

**LIFT**

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of additional students not funded by the state."

She said that LIFT Academy officials will continue to talk with officials with the Department of Public Instruction's Office of Charter Schools to try to be reimbursed for the unfunded students.

Parmon explained the reason for the discrepancy this way: In the 1997-98 school year, the first year LIFT Academy was a public charter school, the N.C. Department of Public Instruction funded LIFT Academy not only for the students who attended during the first 20 days of school, but students who were added after the first 20 days.

"Starting the 1998-99 school year, we continued to enroll (after the first 20 days) because the previous year we were funded for our increasing average daily member-

ship - students that came in after the first 20 days," Parmon said. But in 1998-99 DPI no longer funded students who were added after the first 20 days, Parmon said. LIFT Academy found out about the change in policy in October, she said.

She said the school has taken a number of actions to try to reduce the budget shortfall. Some employee benefits were cut in October. The school renegotiated its food-service contract so that it would have to pay only for the actual number of students fed, rather than a preset number.

"We had to cut back on supplies, such as general office supplies and cleaning supplies. The only thing we have not cut back is direct services to students," Parmon said.

She said the staff of LIFT Academy agreed to a pay cut that went into effect in January. "The staff said let's do whatever neces-

sary to keep the doors open," she said.

The pay cut has reduced employees' salaries about 10 percent, she said.

Parmon said that next school year "from a business perspective, we may have to take a look at whether we will be able to enroll students after the first 20 days of school."

A lot of the students that LIFT Academy enrolls after the first 20 days of school are those who are kicked out of other schools for disciplinary reasons, Parmon said. "These students had no alternative for pursuing their education."

"We need this school," Wanda Sprinkle, whose 17-year-old son Lesley, attends LIFT Academy. "These teachers are good for this school."

Sprinkle said that if Lesley had not been allowed to attend LIFT "he probably would have been in the penitentiary. He was a straight-

F student (before attending LIFT). He's an A-B student now."

"I wouldn't take nothing for LIFT; my child is still in school," Sprinkle said.

The school's mission is to enhance "students' ability to succeed through individualized class instruction, smaller class sizes and stimulating academic and extracurricular approaches. The school targets students who experience difficulty succeeding in their current academic environment."

Parmon founded LIFT Academy in 1982 as a nonprofit youth project under the auspices of the East Winston Restoration Association. Over a period of time, the program evolved into a certified school serving children ages 6-16.

"Initially, its mission was to provide an alternative, protective

environment for auxiliary education to students who had been expelled from the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System or referred by the local courts," a school brochure says.

"The name, LIFT, is an acronym for 'Learning is Fun Too!'"

Ansylyne Mitchell, a former teacher at LIFT Academy, said in early May that her 403-B retirement account with LIFT Academy was, according to her calculations, \$1,379 short, but she learned later that LIFT Academy sent a check April 27 for \$1,108.45 for her 403-B retirement account to the company that administers the 403-B fund. Mitchell said she was generally satisfied.

Mitchell had several other complaints about LIFT Academy:

She said on several occasions she was paid late or was not allowed to cash her paycheck on the same day she was paid, and that once she was paid in cash. She also said that her dental insurance coverage through the school lapsed because the school had not paid the premium, even though she was paying for dental insurance through payroll deduction.

Mitchell said she took a layoff from LIFT Academy effective March 31 after Parmon gave her a choice of either taking a 39 percent pay cut or a layoff.

The 39 percent pay cut would have been in addition to the pay cut that went into effect in January. Parmon said that because of state personnel regulations, she could not comment about Mitchell.

**Jackson**

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straight and narrow path," she said.

The Rev. James Lewis served as the master of ceremonies. He set the tone for comments from the dinner tables. "We don't want to think of Gloria as going anywhere, but as coming home often. We give her the rewards she has won. No matter where she goes, we want her to know she is very special in our lives," Lewis said.

Hezekiah Jackson spoke on behalf of the Jackson family. "I am very happy for my sister. We are a close family, and we have never been scattered. This is a transition in our family's life. We will miss Gloria, but she will have trouble with me if she doesn't come around. God will take care of you," he said.

