

Hall-Woodward, Speas honored for making great strides

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Two local elementary schools were feted by the Piedmont Triad Education Consortium during its Annual Meeting and Signature School Awards Breakfast on Dec. 4 at the Cone Ballroom in UNCG's Elliot Center.

Hall-Woodward and Speas School were among 21 schools in the Piedmont region that were honored for their outstanding growth in test scores in the 2008-09 school year. Both schools were named Signature Schools by the organization, which provides staff development and support to 15 school districts and 17 higher learning institutions throughout the area.

"Historically, the Piedmont Triad Education Consortium has focused on the outstanding achievements of the top 21 schools in the Piedmont Region," explained PTEC Executive Director Larry Coble, EdD. "This celebration, identifying these schools as Signature Schools, recognizes the accomplishments of faculty, staff and administration in achieving educational excellence in an envi-



Principals Essie McKoy and Dr. Kent Reichert are celebrating their schools' success.

ronment of high-stakes testing and accountability."

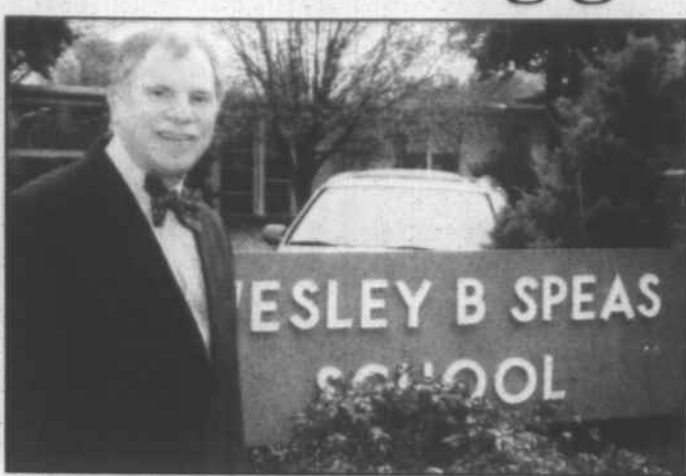
Hall-Woodward and Speas both made 100 percent Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the state's ABCs accountability program, according to the school system, and showed significant improvement in science, reading and math scores.

"The achievements of both Speas and Hall-Woodward schools captures in reality and symbolically some of the best in education in our area," said Coble, a visiting professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Cultural Foundations at UNCG. "We

are proud to be able to honor all of those who have contributed to improving education for their students."

Area school systems are charged with selecting the schools that receive the honor from the PTEC each year, based on their own criteria. The Winston-Salem / Forsyth County system uses the schools' ABCs growth percentages, according to Superintendent Don Martin.

"Both of these schools have done outstanding work ... in making a lot of growth and trying to move kids forward," Martin said. "...They've had a lot of good performance over the years.



Photos by Layla Farmer

They use data extremely well, providing interventions for low performing kids."

The school system is doing its part to support Equity Plus schools (those with a high percentage of students on free or reduced lunch programs) like Speas and Hall-Woodward, Martin said. The sagging economy has forced the system to cut programs and increase class sizes in some schools, but the Equity Plus schools have remained untouched, in that respect thus far, he added.

Hall-Woodward Principal Essie McKoy says she is proud of the progress the students at Hall-Woodward

where 100 percent of the student body qualifies for free or reduced lunch - have made.

"This is actually an award that is well-deserving," said McKoy, who has led Hall-Woodward for the last six years. "I give the credit to all staff members, especially the ... high quality individuals in the classrooms teaching everyday. This staff goes beyond the call of duty in serving our kids."

Hall-Woodward assesses student and teacher performance regularly, in hopes of catching issues early, McKoy said. The school has

also implemented new programming, where teachers meet regularly to share best practices with one another, she said.

Speas also enhanced its available programming in the last school year, with teams of teachers that visit each classroom during reading time to assist students in guided reading and math; and an accelerated program that introduces low performing students to concepts early, so they will get a head start on their learning objectives.

