's books remain in the black, said Hamlin, but he feels that color may be why he's not getting the support he wants.

"It's always been difficult for some to accept that African Americans can handle business properly," said Hamlin.

TILLMAN

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black doctors. While mothers-to-be labored, Tillman sat up all night in an uncomfortable chair or slept in an empty bed in a ward. "The treatment of black patients," he writes, "was not only separate, but at times, grossly unequal."

Jim Crow laws also posed challenges for him as a parent. "The hardest thing," he recalls, "was to try to explain to a little child why they couldn't see cartoons at a movie when they saw the billboards and the other children lined up to go in."

During the Civil Rights Movement, Tillman fought to cure the ill of racism. While his wife, Barbara, was pregnant, for example, he was jailed for protesting at a segregated drive-in restaurant.

Today, some doors have opened, blacks' access to health care has improved and Tillman reflects on his 39-year career. His successful medical practice often saw as many as 100 patients a day. A graduate of North Carolina A&T State University and Howard University Medical School, he was named High Pointer of the Year by the city's Human Relations Commission.

At a time when some patients complain about doctors' bedside manner, Tillman's book is an uplifting bedside companion. He self-published the book — 1,000 copies — and pledges to donate profits from book sales to local churches and charities.

Within the book's 210 pages, however, is an even greater offering — heartfelt prayers and priceless wisdom. On every page, his faith shines through. The caring doctor not only shares small miracles but expresses his concerns about families, AIDS, drugs, teen pregnancy and race relations.

"As I followed my many patients, some from birth, others during life, and still others to death, the awesome power, as well as the tender mercy of God, has been evident," he attests. "My only regret is that I waited until my golden years to let the whole world know the source of my being."

Tillman's stories and prayers may have been a lifetime in the making. But "A Prescription for the Soul" was well worth the wait.

With this project behind him, Tillman is chronicling the story of High Point's black doctors, a history he himself helped shape.

Excerpts from "A Prescription for the Soul"

"The Piano Stool Remains"

After the examination, we would talk about the value of life and the joy of living Christlike lives. She always brought a brown bag containing a sweet potato pie, some liver pudding or some other food. As the years passed, she would summon me to her home. She would always have a little oak piano stool at her bedside for me. The house call often lasted a bit longer than usual, but I always came away much richer in spirit. On my last visit to the bedside of the silver-haired old lady, I saw the little stool that had been the resting place for both my body and problems for so many years. Her home contained many antiques and the family gave me preference of any of the articles before they were divided among family and friends. They were somewhat surprised when I requested the oak piano stool. Each time I use it, I'm reminded not only of this patient, whom I had come to love and respect so deeply, but also how God used her life to let me see more clearly the path that I must travel to fulfill my purpose for living.

"Rise Up, Ye People of Color"

I heard a voice out of the dark, saying, "Black people, come up higher in the trees of life; there is room for you to

live." But we said that we are just out of slavery and have never walked alone, but we will try and we stood proud and free.

Another voice sounded, crying, "Come up the side of the mountain, you people of color." "But our education is inferior, our training is low, still our desire is strong." So we climbed and our view of greater things made us thirst for more.

Another voice said, "Rise up you people of African descent, to the top of the mountains." We said that we are discouraged by past experiences, but we came and saw new visions of hope for our people.

A still louder voice commanded, "Now cast out into the great unknown, yes, spread your wings and sail to the uttermost parts of the earth, attaining any heights your ability will permit, achieving any goals your mind can conceive." Though apprehensive at first, we fought and succeeded and passed on to our offspring the spirit of self-worth and the will to excel.

A final voice proclaimed, "Fear not, for you see, my black children, I am your Creator. I made you in My own image not to walk through life with bowed down heads, shuffling feet, and broken spirits, but to use all of the gifts I gave you and to live so that My Name may be glorified in all the earth."

SHABAZZ

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Westchester County attorney's office, would not comment on the status of charges against Malcolm Shabazz. "Because it's a Family Court matter, we're precluded by law on commenting unless the judge in the case ordered otherwise," he said.

