

OP/ED

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Forsyth's Angelou Center

Forsyth Medical Center's Maya Angelou Center for Women's Health and Wellness has wasted little time in making a name for itself.

It officially opened in June, and today is kicking off its first high-profile powwow. Experts in various health and wellness-related fields have come from around the globe to take part in the Maya Angelou International Women's Health Summit. They will discuss the barriers that often stand between women and girls and the healthy, safe lives they deserve.

Betty Makoni is working each day in her native Zimbabwe to remove such barriers. She founded the Girl Child Network Zimbabwe to help young girls who have been victims of rape. Girls are especially vulnerable in certain parts of Africa, where AIDS/HIV rates are extremely high. There is a myth that if a man with HIV rapes a virgin, he will be cured of the virus.

Makoni deals with the aftermath of that myth. Often, the girls she rescues are not only broken and frightened, but also HIV-infected. It is believed that this remarkable woman has rescued more than 35,000 young girls, and the work of Makoni's organization has spread to Uganda, Sierra Leone and other African nations.

Makoni will talk about her work at the Summit, and the acclaimed documentary that highlights her, "Tapestries of Hope," will also be screened.

Other internationally-recognized summit speakers include Kathryn Bolkovac, a former UN Police Force monitor who has produced a documentary, "The Whistleblower," about the efforts to end sex-trafficking in Bosnia; Imani Walker, the charismatic co-founder of the



File Photo
Dr. Chere Gregory stands by Dr. Maya Angelou at a media conference in May to formally announce the opening of the new center.

Rebecca Project, which advocates on behalf of "vulnerable women and girls in the United States and Africa;" and Mary E. Singletary, the president of the more than 100-year-old National Council of Women of the United States. Also, dozens of equally-respected experts will take part in the three-day (Sept. 27 - 29) summit.

We applaud Dr. Chere Gregory for organizing such a far-reaching summit. We have always known that Gregory, director of neurosciences at Forsyth Medical Center, is the kind of doctor that truly cares about this community. Though Forsyth Medical is known for its innovative stroke treatments, Gregory will be the first to tell you that she doesn't want to see you as one of her patients.

She imparts the importance of healthy, preventive living to the church, community and seniors groups she regularly addresses.

Gregory is among the most respected in her field and an inspiration to many. This community and Forsyth Medical are lucky to have her.

Learn more about the summit, which is open to the public, at www.mayaangelouhealthsummit.org.

Lawyer Davis

Denise
Hartfield
Guest
Columnist

On Wednesday, Sept. 12, more than 100 members of the Forsyth County legal community came together to honor Attorney Harry Glen Davis.

"Lawyer Davis," as he is known by many in the African American community, has decided to close his practice and spend more time with his farm, his golf game and his family. He will still take some cases, but will put his health and family first for the first time in almost five decades.

Lawyer Davis is a legal giant in this community. Licensed to practice in 1960, he has survived, among other things, sit-ins, desegregation, Separate but Equal and the riots of the 1960s. He and the late Honorable Richard C. Erwin were the first blacks in this city to apply to the Forsyth County Bar Association. Both were given long consideration before they were accepted into the white male-dominated group. Lawyer Davis, Attorney Annie Brown Kennedy and Attorney David Wagner are among the few still around from the era when African American attorneys were few.

In spite of the struggles

and obstacles presented along the way, Lawyer Davis never lost sight of his oath. Upon graduation from NCCU, where he earned both his undergraduate and law degrees, he returned to his native Winston-Salem to practice law. Stories of his bar examination process are mind blowing, yet he endured to practice law. At NCCU, his undergraduate roommate was Herman Boone of "Remember the Titans" fame. Mr. Boone was the legendary coach who integrated the T.C. Williams High School football team after the Northern Virginia school was forced to integrate in 1971. Lawyer Davis, like Coach Boone, represents a fortitude and determination that is seldom seen today.

Lawyer Davis has represented defendants in various areas of the law. As a street lawyer, he kept his door open in the Pepper Building by representing whoever came in the door. Many can remember the portable black and white television with aluminum foiled rabbit ears in the waiting room, and the smell of the chewed up cigar smoke that filled the air. However, few know of the representation he gave in his later career to many parents facing termination of their parental rights. I am grateful to have seen Lawyer Davis in this capacity while I sit as a juvenile judge. I have seen him fight to the finish for parents who have drug prob-

lems, money problems and every issue in between. I have seen him stand up for persons with low intellect, lost hope and those troubled by domestic violence issues. I have watched him use reason and common sense to convince judges to reunite families and return children home to parents. I have seen him be a role model to African American boys through his dedication and matter of fact manner.

Lawyer Davis was often perceived as old and out of touch by many. Some colleagues and courthouse personnel expressed pity toward Lawyer Davis in recent years. Many compared his style to Andy Griffith's "Matlock," unassuming yet powerful. Powerful he is, not needing pity from anyone, but praise from all who have had the privilege of knowing him.

On behalf of young attorneys everywhere, particularly African American attorneys, I say thank-you to this giant of a lawyer on whose shoulders all of us have stood. I thank this powerful advocate for making the hills we have had to climb a little easier. Thank you, Attorney Harry Glen Davis for traveling the rough side of the mountain, so that our mountains would not seem so high.