Bishop John Heath dedicated the song "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." He then offered words of love. "Gloria and I have been friends down through the years as we traveled around the world with the Gospel Music Workshop. Don't forget about Winston-Salem," he said.

Sherrie G. Grant dedicated

the solo "Only What You Do For Christ Will Last" to Jackson.

Dr. Marion "Pete" Thomas also offered expressions of love. He reminded the audience of the various conventions that he, Jackson, Heath and other friends attended together. "Gloria had a big car. This was bigger than a jet. In fact, she could get 12 people in that one car, and it was not crowded," he said with a chuckle. Thomas expressed his pride about Jackson's promotion. "We don't know the price of the anointing or of God's favor," he said.

Deacon Thomie Douthit reminded the audience of the song that Jackson sang with such fervor and tears of joy at the pastor's anniversary for the late Dr. B.F. Daniels - "One Mo' Sunny Day."

"You have impregnated us with your love. We love you. Come on back. You are always a part of this congregation," Douthit said.

Jackson came forward and sang "One Mo' Sunny Day" with strong conviction and expression.

The audience rose to clap along with her and the band of friends who sang with her.

**WSSU**

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administration. At the meeting, the hot-line was even referred to as the "no confidence in Alyn Schexnider line."

"I have not been satisfied with what's been happening on this campus... We think that our chancellor does not seem to have a good relationship with the community, especially the African American community," said Davenport, who graduated from WSSU more than 50 years ago and has remained an active alumni.



Schexnider

Davenport read some of her comments from a resolution that she and other alumni have drawn up.

According to the resolution, about 30 percent of WSSU freshmen drop out after their first year and the school has lost corporate and community support under the present administration. In total, about a dozen gripes are contained in the resolution, with most pertaining to the administration's running of the school.

Although WSSU has claimed the CIAA men's basketball title and has been hailed as one of the nation's top liberal arts schools by U.S. News and World Report within the last 12 months, the school's finances have dominated newspaper headlines.

An internal audit last June determined that Schexnider had violated spending policies several times. But all the violations were considered minor. Last July, questions surfaced about Cone's involvement in a multimillion dollar deficit at Norfolk State University,



Blunt

where she served as the chief financial officer before coming to WSSU. Last November, the first director of the university's newly-formed community development corporation, Thurmond Williams, was fired after he alleged that federal money had been misused by the university. However, audits by General Administration and HUD found no evidence of the money being misused.

last week.

Earlier this year, Cone was questioned by members of the board of trustees after she moved a quarter-million dollars from the school's endowment fund to another account. In an interview with The Chronicle in March, Cone said the money was moved because it had been placed into the endowment erroneously.

And Bailey, a former president of the university's alumni association, has charged that the grades of some basketball players were changed so that they could be academically eligible for games. The NCAA is currently investigating the charge.

Although General Administration officials insist that Gilley's presence is not indicative of a takeover by the UNC system, Bailey and others are not convinced.

"I have heard that equipment is now coming into the university addressed the University of North Carolina at Winston-Salem," Bailey said during the meeting.

Marshall said that the wrath that has developed against Schexnider may be misdirected. He and others criticized Broad for taking the drastic step of appointing Gilley after Schexnider asked for help.

It was a move Broad made without the knowledge of the school's board of trustees, which reportedly has left Theodore Blunt, the chairman of the board, a little miffed.

"We have made (Schexnider) the issue when he is not really the issue. The issue is what's happening to black institutions," Marshall said. "I don't think (Broad) would have done that at UNC-Chapel Hill or any other institution."

Womble said he wants to set up a meeting between himself, State Rep. Pete Oldham, the president of the N.C. Legislative Black Caucus and Broad to address, among other things, the constant rumor that WSSU is about to be taken over by the system.

"Some people have a perception - whether it's right or wrong - that this may be the first step in a take-over," Womble said after the meeting. "We want to settle the rumors."

Smith will draft a letter to Schexnider this week requesting the meeting. She, Tatum and other members of the group say they will attend the meeting if the chancellor agrees to it.

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