

COMMUNITY FOCUS

Winston-Salem Greensboro High Point
1974- Celebrating 25 Years - 1999

OCTOBER 21, 1999

SECTION C

Caring obstetrician

Hopkins honored during testimonial dinner

BY FELECIA P. McMILLAN
COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

For almost 20 years, obstetrician Lawrence Hopkins has gone quietly about his work.

He's delivered more babies than he cares to count and counseled hundreds of women on how to care for themselves and their newborns.

Last week, Hopkins was one of three local doctors honored by the March of Dimes and the Urban League during a testimonial dinner for their commitment to keeping children healthy.

"We are here tonight to honor three pillars of our society. ... Look at the families here to support these three heroes," said honorary co-chair Maya Angelou, Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University. "I am a human being. Nothing human can be alien to me. The people we are honoring tonight have said that, and we are the better for it."

Not one to toot his own horn, Hopkins is reluctant to talk about himself, or the years he's spent caring for women - particularly those who can't afford prenatal care.

Each week, he divides his time between his practice at Aegis Winston-East and Today's Woman, a health center which provides prenatal care for some of the city's neediest women and children.

Hopkins focuses on the need to teach women to take care of themselves.

"That's what's really important," he said in an interview before the banquet. "Women just need to be taught how to take care of themselves when they're pregnant."

In Forsyth County and across the nation, African American babies die at twice the rate of white babies and are most likely to be born small or premature.

"Allow me to remind you of the bitter pills we have to swallow," said Dr. Richard Janeway, professor of neurology at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, who served as honorary co-chair of the event.

"Every day in North Carolina, eight babies are born with birth defects. Every day in North Carolina, three babies die before they reach their first birthday. Every day 25 babies are born with low birth weight. Every day 10 babies are born to mothers who did not receive adequate prenatal care. These facts must not stand," Janeway said. "The March of Dimes is here to reduce this."

The statistics are even more grim for babies born to poor or young mothers, a fact not lost on Hopkins. He was one of a group of local doctors who worked with the late Mazie Woodruff, a tireless community worker, to create Today's Woman as a resource for pregnant women in the Kimberley Park and Boston communities.

During the banquet, Linda Carter, executive director of Today's Woman, presented a plaque to Hopkins and showed a slide presentation of the physician's contributions and achievements.

Hopkins said he was just grateful to be able to help.

