

CAREERS

Briefs

Colleagues name Rodda N.C.'s tax assessor of the year

Forsyth County Tax Assessor Pete Rodda took home the North Carolina Association of Assessing Officers' "Outstanding Assessor of the Year Award" last month.

The honor was presented during the Association's Fall Conference (Nov. 16 - 20) at the Sheraton Four Seasons in Greensboro. Several of Rodda's colleagues from Forsyth County Government were on hand to cheer him on, including County Manager Dudley Watts.

Rodda began his career with Forsyth County in 1989, first serving as an assistant tax assessor. He was subsequently appointed by the Board of Commissioners as Forsyth County Tax Assessor/Collector in July 1994.



Rodda

Salem NTLs wins excellence award

Winston-Salem-based Salem NTLs was among the recipients of the Leadership Circle Awards recently presented by NationalLease, one of the largest full service truck leasing organizations in North America.

The awards were presented to 35 NationalLease member companies that have demonstrated an exemplary commitment to system involvement and leadership. The recipients were chosen from among NationalLease's 175 independently owned businesses.

Companies are chosen based on their participation in NationalLease programs, fleet growth and for superior performance as measured by NationalLease member standards.

"Our Leadership Circle Award winners represent the finest companies in the transportation industry today," said Gene Scoggins, President of NationalLease. "As leaders in the industry, they seize every opportunity to gain the competitive advantage in their marketplace and exceed customer expectations by staying engaged, focused and fully committed."

Credit Union, Visa Inc. give laptops to academy

State Employees' Credit Union (SECU) recently celebrated its gift of 54 laptop computers for North Carolina's Tarheel ChalleNGe Academy at a ribbon cutting ceremony, which marked the official opening of the school's computer lab. The Credit Union provided the computers to the Academy through a partnership with Visa Inc.

Tarheel ChalleNGe Academy, located in Salemburg, is a quasi-military program available for at-risk youth. The Academy's program concentrates on providing these young adults with the discipline and life skills necessary to be productive members of society.



SECU Photo
Shirley Bell with two Tarheel ChalleNGe Academy cadets and General William E. Ingram Jr. Ingram cut the ribbon for the school's computer lab.

The laptops, which will be used to enhance instruction at the institution, feature links to financial literacy programs, including SECU's teen Web site and the National Endowment for Financial Education's Web site, as well as Visa's program, "Practical Money Skills for Life" (www.practicalmoneyskills.com).

"SECU, a not-for-profit financial cooperative, serves members of the North Carolina National Guard, making this project a natural fit for our organization," said Shirley Bell, the 2008-2009 SECU Board of Directors Chair. "The Credit Union also places a major focus on education and financial literacy and the donation of these laptops for Tarheel ChalleNGe Academy's computer lab aligns with this focus."

She added, "With the Academy's mission of improving life-coping skills and the employment potential of North Carolina youth, we take great pride in our partnership with Visa to further enhance the Tarheel ChalleNGe program and look forward to a long-standing relationship with the Academy, its fine instructors and cadets."

Malveaux in Copenhagen to provide a black POV

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The president of Bennett College and a student attending the Greensboro-based school are among a small delegation attending the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen, Denmark, Dec. 7 - 18, to promote the interests of African Americans.

Bennett President Dr. Julianne Malveaux and Bennett sophomore Hershelle Naomi Gaffney are part of a delegation led by Carolyn L. Green, managing partner of Philadelphia-based EnerGreen Capital Management. The team also includes Dr. Robert D. Bullard of Clark Atlanta University; Leslie G. Fields of the Sierra Club; Frank M. Stewart of the American Association of Blacks in Energy; and Dr. Beverly Wright of Dillard University.

A nationally-respected economist, Malveaux says when it comes to African-Americans, the issues of economics and the environment are often linked.

"When you look at environmental issues, you don't always look at African Americans as being integrally involved, but they are," she said. "But environmental issues are closely intertwined with issues of economic justice. All these issues have to do with who makes a mess, who cleans it up and who pays for it."

Malveaux said she would also be keeping an eye on how the interests of developing nations are represented.

"We've done a poor job managing the planet," she added. "The United States uses more than its share of the world's resources and developing countries, notably in Africa, use less than their share. The challenge for the West is what are we willing to give up?"

Gaffney, who is from Elk Grove, Calif., was selected because she has an interest in environmental justice issues and because she "represents Bennett College as an Ideal Belle," according to administrators. Gaffney, a business administration major, was elected parliamentarian of the Student Government Association (SGA) during her "freshwoman" year. She is a member of the Golf Club and has a 3.58 GPA.

