

Biggs honored by attorney general

By FELECIA P. McMILLAN
COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

Loretta Copeland Biggs, executive U.S. attorney, was honored by Attorney General Janet Reno recently.

Biggs was given the Attorney General's Award for Outstanding Contributions to Community Partnerships for Public Safety during the Department of Justice 47th Annual Award Ceremony. The ceremony was held July 13 at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C.

Sylvia I. Oberle, who works for Biggs at the U.S. Attorney's Office, was also honored. More than 100 award recipients were recognized during the 90-minute ceremony.

Biggs' husband, Larry, and their children, Jahmela, 16, and Jelani, 13, attended the ceremony along with several members of Emmanuel Baptist Church, where Biggs worships.

"I sincerely believe that Ms. Reno has bestowed a great honor upon all who have participated in developing Forsyth Futures by recognizing the role of Loretta and Sylvia as representatives of the United States Department of Justice," U. S. Attorney Walter C. Holton Jr. said.

The Attorney General's Awards are "the highest commendation for employees of the Department of Justice and for certain nonemployees who have provided service to DOJ and communities across the country. The awards are given to individuals for exceptional achievements, leadership and heroism. The 1999 award recipients were recommended and selected from a group of more than 580 highly qualified nominees. Reno offered remarks before the presentation of awards.

"I am pleased to be here today to personally recognize the employees of the Department of Justice who have responded to the many challenges that threaten the safety of our citizens, our children and our communities," Reno said.

Biggs was elated to receive the honor. She was also surprised to see her church members



Loretta Copeland Biggs received the Attorney General's Award for Outstanding Contributions for Public Safety from Attorney General Janet Reno during the 47th annual ceremony. They are flanked by U.S. Attorney Walter C. Holton Jr. (left) and Louis Freeh, FBI director.

"While I have been blessed to receive a number of awards, I truly believe I receive that as a representative of a group of many people who have worked in this community to improve the quality of life for children and youth," she said. "The event itself is exciting and special, but what makes it an exceptional day is for me to see my church members standing there in support of me. There is no greater feeling than to know that the people at home love you and support the work you are doing. That, in and of itself, is a precious gift to me," she said.

During the reception, Reno had the opportunity to meet the vanload of Biggs' supporters.

"Now all of these people came up from your church?" she asked Biggs.

"Sister Biggs has done an excellent job as a judge and as executive assistant U.S. attorney in helping to reduce crime. It is important for us to show our support for her efforts," said the Rev. John Mendez. "There are so few African Americans we see

here in upper levels of law enforcement, and it is good to see our African Americans who are being recognized. We need to show our support physically."

Mendez, who is the pastor of Emmanuel, said he saw his church's support of law enforcement as a way to send a message that counters the myth that many African Americans are critical of law officers. He commended Reno for her work with the burned churches, a project on which Mendez worked with Reno in order to reduce the number of churches being torched by arsonists.

"In fact this myth is far from the truth. We simply want to weed out the bad element in law enforcement. But we have many in the law arena that make our communities safe for all of us," he said.

"I am very proud of Loretta as if I had done something myself. My chest was standing out and I was smiling just like she was mine," Emmanuel member Mildred Peppers said. "I was taken aback that this is an annual event, and it was

something that I did not know existed. This event has opened a whole new world for me to share with my students. There are positions in federal government that they need to get ready for."

Biggs received the award for her role in assisting in the development of Forsyth Futures, an innovative community partnership to address issues of juvenile violence. She is the principal adviser to the U.S. attorney in areas of crime prevention and crime reduction strategies and oversees those activities for the Middle District of North Carolina. She has served as chairman of Forsyth Futures since its inception and has been instrumental in developing it as a model.

Having been with the U.S. Attorney's Office since 1994, Biggs supervises the Winston-Salem branch office, oversees the Weed and Seed efforts for the office as well as the federal child support efforts. She is a former District Court judge as well as a former state assistant district attorney in Forsyth County.

