

# Forsyth Tech students get path to four-year degree via new WSSU deal

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Forsyth Technical Community College and Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) have entered into an agreement that will allow students to be simultaneously granted admission to both colleges.

The Dual Admissions Program (DAP) partnership, which will begin in fall 2010, is designed to provide support and resources to students who may not be ready to succeed in a bachelor's degree program.

"We have some students come to Winston-Salem State without the depth of preparation needed to be successful in a university setting," said WSSU Chancellor Donald J. Reaves. "This partnership with Forsyth Tech will provide those students with such important supports as smaller classes and lower tuition. By using dual admission, we also will be taking the steps necessary to help students feel a part of our campus so that the transition to a four-year institution will be easier for them."

Under the DAP agreement, students will have a seamless application process that includes admission to both institutions. There will also be shared responsibility for student advising, access to resources at both campuses, and opportunities to participate in university activities.

While students who graduate with Associate Degrees in arts or science from Forsyth Tech are already able to transfer



WSSU Chancellor Donald Reaves and FTCC President Gary Green shake hands during last week's announcement.

their credits to University of North Carolina schools, this new partnership provides additional advantages.

"Students will have the same benefits as in our regular program, and will have the additional benefits of an established relationship with Winston-Salem State," said Dr. Gary M. Green, president of Forsyth Tech. "They will have access to academic advisers, student activities and facilities at both schools."

Students who apply and do not meet the admission standards at WSSU will receive information on the Dual Admissions Program. Students, who sign the contract to join the program and are accepted, receive a letter of deferment for admission to WSSU. Once they complete their requirements at Forsyth Tech, the students are guaranteed admission into a related baccalaureate degree program at WSSU.



Mixed Roots Film and Literary Festival founders Fanshen Cox and Heidi Durrow.

## Bi-racial

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According to Battle-Cochrane, the client eyed a collection of glamorous photographs Battle-Cochrane had of her mother on display, and asked a stylist why the salon had pictures of "that white bitch." After that, Battle-Cochrane says she "came out" as a biracial person.

The reaction amongst her associates was mixed, she said.

"Some of them ... were very uncomfortable," she noted. "One friend asked me, 'Why do you need to do this? Just be black.'"

But Battle-Cochrane, who has authored two memoirs to date, says denying half her heritage was no longer an option for her. As a woman in her 30s, Battle-Cochrane says embracing her whole self for the first time in her life was an empowering and life-changing experience.

"I'm more confident than I've ever been because I'm clear about who I am," said Battle-Cochrane, who began shooting the documentary five years ago as a way of coping with her own emotions. "You can't shake me (now)."

The series has taken on a life of its own, as Battle-Cochrane uncovered more and more elements in the biracial story. Despite hailing from diverse backgrounds and different countries, Battle-Cochrane says the hundreds of biracial people she encountered shared many of the same challenges.

"It was almost like listening to the same story over and over again," she said.

Making the film has required many sacrifices. Battle-Cochrane says she spent time living with friends because she could no longer afford the cost of both her home and the film. She even hawked much of the designer

clothing, jewelry and bags she had amassed over the years to keep the project afloat.

"I would like to have stopped. This has drained me financially," she admitted. "But ... when I started interviewing younger generations and seeing that this (discrimination) was still going on, it was like I didn't have the option of stopping."

Contrary to the beliefs of some in the black community, who say she is trying to run from her African-American heritage, Battle-Cochrane says that her video is about being proud of one's background — all of it.

"(This) is a huge collective of people that just want to be okay about who they are," she asserted. "How does that hurt anybody else?"

Battle-Cochrane hopes her film will help to create an honest and healing dialogue around race for all people.

"The only time we are even discussing race is when there's a catastrophe," she commented. "That's not giving healing or understanding to anybody."

Los Angeles residents Fanshen Cox and Heidi Durrow screened a portion of Battle-Cochrane's film earlier this year at the Mixed Roots Film and Literary Festival, which they co-founded in 2008. The women, both of whom are biracial, started the festival to make the voices of mixed race people heard.

"This is really about sharing stories that we know have been lacking in literature and film," said Cox, an actress and community college instructor. "...we just feel like the more we talk about it, the more people are opening up."

For more information about "Bi-Racial ... Not Black, Damnit," visit <http://battlecatt.com> or [www.youtube.com/battlecatt17](http://www.youtube.com/battlecatt17).

## Banks

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Minorities more likely to be unbanked include blacks (21.7 percent of black households), Hispanics (19.3 percent), and American Indian/Alaskans (15.6 percent). Racial groups less likely to be unbanked are Asians (3.5 percent) and whites (3.3 percent).



Bair

Black are also most likely to be underbanked (an estimated 31.6 percent), followed by American Indian/Alaskans (28.9 percent), and Hispanics (24.0 percent).

Households with income under \$30,000 account for at least 71 percent of unbanked households. As income increases, the share of households that are unbanked declines considerably. Nationally, nearly 20 percent of lower-income U.S. households — almost 7 million households earning below \$30,000 per year — do not currently have a bank account. In contrast, only 4.2

percent of households with annual income between \$30,000 and \$50,000 and less than 1 percent of households with yearly income of \$75,000 or higher are unbanked.

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