After missing AYP by .01 percent in the 2007-08 school year, Speas Principal Dr. Kent Reichert said he is glad to see the school finally getting the recognition it deserves.

"I'm very pleased for the staff; they oftentimes don't get the opportunity to be recognized for their work," Reichert said. "...This was one chance for our faculty to shine and for our community to see that good things go on at Equity Plus schools, just like they do at affluent schools."

For more information about the Piedmont Triad Education Consortium, visit www.ptecnet.org.

Smith

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land to its American Indian owners. But owners say they have received little or nothing.

David C. Smith, a partner at Kilpatrick Stockton in Winston-Salem, gave up part of his practice to represent the plaintiffs in the case - spending much of his time for the past six years working out of the firm's office in Washington, D.C., where he often attended services at the Episcopal church where his grandfather was a priest.

Smith received his undergraduate and law degrees from Wake Forest University. Fellow Wake Law graduate Dan Taylor, who spent a summer doing some accounting work related to the case, said Smith's devotion to the case made all the difference.

"I can't say enough about what David has meant to this case," said Taylor. "It's been a lifetime endeavor for David, a true labor of love. It's been

Herculean, absolutely Herculean."

The settlement includes: a \$1.4 billion Trust Accounting and Administration Fund; a \$2 billion Trust Land Consolidation Fund; a \$60 million federal Indian Education Scholarship Fund; and the establishment of a commission to oversee and monitor improvements in the accounting and management of individual Indian trust accounts and trust assets.

"There is some excitement in the case coming to a close after 13 years of litigation, and a lot of hope from our clients who stand to benefit financially from the settlement," Smith said. "Clearly what took place that led to this lawsuit is one of the saddest parts of American history. We're dealing here with some of the poorest people in the country. They deserve more than is reflected in the settlement. The clients simply asked for their money, which the government has mismanaged."



Photo by Layla Farmer

Frank Pantano with Gale Kuhenbeaker and Ken White.

Census

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allowed Kuhenbeaker to catch her breath, financially speaking.

"The job has helped me to get back on my feet and I feel that we will be able to pay our bills and be okay," said the married mother of three adult children. "...It pays more than most jobs, and it gives you a lot of opportunity for growth."

The local Census Office will act as the hub for next year's count, which will begin when all U.S. residents receive a brief questionnaire in their mailboxes. The Census mailer will ask the names and ages of all those who live in a household - information that the Census Bureau is required by law to keep confidential, even from law enforcement agencies and other government agencies.

"Ten questions, 10 minutes, and it's going to make a difference in the community for the next 10 years," said Wayne Hatcher, director of the Charlotte Region, an area that spans five states and boasts the second largest resident population of the country's 12 districts.

Hatcher was on hand at an Open House at the Winston-Salem Census Office, which was attended by local leaders like Mayor Allen Joines and County Commissioner Dave Plyler.