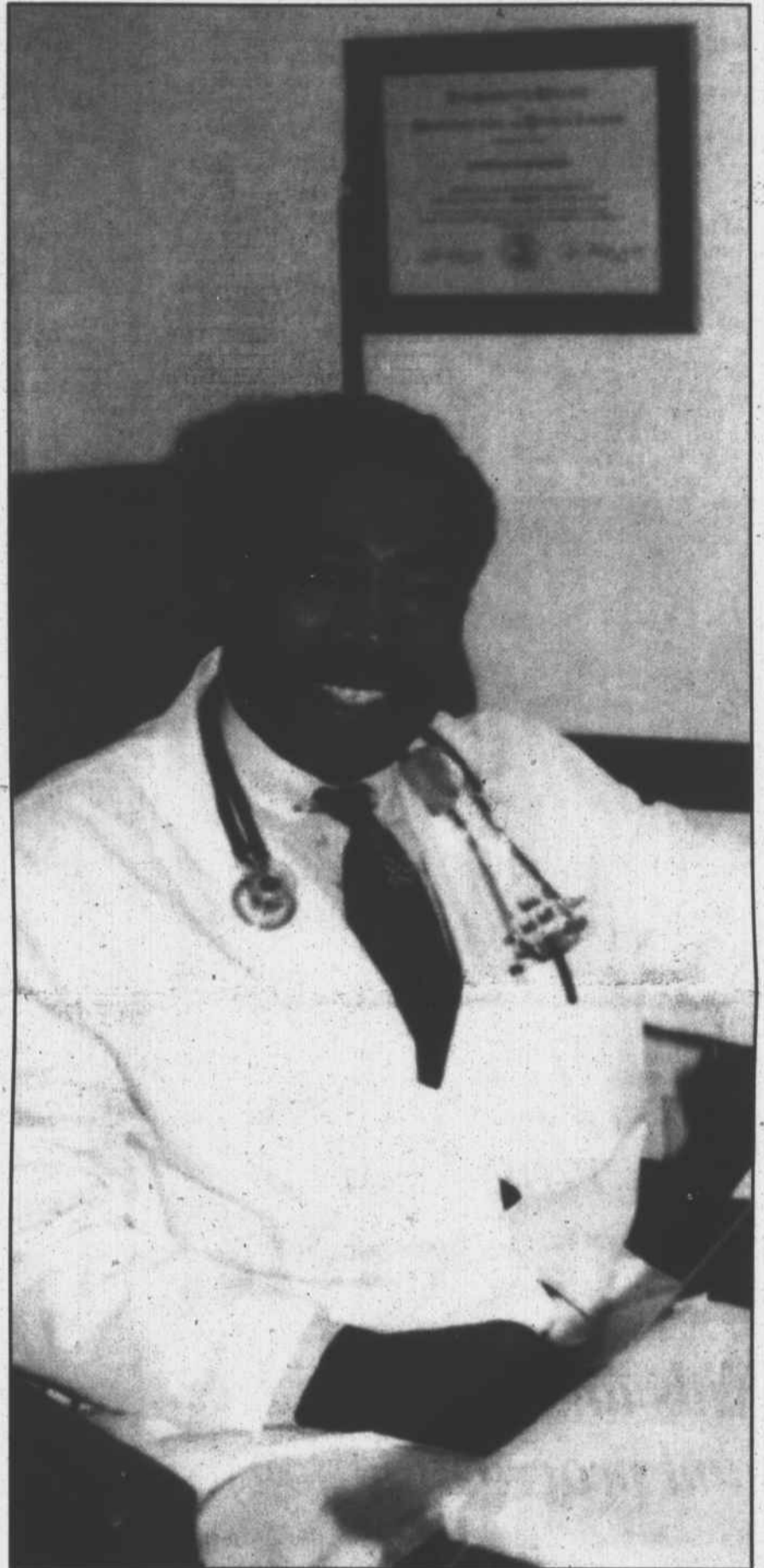
"I do what I can do to serve this community. I thank my family and friends for being here, especially my wife. Without her, I would be unable to do the things I do in this community. She has been with me for the past 25 plus years. Thank you, Beth," he said.

Beth Hopkins said she was proud of her husband's work in the community.

