

GMAC **Insurance**

Recognizes
Janet Wheeler
as Volunteer of the Year



Janet Wheeler poses with fellow members of LINKS Inc.

A Woman of Action

Janet P. Wheeler's life has been an exercise in dedication – dedication to her profession and to the many organizations that she has devoted her time to over the past 30 years.

Wheeler began a stellar career at R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. in 1969, shortly after earning a degree in chemistry from Hampton University.

She joined RJR as a junior chemist, working in a field where few blacks and even fewer black women had ventured before her. Hard work and, yes, dedication helped Wheeler move steadily up the corporate ladder. She eventually became the company's vice president, product chemistry and information sciences, before retiring late last year after 33 years.

Wheeler has shined away from work as well. Her civic and community activities are numerous and continue to grow. Through the Black Executive Exchange Program, Wheeler committed to visiting historically black colleges and universities throughout the country to cultivate the next generation of African-American leaders.

She is a past board member of several organizations, including the Arts Council of Winston-Salem, YWCA of Forsyth County, Crosby Scholars, and the Kate B. Reynolds Poor and Needy Trust.

Wheeler's current volunteer activities keep her busy. She is an active member of her beloved sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha, and a member of the Wake Forest University Board of Visitors. The boards of the Hospice Foundation, Wachovia and the United Way Campaign Cabinet also benefit from Wheeler's time and input.

Wheeler doesn't brag about all the work she has done and continues to do, but her efforts have not gone unnoticed. She has been named one of the 10 Outstanding Women in Forsyth County by the National Council of Negro Women. The National Women of Achievement gave Wheeler its highest award in 2000, while AKA has bestowed on her the Outstanding Achievement in Corporate America Award.

Wheeler, a Henderson native, is an active member of First Baptist Church. She is married to Harden "Butch" Wheeler.



Janet Wheeler with her husband, Harden.



Janet Wheeler and others help collect food for the needy.



Janet Wheeler and other business people pose for a United Way program.