

WSSU

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"We saw it as a good opportunity," said Olosope Oyelaran, director of WSSU's Office of International Programs. "The objective is to have them live among our students and expose them to the culture on campus."

The formation of the Office of International Programs was one of Chancellor Harold Martin's first directives in 2000 as the new leader of Winston-Salem State.

The office is responsible for coordinating study abroad trips for WSSU students and working to bring in foreign students like Thomee and Torres.

"Our Office of International Programs exists for our students as a gateway to the outside world. I urge our faculty and students to consider the opportunities studying abroad can offer," Martin said.

The office also advocates for the natural infusion of global thinking in courses and programs at the university. Last week, Oyelaran led a daylong workshop for WSSU professors, showing them ways that an international spin can be added for such subjects as health, science and math.

"The society's is globalizing; this place should not be left behind," Oyelaran said.

While historically black colleges and universities such as Florida A&M University, Morehouse College and Spelman College have well established and much praised Offices of Interna-

tional Programs, the offices are still fairly rare among HBCUs in this state. Of the five HBCUs in the UNC system, only two have formal Offices of International Programs, WSSU and North Carolina A&T State University.

Since WSSU launched its office two years ago, students have studied in countries such as Russia, Mexico, Australia, Finland, Sweden and Ghana. The university currently has two students in the popular Semester at Sea program, where students sail to 12 countries on five continents while taking a full academic load.

There are many more students waiting to study abroad, Oyelaran said.

He says the university will also continue to seek students from abroad to come to WSSU to study. The school hopes to establish its own linkages with overseas universities, separate from those already established by the UNC system.

Oyelaran joined Martin in the first step toward that last month with a trip South Africa. Martin led a delegation from the UNC system to the nation to help establish linkages in the Western Cape region of South Africa. Oyelaran said he and Martin were also keeping an eye on establishing partnerships for WSSU.

The university is also looking to build relationships with civic organizations here in the city in the hopes that such groups will host an exchange student for a day or a weekend. The local chapter of Links, Oyelaran said, has already expressed an interest in

hosting the current crop of exchange students.

Thomee and Torres have already gotten a chance to experience the city outside of the WSSU campus. They attended the Board of Aldermen meeting last week, briefly telling board members about their experiences in this country thus far. They also attended the recent Fiesta event hosted by the Hispanic League of the Piedmont Triad.

The event was especially eye-opening for Torres, who got a taste of the city's burgeoning Mexican-American culture.

"I have had a chance to meet a lot of Mexicans here," he said.

Both say that the fact that WSSU is a majority African-American school has not posed any challenges. In fact, they say, it has enhanced their experiences.

"I wanted to meet a lot of different people and to know about all types of people," Torres said.

Although Thomee is from a European country that many believe is lily white, he says he is used to diversity. Many Africans, Arabs and Eastern Europeans have found their way to The Netherlands, a small nation tucked between Germany and Belgium.

"I don't have any problem with (being at a HBCU). The people here are nice just like any American," Thomee said.

Thomee and Torres currently share a dorm room. That will change next semester. Torres will return to Mexico. Thomee will spend the entire 2002-2003 school year at WSSU.



N.C. Attorney General Roy Cooper speaks to parents and educators.

Cooper visits city to speak out against school violence

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD
THE CHRONICLE

N.C. Attorney General Roy Cooper vowed to work with educators to help improve parenting skills at The Parenting Institute's first annual conference Sept. 11.

The Parenting Institute, with headquarters in Winston-Salem, works to promote good parenting skills in hopes of strengthening families. The Duke Endowment funds the institute.

"Helping families, helping parents be better parents to their children is the very best thing that we can do to fight crime in the long run," said Cooper, who believes that parents who lack consistent and effective parenting skills are having a detrimental effect on their children's behavior in the classroom. Cooper spoke briefly at the conference, which was held at the Adam's Mark Winston Plaza Hotel.

"The very best way to fight crime is to stop it before it happens. We need to make sure that we make a difference

in the lives of our children. And it begins at home; it begins with parents with good skills who love their children," Cooper said.

According to Cooper, state officials are working hard to instruct law enforcement officers and teachers how to react and prevent violent incidents in schools. A strong supporter of strict law enforcement, Cooper stated that if "you do the crime, you do the time."

"We hope and pray that we never have Columbine High School type of incident (of school shooting) in North Carolina, but we owe it to our kids to be ready," Cooper said.

Past school shootings have been the result of bullying incidents, and Cooper says that state educational officials are making strides in anti-bullying efforts by providing Critical Incident Response Kits to every school, both public and private, in the state.

A bully who is identified by the age of 8 is six times more likely to be convicted of a crime by age 24, Cooper said, and he believes The Par-

enting Institute is a major preventive source to identify at-risk children early on.

Patricia Stewart was one of the educators who attended the conference. Much of her job as parent coordinator at the Black Child Development Institute in Greensboro is to teach parents how to advocate for their children at school. Stewart says that she is always encouraging parents to get involved in their children's school life.

"It's very important that we as adults get back into role modeling. It's not just about whether we have a child that's involved. It takes a village to raise a child," said Stewart, who is a retired teacher.

As the parenting population gets younger, Stewart says that younger parents are losing sight of what their priorities should be where their children are concerned. While bullying may not be a problem among black youths in school, Stewart says that peer pressure (to do drugs, become sexually active and drink alcohol) should be a major concern to parents today.



From left: Betsy Brown, associate vice president for academic affairs for UNC system; Minnie Battle Mayes, director of international programs at N.C. A&T; Steve Flynn, director of UNC Exchange Program; George Wilson, associate provost for international affairs, N.C. State University; Olosope Oyelaran; and WSSU Chancellor Harold Martin pose at the Cape of Good Hope during a recent trip to South Africa.

I'M DOWNTOWN BECAUSE "I want to help make it a cooler place"



MILLICENT GREASON

Artist, Entrepreneur,
Renegade Ninja Gangel

HOMETOWN Winston-Salem. Tried to move away four different times but kept coming back. Lives in Ardmore, but her home is Urban Artware 207 W. 6th.

ON URBAN ARTWARE To me, "art is the soul of life," so Urban Artware is more about broadening horizons than it is selling stuff. Just look around and you'll see what it's like being inside my brain.

ON DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Everyone's heard it before, but it's different this time. There are more business anchors, more passionate people, more visible signs around downtown. Through DADA, the Gallery Hops and Summer on Trade, I've just been trying to do my part to make a difference.

There's music in the streets, art along the sidewalks and new shops, new businesses and new energy everywhere.

Thanks to people like Millicent and other members of the Downtown

Winston-Salem Partnership, the plan for downtown is coming alive right before our eyes. But don't take our word for it, come downtown for a great evening of music, theatre or dance during the ArtsIgnite Festival, September 27th - October 12th.



Visit www.downtownwinston-salem.com