Since becoming president in 2007, Malveaux has made it part of her mission to make all Bennett Belles citizens of the global world. The college has added courses in the study of Russian, Swahili and Turkish culture and language, and administrators have adopted a goal of half of its students studying abroad by 2012.



Dr. Malveaux



Gaffney



File Photo

State Reps. Earline Parmon and Larry Womble at an event earlier this year.

Justice-seekers Parmon and Womble to get honorary degrees

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

State Reps. Earline Parmon and Larry Womble will receive honorary Doctor of Laws degrees tomorrow during Winston-Salem State University's Fall Commencement.

Chancellor Donald J. Reaves recommended that the two long-time public servants be so honored and his recommendation was unanimously green-lighted by the school's Board of Trustees.

"The support and the constituent services that Rep. Womble and Rep. Parmon provide for the citizens of their districts and for all of Forsyth County are certainly to be admired," said Reaves. "It is, however, their level of commitment to the betterment of the State of North Carolina and their unwavering commitment to justice for all people that gives Winston-Salem State University so much pride in calling them our state representatives, our alumni and our friends."

Reaves noted that Womble, who will serve as the keynote speaker for the commencement

ceremony, and Parmon both have shown courage in taking stands that are not always popular. He cited their efforts to have a bill passed by the General Assembly to increase research and education of the forced sterilization that occurred in North Carolina over a 40-year period and affected the lives of approximately 7,600 citizens.

Both alumni of WSSU, Womble and Parmon were also leaders in the passage of the N. C. Racial Justice Act that allows challenges to the death penalty by presenting evidence of racial disparities in the application of capital punishment.

"They understand, appreciate and support learning at all levels, but are especially aware of the importance of Historically Black Colleges and Universities," Reaves said. "Winston-Salem State University has certainly benefited from their outstanding leadership and service, as well as their support of our university."

The ceremony, which is free and open to the public, will be at 4 p.m. at the Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum.



Chancellor Reaves

City native is mover and shaker in Louisville

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Winston-Salem native Phyllis Sawyer Anderson recently helped the Louisville (Ky.) Urban League welcome U.S. Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-Miss.). The congressman, who heads the powerful Homeland Security Committee, was the keynote speaker at the agency's Annual Report Luncheon on Friday, Dec. 4.

Among the prominent special guests in attendance were U.S. Rep. John Yarmuth (D-Ken.), Louisville Mayor Jerry E. Abramson and Winston-Salem's own Mary Sawyer, Phyllis Anderson's mother.

Anderson is the former vice chair of development of the Louisville Urban League. She is now the vice president of marketing for Humana, a Louisville-based healthcare provider. Anderson is the chairperson of the Louisville Urban League Board of Directors - the first woman to lead the board in more than 20 years.



UL Photo

Phyllis Anderson with her mother, Mary Sawyer, U.S. Rep. Bennie G. Thompson and her husband, Kevin Anderson.

Anderson praised U.S. Rep. Thompson for the unique insights he provided at the luncheon. Thompson is the longest continuously serving black elected official in Mississippi. He has been an elected official for nearly 40 years - first serving as mayor and an alderman in his hometown of Bolton. He was a member of the Hinds County Board of Supervisors when he

was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1993.

"We were very fortunate and honored to have Congressman Thompson as our keynote speaker," said Anderson, who lives in Louisville with her husband, Kevin, and their two children. "His views on current issues facing all Americans were insightful and thought-provoking."

THE FOOD LION OF THE FUTURE

PRNewsFoto/Food Lion Inc.
Food Lion officials and local dignitaries cut the ribbon on Dec. 9 to open the grocery chain's and South Carolina's first environmentally-friendly supermarket. The store is located in Northeast Columbia in the Summit Commons Shopping Center.



Local lawyer helps American Indians win landmark settlement

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The selfless dedication of a local lawyer has led to a multi-billion dollar settlement of a class action suit that has dragged on for more than a decade.

The American Indian plaintiffs of the *Cobell v. Salazar* lawsuit announced a \$3.4 billion settlement with the federal government on Dec. 8. If the settlement is approved by Congress, it would be one of the largest class-action victories against the federal government in U.S. history.



Cobell

Elouise Cobell, an American Indian



File Photo

David C. Smith talks about the case at Wake Forest University last year.

activist, was the lead plaintiff in the suit. Ken Salazar is the head of the United States Department of the Interior, the main agency that was the target of the suit. Cobell filed the suit in 1996 over alleged mismanagement of trust accounts it holds for American Indians. In the late 1800s, American Indians were granted land by the federal government. According to the law at the time, American Indians were incompetent, so the government became the trustee of the land - managing it and then giving the revenue generated by the

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