On charges against his client, Shabazz family lawyer Percy Sutton said, "What difference would it make except an added burden on this family ... this is sad enough already."

A hearing is scheduled Tuesday on petitions from news organizations to open the case to reporters.

Sutton also said the family would fight any attempt to conduct an autopsy. "They have been here these days and watched their mother," he said. "They loved this lady and do not wish to have her body subjected to additional cutting."

Muhammad Sherwani, director of the Muslim Center of New York, said autopsies are allowed under Islamic law in criminal cases.

Mrs. Shabazz died at 2:46 p.m. at Jacobi Medical Center, where doctors said she took a turn for the worse last week after five operations to replace burned tissue.

In 1965, pregnant with twins, Mrs. Shabazz was in the audience at the Audubon Ballroom in Manhattan with her four children when gunmen pumped 16 shots into her husband as he preached on stage.

"Sister Betty came through the people, herself a nurse, and people recognizing her moved back; she fell on her knees looking down on his bare, bullet-pocked chest, sobbing, 'They killed him!'" Alex Haley wrote in the book "The Autobiography of Malcolm X."

Mrs. Shabazz went on to become a university administrator and spokeswoman for civil rights.

"It's incredible that we should

go into the next millennium with our race issues," she told a group in Kansas City, Mo., in 1995. "God must be a little upset with his creation that we can't get along together."

She made headlines in 1994 by publicly accusing Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan of orchestrating Malcolm X's assassination. She reconciled with Farrakhan a year later and defended her daughter, Qubilah, against charges that she plotted a revenge attack against him.

It was Qubilah's son who was arrested in the fire. He reportedly was unhappy he had been sent to live with his grandmother and wanted to return to his mother in Texas.

Black activist Elombe Brath called Mrs. Shabazz "one of three major widows whose husbands were sacrificed to the struggle in this country," along with Coretta Scott King and Myrlie Evers-Williams.

Despite their husbands' differences, the three widows were friends.

"I am deeply saddened by the death of my friend and sister, Dr. Betty Shabazz. I will miss her greatly. She leaves a legacy of love, service, dedication and caring especially for the children," Mrs. Scott King, widow of the Rev. Martin Luther King, said Monday.

Evers-Williams, widow of Medgar Evers and chairwoman of the NAACP, said after Mrs. Shabazz's hospitalization: "Betty Shabazz has not been given the amount of credit she deserves in shaping America's civil rights movement. She has been a source of strength and encouragement not only to myself but to millions of Americans."

Born in Detroit, Betty Shabazz studied at the Tuskegee Institute, Brooklyn State Hospital School of Nursing and Jersey City State College. She met her husband through the Nation of Islam; she called herself Sister Betty X at the time.

They married in 1958, when Malcolm was minister of

Harlem's Mosque No. 7 and Betty was working as a nurse.

"Betty's a good Muslim woman and wife," Malcolm X said in the autobiography he co-wrote with Haley. "I don't imagine many other women might put up with the way I am. Awakening this brainwashed black man and telling this arrogant, devilish white man the truth about himself, Betty understands, is a full-time job."

After his assassination, she raised their daughters alone in Mount Vernon, in suburban Westchester County. More recently, she moved into the Yonkers apartment.

She earned a doctorate in education from the University of Massachusetts in 1975. She became director of public relations at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn and later headed the school's office of institutional advancement.

"Our nation has lost a woman of vision and compassion whose life and career ... were dedicated to helping young people achieve educational pinnacles," said W. Ann Reynolds, chancellor of City University of New York, which includes Medgar Evers College.

While speaking out strongly at times against racism, Mrs. Shabazz claimed she was never as assertive as she appeared in Angela Bassett's portrayal in the Spike Lee film "Malcolm X." In 1992, Mrs. Shabazz told a Harvard audience that the movie and her marriage thrust her into a role she never sought.

"I have been propelled on a bridge, on a trail, on a platform by this man called Malcolm," she said.

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