Women

from page A2

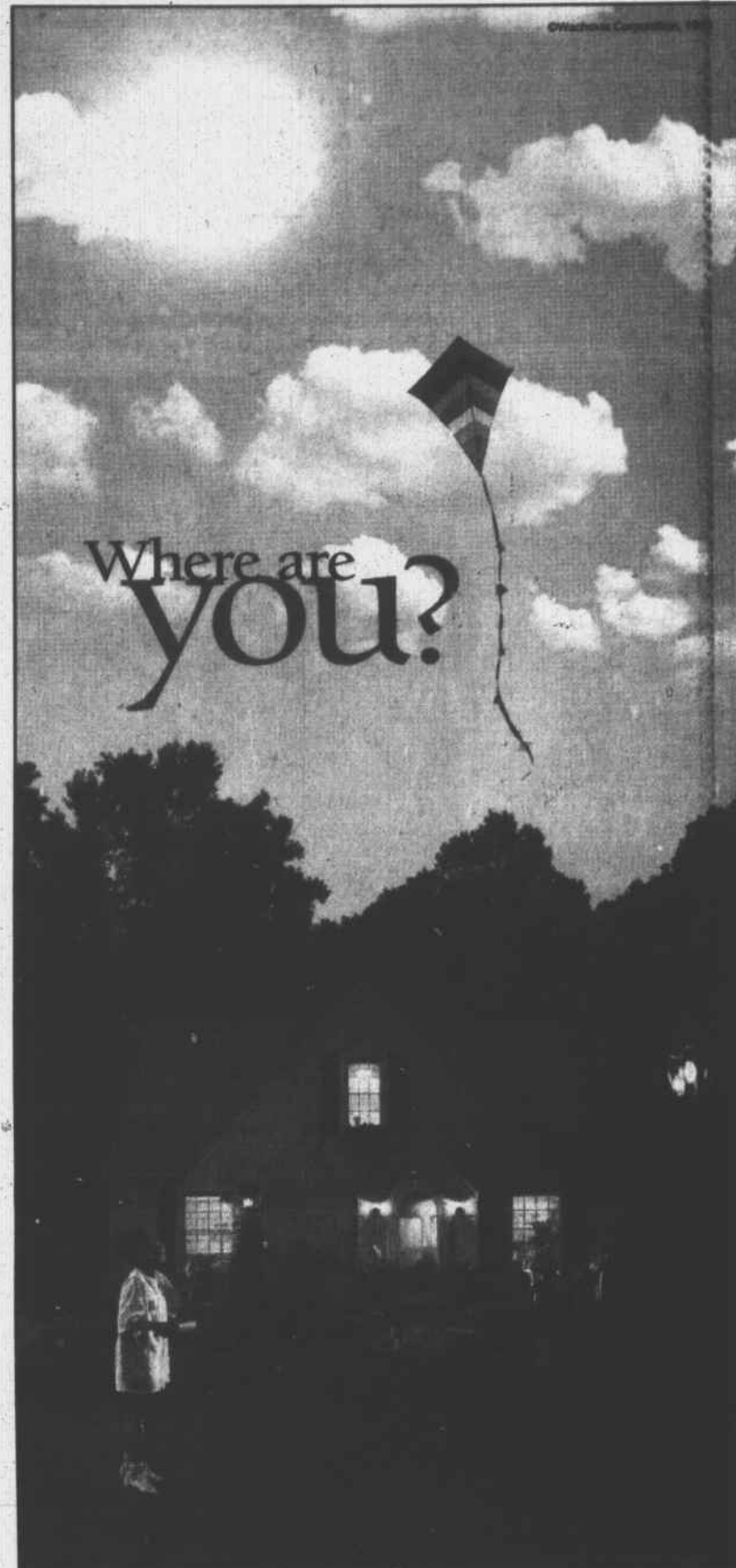
managers have few role models to turn to.

Further, minority women's immediate bosses often can't or don't help them advance. Fewer than half of those surveyed said their manager "provides opportunities for visibility," according to the study. Seventeen percent said their managers are held accountable for advancement of women who work for them.