The Census questionnaire

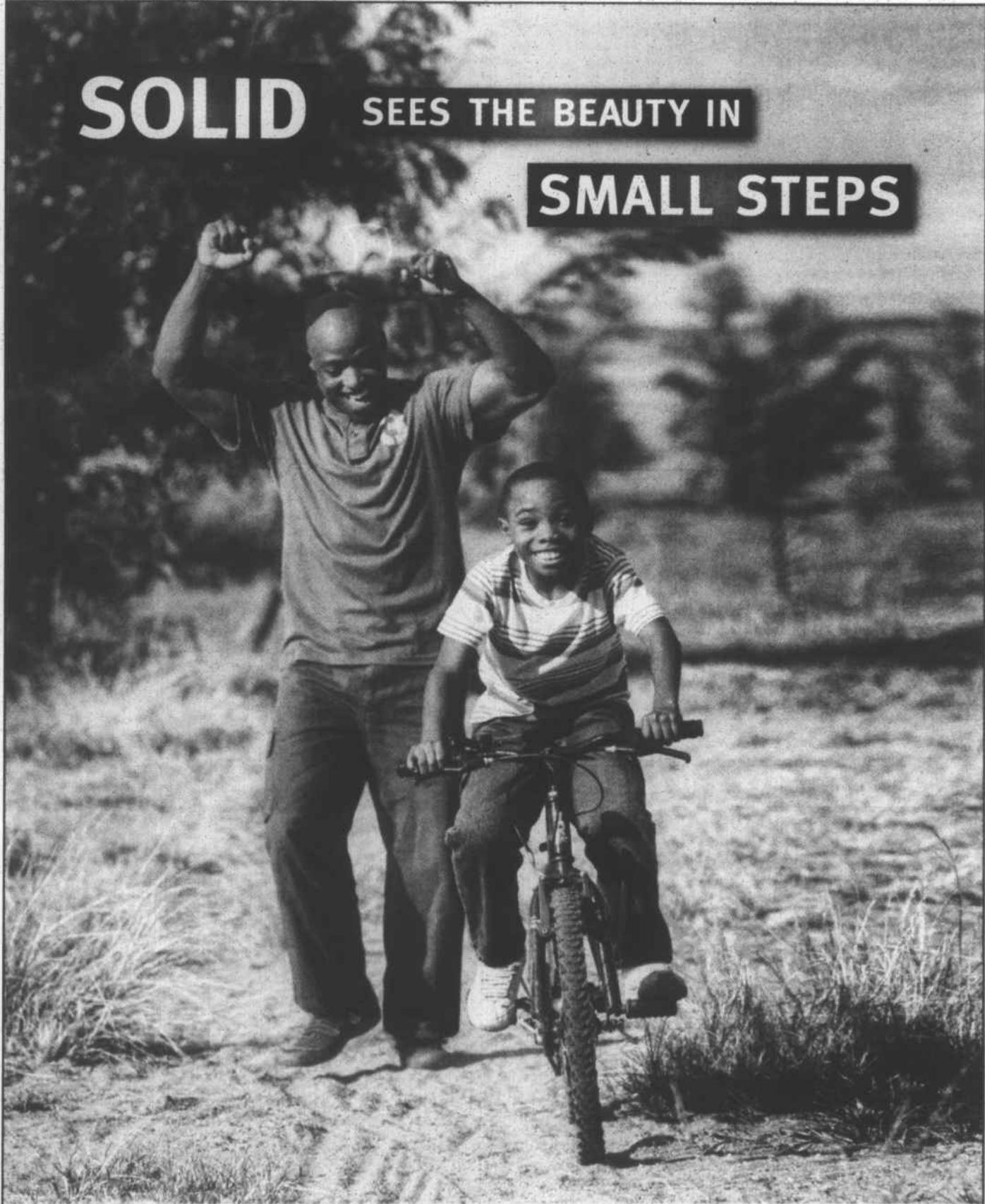
makes no attempt to gather information about a person's immigration status, criminal history or sexual orientation.

If the mailed questionnaires are not returned, a Census worker will visit the residence to try to obtain the information through a brief interview.

The data gathered through the Census is used to determine population demographics and other statistical information. Population assessments gathered in the Census determine federal appropriations of funds and programs; political districts and the number of U.S. House Representatives each state is allowed for the next decade. North Carolina gained a 13th District delegation in the House following the 2000 Census.

"(The Census) will have a significant impact on everything we do," declared Local Census Office Manager Ken White. "It helps the individuals that we hire and it impacts the community as well."

Job seekers can find application information at www.2010censusjobs.gov or by calling 1-866-861-2010. The information is also available at the N.C. Employment Security Commission or JobsNOW.nc.gov. Some jobs will begin as early as January, while most will begin in February and March, and will extend until June or July.



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