

# Well-known Y employee moving up and moving on

BY LAYLA FARMER  
THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem native Spencer McCall Jr. expected to spend the rest of his life in his hometown.

But last week, the long-time employee of the YMCA of Northwest NC bid his family, friends and church members goodbye and headed for greener pastures in Chattanooga, Tenn., where he will serve as executive director of one of the city's YMCA branches.

"I never thought I would leave, and the funny thing was it felt so right," he said of the new position, which he was slated to begin Oct. 11. "It was like, 'This is what you've been called to do,' and things just fell into place, one after another."

Sam Franklin, vice president of Operations for the YMCA of Northwest NC, believes the new position will be a good fit for his colleague and friend.

"I'm very tickled for him; I think it's a great opportunity. I think they are getting a great staff person," he said of the YMCA of Metropolitan Chattanooga. "They do a lot of outreach there, and that's really Spencer's passion."

McCall, 34, a lifelong resident of Winston-Salem, was studying to become a doctor at Wake Forest University when he took a summer job as a counselor at Camp Tangle Y in Tanglewood Park.

"I wanted to do a good deed. I thought, I've been so fortunate," McCall said of his initial motivation to pursue the job.

When he returned to school, McCall soon realized that his focus had shifted.

"That experience kept calling me back," he said of working with the youth.

McCall hails from a legacy of service to young people and a family connection to the Y. His father, Spencer Sr., had been raised under the wing of prolific YMCA mentor Mo Lucas. The elder McCall spent years volunteering as a basketball coach at the Y until his untimely death in 2002, just one day after his son was officially hired as a Y camp director.

Since that time, the younger Spencer McCall has held several different positions within the YMCA network with considerable success. Among his claims to local fame is the organization's Christian Leadership Conference, which he volunteered to direct in 2005. That first year, McCall was forced to cancel the conference because he lacked the necessary paperwork to pull it together in the tight timeline, but the complication was short lived. In 2006, the conference blossomed.

"The next year, we had the largest CLC in the nation. Since that time, they've used it as a training ground for other CLC directors," McCall related. "That was really a proud moment for me."

"Keeping the 'C' in the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association)" has been one of his chief objectives, said McCall, a member of First Baptist Church on Highland Avenue, and it was



Spencer McCall has led several successful youth programs for the YMCA.

his faith that led him to make the move to Chattanooga.

"Being at the YMCA where there's a Christian mission, you realize that you're working for God and not anybody else," he said. "I always focus on what God's will is and being a change agent and carrying forth the mission of the YMCA. I think a lot of people lose sight of that, and our mission is so powerful."

McCall has also led the organization's Youth and Government and Black Achievers programs in recent years. Black Achievers focuses on academic

achievement and career development for high school students. Housed at the Winston Lake Family YMCA, the countywide program's enrollment has ballooned to nearly 200 active participants during his two-year tenure at its helm, making it the largest in the Southeast. McCall added more college tours and other outings to the group's schedule. The program's success is a source of great satisfaction for him, McCall said.

"When I first came, my goal was for it to be a premiere program for kids of color in our community, and I think we've accomplished that," he commented. "But the proudest moments are when you see kids achieve. The statistics and the news say these kids shouldn't achieve, but yet, they do."

Franklin praised McCall for serving the Y well throughout his career in the Twin City.

"Spencer was a great employee. He was always willing to go above and beyond," he declared. "He was always very giving of himself and his time to staff and volunteers. He always put the YMCA in a very good light."



Franklin

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## News Clips

### Governor appoints Wake Forest doctor to NC Medical Board

Dr. Karen Gerancher, a physician at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, has been appointed by Governor Beverly Perdue to serve on the North Carolina Medical Board.

Gerancher is assistant professor, section head of gynecology and residency program director for the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Wake Forest Baptist. She also currently serves as medical director for the Forsyth County Health Department's Family Planning Clinic.

"Appointment to this board is indeed a great honor," Gerancher said. "It has already helped make me not only a better physician for my patients and advocate for public health consumers, but a better colleague for my peers as well."

Gerancher is the recipient of numerous awards



Dr. Gerancher

including the Resident Advocate Award, the Outstanding Clinical Teacher Award and the University Medical Guild Memorial Award for Excellence.

The N.C. Medical Board was established April 15, 1859 by the General Assembly and grants the practice of medicine to physicians in the state. The board consists of 12 members appointed by the governor, eight of whom are licensed physicians, one of whom is either a licensed physician assistant or nurse practitioner and three who are members of the public with no financial or professional interest in a health service or profession.

### Community Roots Day volunteers needed

The Community Appearance Commission, Keep Winston-Salem Beautiful, and the City of Winston-Salem are seeking volunteers to help plant almost 400 trees in the Happy Hill neighborhood on Saturday, Oct. 23, during the 18th annual Community Roots Day. Volunteers are needed from 9 a.m. to noon. The first 250 volunteers will receive free t-shirts and hats and all volunteers get a free lunch. Volunteers will meet at 9 a.m. at the William C. Sims Sr. Neighborhood Recreation Center, 1201 Alder St. To sign up or for more information, go to [www.kwsb.cityofws.org](http://www.kwsb.cityofws.org) or call City Link at 336-727-8000.

Celesia D. Cannon completes basic training Army Pvt. Celesia D. Cannon has graduated from basic combat training at Fort Jackson, Columbia, S.C.

During the nine weeks of training, the soldier studied the Army mission, history, tradition and core values, physical fitness, and received instruction and practice in basic combat skills, military weapons, chemical warfare and bayonet training, drill and ceremony, marching, rifle marksmanship, armed and unarmed combat, map reading, field tactics, military courtesy, military justice system, basic first aid, foot marches, and field training exercises.

She is the daughter of Chinno Ingram Sr. of Kernersville and Trina Cannon of Winston-Salem. Cannon is a 2009 graduate of East Forsyth High School.

### Tanglewood offers hayrides

Pumpkin Pick Hayrides are being offered this month at Tanglewood Park.

Park officials say that the hayrides are great for groups, families, friends, classes, or even business outings. Participants can take part in this 45 minute ride for \$7 per person, which includes one self-picked pumpkin.

The comfortable horse drawn wagon ride takes groups through the rolling hills, grassy lands and the most beautiful terrains Tanglewood Park has to offer. All services are available by reservations by calling Mike Dowd at 336-766-9540.



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## Senator Linda Garrou North Carolina State Senate

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