



Young player driven to excell

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New online portal makes its debut

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BCBSNC plans to bring new jobs here

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CHRONICLE

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Center spreads re-entry strategies

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Last year, the Winston-Salem State University's Center for Community Safety (CCS) received a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to help other communities re-integrate ex-offenders into society.



Alvin Atkinson

The center's efforts were recently recognized with a new grant, this one for \$100,000, recently awarded for the continuation of the program.

"The main thing that we have done is actually try to get agencies to really work together and

making sure that there are several key components that we have learned through working in re-entry over the years and having different agencies really move towards being successful," explained Alvin Atkinson, interim director of the CCS.

All of the center's CCS supports are part of the Weed and Seed program, a flagship program of the Department of Justice's Community Capacity Development Office which offers a comprehensive multi-agency approach to law enforcement, crime prevention and community revitalization.

The CCS has worked with communities in Miami, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Indianapolis and Oakland, Calif.

The grant was originally awarded to the CCS, in Atkinson's opinion, because of the center's dedication to the successful re-entry of ex-offenders into society.

"We had been looking at re-entry really as far back as 2001 in partnership with the Urban Institute out of Washington, D.C.," he said. "We had actually brought individuals to our community in looking at re-entry and had done some work nationally as part of a

See CCS on A5

SNAPSHOTS OF REAL LIFE

Exhibit gives voice to caregivers and those coping with illness

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

Brenda Sloan takes her mother for her dialysis treatment. She helps her get secure on her walker, sits with her in the waiting room and even accompanies her to the treatment area. But when health care workers begin to prep her mother for the procedure, Sloan often gets a little uneasy.

"I felt her discomfort with the needle insertion, and I saw her grimace in pain. I was hurting too and thinking how brave this 89-year-old lady is to have endured the challenging experience of dialysis," Sloan wrote those words in a journal she kept to detail her experiences as a care-giver.

Some of her thoughts are juxtaposed with pictures she took of her mother. They are included in "Voices of African-American Health," a new exhibit that opened Sunday at Delta Arts Center. The show was months in the making. The Maya Angelou Research Center on Minority Health at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center won a \$12,000

See Exhibit on A8



Brenda Sloan looks at the picture she took of her mother.

Photo by Kevin Walker

TOP COP

Photo by Jason Pitt

City Council Member Dan Besse congratulates Officer Robert Baker, one of 27 new rookie cops. Baker won two awards last week during a graduation ceremony for the new officers. To read more about the event, see page B16.



NAACP's latest battle is against a school policy

Local president thinks schools should notify parents if their kids are arrested on campus

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

The head of the local NAACP believes that racism was a factor when a mother of a Parkland High School student was not notified that her son had been arrested on school grounds and hauled off to jail.

"I know this would not have happened at Reagan (High School)," said Winston-Salem NAACP Branch President Stephen Hairston. Reagan is a brand new suburban school with a largely white student body.

Hairston moderated a community forum last week at the NAACP headquarters, where several parents complained that school resource officers (SROs), sheriff's deputies assigned to protect local schools, are often hostile toward students and do more harm than good. Doshia James, the mother of the Parkland student, was one of the parents with concerns. James said the SRO had no cause to arrest her son. The merits of the incident will be weighed in court. Hairston is most concerned that James was neither contacted by Parkland administrators nor the Sheriff's Office that her son had been arrested.

"No one took the initiative to let this mother know that her son was not coming home that night," Hairston said.

Parkland Principal Tim Lee and Alecia Harvey, an assistant principal at the school, were both on hand for the forum. Harvey and James sparred verbally over the circumstances surrounding the incident involving James' son, but neither Lee nor Harvey addressed Hairston's concerns about parental notification. Paul Puryear, an assistant superintendent for high schools who also attended, said that it is the responsibility of the Sheriff's Office to notify parents if



Doshia James defends her son last week at a NAACP forum.

Photo by Kevin Walker

Autistic student impresses peers with art

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

"DeShaun, will you draw something for us?" asked Carolyn Coleman, a job coach and teacher's assistant at Mt. Tabor High School.

"Sure Ms. Coleman," the boy replied affably.

DeShaun Miller, a sophomore at Mt. Tabor, drew quickly and without hesitation, and within three minutes a perfect likeness of Spongebob Squarepants and sidekick Patrick Star appeared on the dry erase board.

Though they have seen him draw many times before, Miller's class grew silent as he worked, enthralled with the precise rendering of the popular cartoon characters.

Watching Miller bring characters to life with a few practiced flicks of the wrist is what some might consider to be an extraordinary experience, but



DeShaun Miller draws a popular cartoon character.

then, Miller is no ordinary boy. Diagnosed with autism at age three, Miller's life has been an uphill battle, says his grand-

mother Brenda Miller.

"He stopped talking and just went into a shell," Brenda Miller recalled. "Right then, I became his instant advocate."

Autism is described by the Neurology Channel as, a life-long disorder that causes abnormal neurological development ... impaired social interaction, communication difficulties and restricted or repetitive activities and interests.

"Sometimes it's a little hard to live with children with autism," Brenda Miller admitted. "but he's worth every minute. I couldn't imagine my life without DeShaun."

Despite obvious challenges, Brenda Miller has always been committed to affording her grandson every available opportunity.

"I wouldn't take no for an answer, and I still won't," she remarked. "I am determined

See DeShaun on A13

See Forum on A8



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