

# Grant will help Chamber continue successful mentoring program

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce has received a \$5,000 grant from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation. The grant will be used to support and maintain the Chamber's Senior Academy mentoring program.

The Senior Academy is a structured program designed to create an on-going mentoring relationship between 12th grade students at six Winston-Salem/Forsyth County schools who are in jeopardy of not graduating, and caring adult volunteers from the local business community.

Mentors work with students for a minimum of one hour per week for nine months or longer if the student does not graduate on time. The mentoring relationship focuses on encour-



aging the student to achieve their graduation and career goals.

An individualized graduation plan is developed for each student detail-

ing the courses needed for graduation. In addition to a graduation plan, a career plan is also developed for each student based on career assessment tool results and a student interview. Mentors use this information to help students get the college or career resources they need. Mentors often assist students with FAFSA, scholarship identification and applications.

The Senior Academy has had a 93-95 percent success rate over the last several years. The program has helped to increase the high school graduation rate, break the cycle of poverty, personal and societal ills and increase the skill level of our workforce.

For information about the Senior Academy program, visit [www.winstonsalem.com](http://www.winstonsalem.com).

## WSSU

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"The university's School of Business and Economics understands and demonstrates the importance of financial knowledge and professional skills," said Theodore Daniels, president and CEO of the Society. "The students participate in our financial literacy programs and the college makes provisions for students to attend our annual conference, where they have the opportunity to engage high level professionals as well as participate in workshops and sessions with such professionals."

Nick Daves, director of WSSU's Center of Excellence in Financial Services, said the school has been taking four students each year to the Society's conference since 2009.

"The students are nominated by the department chairs within the school and the Center funds the trips," he said. "The conference provides an excellent opportunity for our students to hear from leaders in the financial services said field and to network with professionals who are focusing their efforts on enhancing financial and economic literacy in this country."

## Fund

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the larger community, and the systems and policies of organizations and institutions.

Over the last six years, the Women's Fund of Winston-Salem has awarded 49 grants totaling nearly \$750,000 to local organizations. Grants are funded from the pooled contributions of the Fund's members, who determine each year which organizations receive grant funding. The Fund's members, now over 800 strong, include female corporate and nonprofit leaders, educators, community leaders, volunteers, entrepre-

neurs, college and high school students.

At the luncheon, more than \$140,000 in grants will be announced and awarded to the recipients. In addition, the Women's Fund of Winston-Salem will be releasing a report entitled "The Impact of Passionate Giving," which provides an overview of the impact of the organization's early grant-making. Tickets are \$25 per person.

For tickets and/or more information about The Women's Fund of Winston-Salem, visit [www.womensfundws.org](http://www.womensfundws.org).



Starke

## Ojo

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Caribbean islands of Antigua and Barbuda.

While preparing for his residency, he is pursuing an online MBA in general management and health care administration from Plymouth State University.

Ojo has three siblings who've all attended Forsyth Tech and had similar success stories. He has a brother who works in the aeronautic engineering field, and one sister who is a nurse and another who is in medical school.

He said the lower cost of taking courses at a community college is a great advantage, especially for medical students, who rack up a lot of debt by the time they become doctors. Ojo also believes that the education offered at Forsyth Tech is just as good as the instruction at four-year colleges and universities. He added that the smaller classes at Forsyth Tech allowed for more on-one-time with instructors and easier access to the school's Learning Center, where he served as a biology and chemistry tutor.

"Take any course you can take here at Forsyth Tech before you transfer," said Ojo. "Trust me, when you transfer you will see the difference."

He reassured students that when other colleges and employers see Forsyth Tech on their resumes, it'll leave a positive impression. Despite the college's small size, he said, Forsyth Tech has garnered a national reputation that has led to visits from President Barack Obama and former President George W. Bush in recent years.

"Forsyth Tech has made a name," Ojo said. "...I think any student that comes here will not regret it."

Ojo said that his resume has also been bolstered by his work with his family's nonprofit, Help the Helpless Inc., which has taken him back



Dr. Adesanmi Abel Ojo (right) with his father Abel Ojo.

Photos by Todd Luck



Caesar Moore

to Nigeria to work with his father and other health care professionals in rural areas of the country.

Forsyth Tech student Caesar Moore listened intently to Ojo's tips and advice. Moore plans to follow a similar path by transferring to UNCG to earn a biochemistry degree before going on to medical school.

He said Ojo's speech encouraged him even more.

"I thought it was amazing," said Moore. "I always wanted to hear first hand from an actual doctor's perspective what medical school is like."

Ojo's speech, which was delivered in Forsyth Tech's Ardmore Auditorium on the school's main campus, was part of the SciTech

Lecture series. Sponsored by Forsyth Tech's National Center for the Biotechnology Workforce (NCBW), SciTech lectures focus on science and technology and are held three times a semester. The lectures have featured a variety of topics, including alternative energy and HIV/AIDS, and have drawn more than 1,500 attendees over the last three years.

Russ Read is the executive director of NCBW, which seeks to represent, enable and lead the national biotechnology workforce. He said that he hoped Ojo's lecture showed students and the public that a Forsyth Tech education can open doors to any career.

"(Ojo's experience is) exactly the kind of career development that happens for a lot of people at Forsyth Tech and there are countless stories like that," said Read.

The next SciTech lecture will be Jan. 17 at 4 p.m. in Ardmore Auditorium. Christy Schaffer of Hatteras Venture Capital, a Durham biotechnology venture capital firm, will speak.

For more information, visit [biotechworkforce.org](http://biotechworkforce.org).

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