

BUSINESS FOCUS

Briefs

Noble donates plants

Noble Investment Group, owner of the current Adam's Mark Hotel, but soon-to-be Marriott Hotel and Embassy Suites, has donated more than 275 plants to low-income nursing home residents.

The plants were donated to the Winston-Salem Parks and Recreation Department, Special Populations Unit. From there they were distributed to low-income residents of local nursing homes.

"At the onset of hotel renovations, the Adam's Mark had a surplus of healthy, vibrant plants in our lobby and conference areas," said Tim Loughman, the managing director of the Marriott, Embassy Suites, and the Benton Convention Center. "We decided that instead of neglecting the plants or throwing them away, they should be distributed to people who could take care of them and enjoy seeing them grow."

Plants were given to nursing home residents of Crystal Towers, Sunrise Towers, Andrews Heights, as well as residents of Diversicare, a residential treatment program for mentally ill patients.

High Point Convention & Visitors Bureau receives award

In December 2004, High Point Convention & Visitors Bureau was presented with ConventionSouth magazine's inaugural Readers' Choice Award. ConventionSouth has been the recognized leader in covering the South's meetings industry for the last 21 years.

After more than a decade of recognizing some of the most talented meeting professionals in the nation through its annual "Meeting Professionals to Watch" designation, ConventionSouth editors turned the tables by asking meeting professionals to name the convention and visitors bureaus (CVBs), convention centers, conference centers, hotels, resorts and other meeting sites that they believe display exemplary creativity and professionalism to groups.

Only the top vote-getters out of about 2,000 meeting sites and CVBs received this recognition. Readers' comments ranged from the very simple, "Great facility to work with," to the very detailed, with some readers even bestowing accolades to particularly outstanding staff members.

Distributed nationally, ConventionSouth, a publication of Covey Communications Corp., is read by more than 16,000 BPA-qualified meeting professionals.

Clifton gets Evers Award

NEW YORK — Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund Inc. has announced that its chairman of the board of directors, James K. Clifton, was recently awarded an honorary doctor of humane letters degree by Medgar Evers College in an official ceremony at the college.



Clifton

Clifton, chairman and chief executive officer of The Gallup Organization, was recognized by the Brooklyn, N.Y.-based college for his outstanding contributions to advancing higher education and career opportunities for African-American students, providing distinguished leadership in supporting the mission of all historically black colleges and universities

(HBCUs) and his strong advocacy of the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund and its 47 member public HBCUs.

Clifton, who was recognized for his professional and business accomplishments as well as community service and philanthropic contributions, was presented with the award at the college's 15th annual Academic Convocation Ceremony.

The college also honored James H. Harding, New York state's director of legislative affairs for New York City, and Rachel A. Robinson, founder of the Jackie Robinson Foundation, with doctor of human letters degrees. Robinson's organization, named for her late husband, baseball great Jackie Robinson, has supported more than 950 students with scholarship grants to attend colleges and universities.

FedEx employee who cried racism wins \$1.5 million

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — FedEx Corp. must pay more than \$1.5 million to a former worker who claimed he was harassed and threatened with demotion after he complained that two minority employees were passed over for promotion in favor of a white candidate, a federal jury ruled.

The company, at the time called Federal Express Corp., must pay Theodore Maines \$1.37 million for emotional pain and anguish and \$200,000 in lost wages and benefits in the workplace retaliation case, the jury in Orlando ruled last week.

Maines, who is white, worked at FedEx's call center. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission sued the package-delivery company in 2002.

"It was very disillusioning to lose my career for doing what I believe was the right thing," Maines said last week. "This is a bittersweet victory."

FedEx officials said they likely would appeal the case. The lawsuit stemmed from an incident in 2001 in which Maines, a senior manager in the customer account services department, sought to promote a black female employee and a Hispanic female employee.

Maines was overruled by a vice president, who favored a white female employee for the promotion, according to the lawsuit.

The vice president rescinded Maines' offer letters to the two minority candidates and instead promoted the white employee, the suit said. After Maines complained to the company's legal department, FedEx gave Maines the option of either accepting a demotion of five pay-grade levels or be issued a warning letter and face immediate termination for any subsequent infractions.

