

# Welcome to the National Black Theatre Festival



# THE CHRON

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## FIRST IN WHAT?

*County earns dubious distinction for STI spike*

BY T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County is used to leading the way.

We spawned the nation's very first local-based Arts Council in 1949; and more than 200 years ago, Salem College became the first educational institution for women in the United States; and, of course, we are tops in black theater, as this week's National Black Theatre Festival (NBTF) proves.

But don't expect to see the county's latest top distinction in glossy tourism brochures. Forsyth County now leads the state in verified syphilis infections, with numbers surpassing even larger counties like Mecklenburg, Wake and Guilford.

"That is not what we want to be No. 1 for."

See STIs on A8

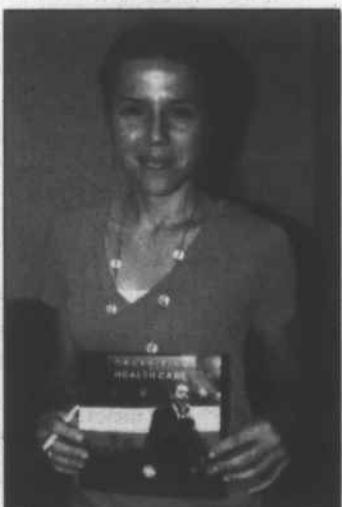
## Grassroots effort launched to help Obama move agenda

BY TODD LUCK  
THE CHRONICLE

Organizing for America (OFA) has arrived in North Carolina to sign-up advocates for the healthcare reform fight that President Obama and most Democrats are facing.

OFA is the successor of Obama for America—the successful nationwide push that propelled him to the White House. OFA wants to be a grassroots movement to support the president's policies, which are topped by his efforts to offer affordable healthcare to every American. OFA chapters exist in 41 states. It has only taken root in North Carolina in the last four weeks.

State Director Lindsay Siler is on a listening tour of the state. She stopped at Emmanuel Baptist Church, where about 50 people were on



Lindsay Siler

See OFA on A8

DON'T  
PASS  
THE BUCK

BUY LOCAL

Photo by Kevin Walker

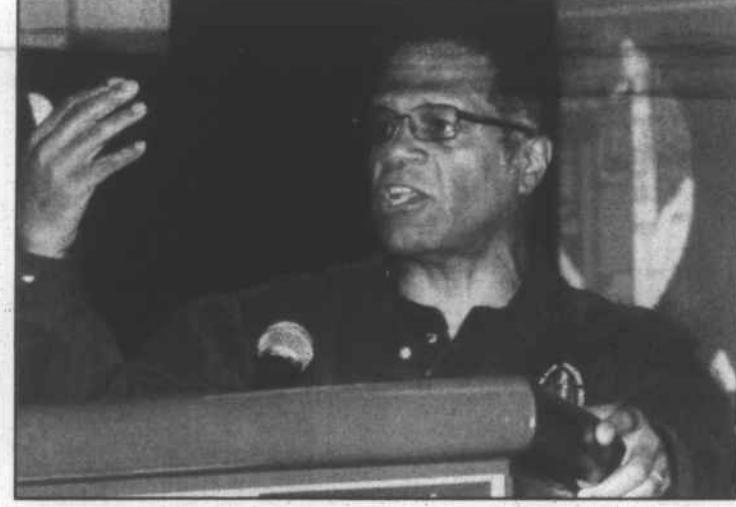
2009 National Black Theatre Festival organizers, celebrities and fans join together Monday to sing "Lift Every Voice," the black national anthem.



## The Curtain Lifts

*2009 National Black Theatre Festival starts in earnest*

BY LAYLA FARMER AND T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE



Celebrity Co-Chair Ted Lange welcomes festival-goers.

## A Legend Speaks

*"Imitation of Life" has earned Moore icon status*

BY T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE

Ask Juanita Moore about her storied show business career, and the names of legends will begin to slip from her lips as causally as if she was talking about the Average Joe around the corner.

"I got started by Marlon (Brando – that is)," she said Tuesday afternoon while seated comfortably in her hotel room. "I was working at an after hours club ... and he would come there ... he liked the chicken. He encouraged me to act."

Her big break came in 1949 when she landed a role (with just a single line) in the Elia Kazan film "Pinky," which starred two great Ethels – Barrymore and Waters. Moore worked steadily after that, but there were no breakout roles for black actresses.

"All we did at that time was bring in a tray – that was it!" she said of the industry's insistence that blacks only play the hired help.

But whatever role she had



Juanita Moore's film career began nearly 60 years ago.

African-American at that time to receive an Academy Award nomination.

Moore said the role almost never happened for her.

"They didn't want me. They wanted Mahalia Jackson for the part," said Moore, who was friends with the gospel singer.

After Jackson insisted to producers that she was a singer not an actress, attention turned to Moore.

See Moore on A10

See Wayans on A11



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CHAMBER