"Women of color tend not to have as many people at the table talking about them positively," said Susan Johnson, director of diversity at Pitney Bowes, a

sponsor of the study. "What's important is there's someone in the organization who knows who these women are and can speak for their abilities and potential."

Many minority women also find fault with corporate diversity initiatives - the programs and policies that aim to smooth ethnic and racial differences in the workplace. More than half of those surveyed said such programs aren't effective in combating subtle racism, and 22 percent said their managers don't receive adequate training in managing a diverse workforce.



Where are you?

Does applying for a mortgage make you uncomfortable? Is there a bank that makes it easier? Is it possible that your dream house is closer than you think?

We are here. To help make it easy with a lot of loan choices, including special loans with low down payments. We'll take the time to understand your situation and guide you to the type of loan that works best for you. And if you can't get to us, we'll come to you; just tell us where and when. Owning your dream house can be easier than you dreamed. Call your local mortgage consultant at 760-5254. We'd like to help.

We are here.

WACHOVIA

Let's get started.

WACHOVIA MORTGAGE
HELPING YOU THROUGH THE LOAN PROCESS

Wachovia Mortgage Company
Wachovia Mortgage is an equal housing lender. Subject to credit approval and acceptable collateral.

M&F Bank introduces e-commerce services

Special to THE CHRONICLE

DURHAM — Mechanics and Farmers Bank has announced that it has introduced Internet banking on its website located at www.mfonline.com.

The product gives the capability of viewing deposit and loan accounts on line, including M&F Visa/MasterCard accounts, transferring funds between accounts, bill pay and the ability to download data to MSMoney™ or spreadsheet format.

This service is available immediately.

The service charges for the first three months will be waived.

Beginning in August, all M&F Internet banking customers will receive their monthly statements by e-mail as soon as they are rendered. The bank expects to introduce discount brokerage services through its Internet banking program as well as through its subsidiary, M&F Financial Services Inc.

These services will be provided by Uvest and should be available in the next 90 days. The technology used by M&F provides convenient, secure Internet banking services.

Other electronic services that will be introduced in August through the bank's website will include InterCheck™ and Positive Pay. InterCheck™ is a secure delivery system that provides the commercial and retail customer with Internet-based access to check images, image statements and account research capabilities. It also provides Internet access to cleared check information, with the front and/or back of each image, available for viewing and downloading the day after clearing.

Positive Pay services will be available for commercial customers. Positive Pay reduces fraud by validating the checks presented to financial institutions for payment and automatically matching the items against customer-issued check records before processing.

Positive Pay detects counterfeit items having duplicate serial numbers, voided checks presented for payment, stolen checks and checks with altered amounts.

CD-ROM statements are now available for commercial customers and can be requested by retail customers. The CD-ROM statement contains image statements, all statement text and images (front and back) of each check and deposit, in addition to images associated with each deposit.

E-Statements™ also will be available to all customers and can be requested even if the customer does not use M&F Internet banking.

Julia W. Taylor, chairman,

president and chief executive officer, said, "M&F Bank has positioned itself to compete and surpass some of the services available by other banks in our market area. We are a community bank

that is dedicated to serving the communities where we operate with personalized service as well as providing the secured aggressive technology to make banking convenient for our customers."

With FHA's new
higher loan limits,
you can buy your
dream home.

How's that for a housewarming gift?



Since 1934 we've helped over 26 million Americans get into new homes. And starting this year, HUD can help you get a home loan for up to \$208,800. Be sure to check with your lender to find out what the FHA-insured loan limits are in your area. We can also help you with any questions you might have. Just call 1-800-HUDS-FHA and ask for our free 100 Questions and Answers brochure. It'll tell you how to get an FHA loan for as little as 3% down. How to choose the right lender. How to prepare yourself for the homebuying process. And much more. In fact, if you're looking for a home, it's all the information you need.



HUD and FHA are on your side.



1-800-HUDS-FHA