BRANCHING OUT

Dukes looking to expand popular child-care service

BY FELECIA P. MCMILLAN, PH.D. THE CHRONICLE

Time is running out for those who want to come aboard as a franchisee for "The Registry," formerly known as Joyce's Childcare Registry. As of Jan 31, 2005, the official name of the company will change to reflect the diversified offerings of the company.

Five women have already signed on as franchisees in Winston-Salem, Kernersville, Greensboro, Burlington and Charlotte. Interested persons are encouraged to call (336) 748-0088 to set up an interview with Joyce Dukes.

Joyce Leak Dukes, 50, owner/president of the 18-year-old million-dollar company, has expanded on her original concept to offer services beyond in-home child care such as in-home sick care, transportation services, tutoring services, child care for weddings and funerals, teachers for day-care institutions and churches, child care for hotels, the share-a-sitter service, new mother's helper or baby nurses, cleaning services, house sitting, pet sitting, elderly companion care, cooks, errand runners, in-home dance, photography services, party planners, and disc jockey services.

"This is a one-stop shop. We cannot fail," said Dukes. "With the Dell Company coming in, I have not tapped all of the market. Now we are offering more services. There will be more work than I can handle."

Jamie Hairston has worked 10 years as a sitter for the child-care registry. She will serve as a broker in Greensboro, Kernersville and Burlington. Sandra McQueen has already estab-



Photo by Felicia McMillan

See Child-care on A9 Joyce Leak Dukes started her company 18 years ago.

Local workers earn college money

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem residents Sam Finley and Crystal Miller are benefiting from Chick-fil-A's 31-year dedication to helping restaurant employees further their education by receiving one of the chain's \$1,000 Leadership Scholarships for excellence in the areas of work, education, community and personal development.

Finley becomes the 66th scholarship employee at the freestanding Chick-fil-A restaurant at Hanes Mall Boulevard, which is operated by Craig Kugel. Finley is studying business administration at Forsyth Technical Community College.

Miller becomes the fourth scholarship employee at the freestanding Chick-fil-A restaurant that is operated by Ross Parrish. Miller is studying cosmetology at The Cosmetology Institute.

This year, Chick-fil-A has expanded its commitment to the Leadership Scholarship program by 10 percent — raising the yearly scholarship amount to \$1.1 million, which will result in an overall total of nearly \$20 million by year-end. To date, 1,762 Chick-fil-A restaurant team members in North Carolina have earned more than \$1.7 million in Chick-fil-A Leadership Scholarships.

Restaurant employees must complete their high school education, remain active in their school and community, demonstrate a solid work ethic and good teamwork, and possess strong leadership abilities and a desire to succeed to be eligible for the Chick-fil-A Leadership Scholarship. Since 1973, nearly 17,600 Chick-fil-A restaurant employees have benefited from the program created by Truett Cathy, founder and chairman of Chick-fil-A Inc.

Nearly 22 percent of current Chick-fil-A operators have received a Chick-fil-A Leadership Scholarship and are perfect examples of the impact the scholarship program can have on a restaurant employee's future. Chick-fil-A scholarship recipients have attended about 2,000 institutions of higher learning across North America, and work in almost every profession and field of endeavor — from engineers to ministers to doctors.

SEE TO BELIEVE

PRNewsFoto Carolyn Goalsby, 8, of Dallas, shows her excitement as she unwraps her Easy Bake Oven with the help of Santa, played by Alliance Data Systems employee Narcizo Nieto. The Dallas-based company holds a holiday party each year for homeless children where the company provides gifts, clothing and school supplies for more than 150 local children.



Wachovia gives \$1 million to N.C. Central

Money will be used for business/teacher scholarships

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Wachovia Foundation awarded \$1 million to N.C. Central University recently to establish the Wachovia Scholarship Fund in the schools of business and education for student scholarship and professional development.

"We are grateful to Wachovia for this award, which is a major investment in the future growth and development of the university," said Chancellor James H. Ammons.

"This scholarship fund will provide support for academically talented students and is yet another example of Wachovia's ongoing support for teacher education and business.

"It is going to better position NCCU to address the critical shortage of teachers in this state and also enhance our ability to recruit teaching fellows and other academ-



NCCU Photo

Chancellor James H. Ammons (center) discusses the \$1 million gift with Jack Clayton, Wachovia regional president, and John Messick, Wachovia Durham market president.

See NCCU on A10