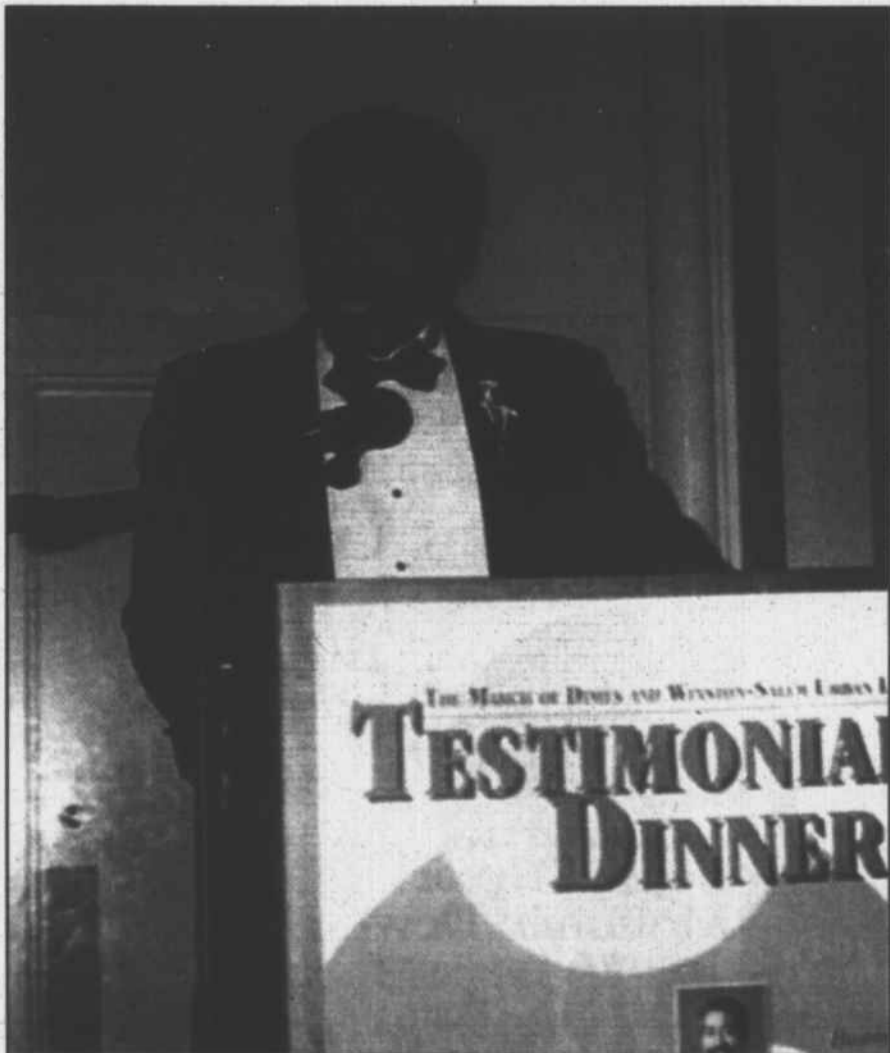
"It has been a pleasure serving the community. Mazie approached us, seeking our help, and we were blessed. Forsyth Hospital was willing to help us fill a void," she said. "Larry has worked really hard. We feel privileged to be part of the evening."

The eldest of five children, Hopkins, an All ACC football player at Wake Forest, said he always enjoyed

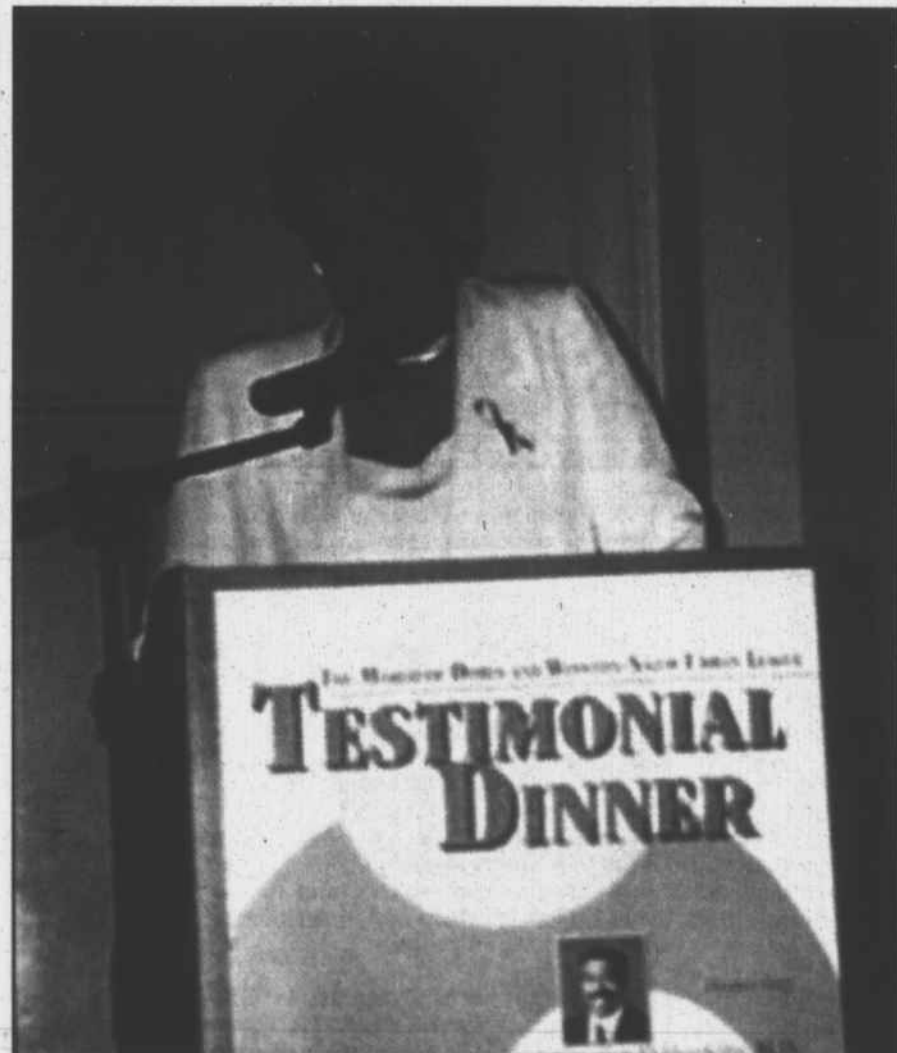
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Dr. Lawrence Hopkins