The Honorable Denise S. Hartfield is a District Court judge in Forsyth County.



Photo by Todd Luck

Panelists Darryl Hunt, Kristin Parks, Rev. Carroll Pickett and Mark Rabil.

Davis

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Rabil said that the Wake panel discussion was not just an answer to Davis' last words, which implored the public to "look deeper into this case" to "finally see the truth," but also a response to a 2006 Supreme Court decision penned by Justice Antonin Scalia in which he wrote that he wasn't aware of anyone who was clearly innocent who had been executed and if such a thing happened "the innocent's name would be shouted from the rooftops."

Rabil, who attended pro-Davis rallies in Atlanta with Hunt and thousands of others, said people did indeed shout about Davis' innocence, sometimes literally from rooftops. There are many like Davis currently waiting to be put to death - those who were convicted on flimsy evidence and shoddy investigations, said Rabil. He added that since 1976, 140 Americans have been exonerated from death row, with 71 of them being black.

Rev. Pickett said he's seen an innocent man executed firsthand. He talked about Carlos DeLuna, who was executed on Dec. 6, 1989 for the murder of a gas station attendant in Corpus Christi, Texas. Pickett said DeLuna was found hiding near the crime scene, but no evidence linked him to the murder. He said authorities wouldn't investigate a similar-looking man, even after he had bragged about committing the crime in prison.

Pickett said that after getting to know DeLuna and hearing his side of the case, he knows he was innocent. He held up a 1,152-page Columbia Human Rights Law Review investigation published this year that he said proves DeLuna's innocence.

"If you want to read something that will turn your stomach ... this is a great book," said Pickett. "This proves without a doubt that Texas executed Carlos DeLuna, an innocent person."

Pickett has a unique perspective on the death penalty. He was chaplain at Texas State Penitentiary in Huntsville, Texas in 1982, when executions began again in the state after an 18-year moratorium brought on by legal challenges. When Pickett arrived, no one at the facility had presided over an execution before. Pickett still remembers the meeting the warden held with his staff about the subject.

"He got over to me, and he said 'You are going to be

with him all day long, and your job is to seduce his emotions so he won't fight getting out of the cell or fight getting on the gurney," said Pickett.

He provided comfort to death row inmates, beginning that year with Charlie Brooks, the first man in the United States to be executed by lethal injection. Pickett gave comfort for 95 others over the course of his career.

Parks warned that another innocent man is about to be executed, this time in North Carolina. Her client, Melvin White, was convicted in 1996 of murdering a woman and her boyfriend in Craven County, but he's maintained his innocence. She said the

police never took fingerprints at the crime scene or looked for other suspects. The collection and SBI analysis of the only evidence in the case - three shell casings - is questionable, she said.

"There are cases that the truth doesn't come out because of sloppy law enforcement work, and I think that's what happened in Melvin's case," said Parks.

In memory of Davis, the NAACP is making posters of Davis with the words "Abolish the Death Penalty" available to print out, display and share online at action.naacp.org/troys-poster.

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OCTOBER SPECIALS
GOLF AND LUNCH SPECIAL
Play golf and enjoy a non-alcoholic beverage with a hamburger, hot dog or sandwich!
WEEKDAYS
Championship \$40, Seniors \$30,
Reynolds \$28, Seniors \$23
WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS
Championship \$50, Reynolds \$28
Twilight rates start at 2:00 pm daily
Championship \$28, Reynolds \$21
Sign up for the first annual
Festival of Lights Golf Tournament
Saturday, November 17, 2012 at 12:00 pm
Open to men and women competing as tyrosomes in a better ball format. Entry fee includes lunch, prizes and a weekday ticket to the Tanglewood Festival of Lights. Call for details or to sign up.
PAR 3 AND FAMILY PRACTICE CENTER GREEN FEES
ADULT \$7, JUNIORS (12 & under) \$4
Weekends & Holidays, Everyone \$8
Annual Memberships
Single \$1200, Family \$1900
Seniors (60+ Monday-Friday) \$800
Join Tanglewood's mens or ladies golf association for friendly competitive golf and fun social activities.
For more information, please call 336-703-6420.
Golf clinic schedules available online at www.tanglewoodpark.org
On Facebook: [facebook.com/TanglewoodPark](https://www.facebook.com/TanglewoodPark)
TANGLEWOOD
Parks
Just 10 minutes west of Winston-Salem

**Small Business
Training Program**

A City sponsored Business Training Program is set to begin on Thursday October 4, 2012. The series of seminars meets on Thursday evenings from 6:00pm to 8:00pm at the Brown and Douglas Recreation Center at 4725 Indiana Avenue. Classes end on December 6.

Every year through the City's Minority and Women Business Enterprise Program a series of seminars are offered to interested City residents thinking about entering into the business world. Topics include Market Analysis and Advertising, Legal Issues, Insurance Needs, Book Keeping and Taxes, Writing a Business Plan, and How to Apply for Funding. Qualified participants who complete the program are then eligible to apply to the City's Small Business Loan Program for funding to assist in starting a small business.



Please call, Walter Farabee, Community and Business Development Department, at 734-1262 if you'd like to register or have questions.