Lawrence D. Hopkins, M.D. offered words of thanks for all who supported his efforts toward winning recognition for his medical expertise.



Dr. Maya Angelou, Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University, served as the co-chair of the testimonial dinner.



Community Calendar

Surviving the game

The East Winston Heritage Center and the ABCD Best Start Fatherhood Connection Program will hold a special forum on the family Oct. 23.

A video will be shown and a discussion on the state of the African American family will follow.

The event will begin at 3:30 p.m. and will be held at the Heritage Center, 1110 East Seventh St.

For more information call 727-2202.

Calling all delegates

The North Carolina Democratic Party is looking for delegates to attend the 2000 Democratic Convention in Los Angeles.

The state has been allotted 103 delegates and 14 alternates to the convention. The delegates will have an opportunity to decide which Democrats will run for president.

Individuals interested in attending must file a notice of candidacy, available from state or county party chair after Dec. 1, and a statement of presidential preference with the North Carolina Democratic Party.

For a copy of the delegate selection plan, call (800) 229-3367 or (919) 821-2777. Information on the delegate selection process is also available on the Web at www.ncdp.org.

Ebony Fashion Fair returns

Oct. 29 marks the date the annual Ebony Fashion Fair makes its return to the Triad.

The show, which features fashions by the world's top designers, is sponsored by the Winston-Salem Urban League Guild.

Proceeds from the event will benefit the Urban League and provide scholarships for students who plan to attend college.

The show will be held at M.C. Benton Convention Center at 8 p.m. For tickets call 725-5614.

For more on Ebony Fashion Fair, see The Chronicle's special insert.

Big Four Reunion

The city's historically black high schools will celebrate their fifth annual gathering Oct. 28-30.

Alumni of Atkins, Paisley, Anderson and Carver high schools, known collectively as the "Big Four," will kick off Big Four Reunion with a worship service Oct. 28 at Shiloh Baptist Church, 916 East 12th St. The Rev. Gwathney Leak will lead the service, which will include special music by the Big Four Choir, with special guest The Community Outreach Fellowship Choir.

The service will begin at 6:30 p.m.

On Oct. 29, the group will pay homage to the teachers during a luncheon at the historic Anderson Center on the campus of Winston-Salem State University from noon-2 p.m.

Tickets to the luncheon may be purchased by calling 765-0030.

The reunion will end with the fifth annual Big Four Dance Oct. 30 from 8 p.m.-2 a.m. at the Benton Convention Center.

Individuals interested in participating in Big Four Choir and ushering during the Oct. 28 service are invited to attend rehearsals scheduled for Oct. 17 at New Hope Baptist Church, corner of Cleveland Avenue and New Hope Lane, and Oct. 21 at Shiloh Baptist Church.

Both rehearsals will begin at 7 p.m.

