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VANESSA AND COURTNEY JOHNSON  
...Charming, talented girls

## Vanessa And Courtney Johnson Are "Beauties Of The Week"

By Debra Stanley  
Post Staff Writer  
Vanessa and Courtney Johnson are the Post Beauties of the Week. These charming and talented girls were born under the zodiac signs of Aries and Taurus. Born under the sign of Aries, Courtney has a strong and imaginative personality. She likes to keep busy and active; she gets

along well with all kinds of people. Born under the sign of Taurus, Vanessa has a warm and dynamic personality. She is a rather tolerant person and enjoys peace and harmony. It's her nature to be helpful towards people in need. Vanessa and Courtney have had many varied and cultural experiences. They have traveled with their parents and

have acquired a wealth of knowledge. They attended Our Lady of Consolation School before moving to Houston, Texas last fall with their mother Mrs. Joan Johnson who is highly intellectual and holds a key position with the Exxon Corporation, whose headquarters recently moved to Houston, Texas. Vanessa and Courtney attended Ridgecrest Elementary School in Houston. Both "A" students, the girls have made many outstanding accomplishments during their year there, including awards in track, outstanding school work, medal for music, and Patrol, a participant in a National Spelling Bee. Courtney wrote a simple, but interesting book, which was entitled "My Teacher's Birthday Cake." The book of stories was published and placed in the School Library.

### Focus Of Urban League

## "Crisis Among Black Youths"

NEW YORK, N.Y. - "The Crisis Among Black Youths" is the focus of the current issue of the Urban League Review, with detailed analysis of the severe unemployment problem among black youth by Esther Plovnia, associate editor of the Urban League Review, and Dr. Bernard Anderson, associate professor, Dept. of Industry, the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania.

and about half of the black female teenagers had some work experience. However, by 1975, less than half the males and only about one-third of the female black teenagers had any work experience. Of those who did work, 39 percent of the males and 31 percent of the females only worked part of the year.

According to Ms. Plovnia, more and more young blacks are becoming part of the hidden unemployed. "The failure to find work is driving more and more young blacks out of the active labor force into the ranks of the discouraged workers. In 1976, for example, while an average of 34,500 black teenagers were officially counted as unemployed, another 36,800 wanted jobs, but were no longer looking, she says in her article, Black Youth Unemployment: A Continuing Crisis.

Dr. Anderson in his article "The Youth Unemployment Crisis," which is excerpted from his testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities, says, "during the past several decades, unemployment rates for teenagers have ranged 2.3 and 3.5 times higher than the labor forces as a whole."

Citing diminishing work experience as a factor in the severe unemployment problem of black young people, Ms. Plovnia says "With the passing years, fewer young blacks are entering adulthood with any work experience. Ten years ago, about 70 percent of black male teenagers

He feels the unemployment problem for young people has been exacerbated" by the rapid growth in their numbers. "Between 1960 and 1975, the number rose by nearly 70 percent, or more than triple the increase in persons over 25," according to Dr. Anderson.

Also in this issue is an examination of the youth unemployment and Demonstration Project Act of 1977, summaries of NUL youth programs, book reviews, and a listing of data sources. The Urban League Review is published semi-annually by the Research Dept. of the National Urban League, and appears in winter and summer. Subscription rates are \$8 per year for individuals, \$10 for institutions and \$6 for students.

**Dinners Will Be Sold Saturday**  
Dinners will be sold on Saturday, August 6 at the Unique Masonic Lodge located at 2101 Newland Rd. Dinners include a choice of fish or chicken and serving will begin at 12 p.m. Dinners will sell for \$2.50 and sandwiches for \$1.75.

# Gregory: Black Family's

## Economic Outlook Gloomy

### Ms. Riddick Resigns From YWCA Post

Mickie G. Riddick, Executive Director of the Charlotte YWCA, has tendered her resignation effective November 1, to assume the position of Director of Services for Urban Associations with the National YWCA in New York. In her new capacity Mrs. Riddick will act as consultant to 30 metropolitan YWCA associations in the United States. In the South, only Houston, Texas, falls in this category.

Mrs. Riddick will continue as a resident of Charlotte while working out of the National Board YWCA office in New York. Her husband, the Rev. Leon C. Riddick, is pastor of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church. Both the Riddicks have been very active in church and civic work in Charlotte since coming here in 1964.

Working out of New York City while maintaining her family and home here in Charlotte presents a fascinating challenge to Mrs. Riddick. "I took this step with my husband and family's encouragement and support," she said. "So that I not only look forward to the tremendous challenge of this new job, but an entirely new lifestyle. I understand that more and more couples are pursuing separate careers in this fashion, especially as their families grow up and leave home. We are quite excited," she concluded.

### It's Getting Time To Start Back To School

It's getting to that time of year again when parents and students have to start making back to school plans. Pupil-teacher orientation day is August 31, and the first full day of school is September 5. Schools will be open for registration during August. The best times to register or visit schools are between 9-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m. The Mecklenburg County Health Department urges parents of children entering school to have the children vaccinated as early as possible.



Thonet-Simmons workers Barney Roberts and Willie Parker walk the picket line to protest firing of fellow-workers. Post photo by Eileen Hanson

### Sparks Strike Here Firing Of Black Workers

By Eileen Hanson  
Special to the Post  
The firing of two black workers has sparked a strike in Charlotte that has brought the support of 60,000 upholstery workers nationwide. The two young men, Timothy Harrison and Berry King, both of Charlotte, were fired in early July by Thonet - A Simmons Company, located on Old Steele Creek Road. Members of the Upholsterers' International Union believe the firings were for union activities. Both men had been active in the employees' campaign to elect the union last May.

The factory produces hospital beds, and is a subsidiary of a national company best known for its Simmons mattresses. According to union spokesman Willie Parker, after the union won the election the company increased harassment of union supporters, especially blacks. "The company made us work an hour overtime every day. Harrison couldn't because of his classes at CPCC," said Parker. "They fired him, even after he brought a copy of his class schedule."

Berry King was fired for allegedly "fabricating a doctor's slip." He had volunteered to work during the July 4 vacation, but went home early on Thursday because of a stomachache. "Who can afford to go to a doctor everytime you have a stomach ache?" asked Parker. "It was just an excuse to get rid of two active union members and to intimidate the rest of us."

In response to the firings, 52 out of the 62 workers at the plant walked out on July 18. They have been picketing the plant 12 hours a day every since. The union has filed unfair labor practice charges against the company. General Manager of the plant, Randy Marks, refused to comment on the firings and other union demands. The company has requested that the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service intervene. According to union representatives, the company offered some compromises, but failed to agree to the demand of taking both Harrison and King back with full pay. At a rally July 27 at the Rodeway Inn, union representatives presented strike support funds from other upholstery workers around the country. Roger Murray, UIU International Vice President, came from Boston to present a check for \$5,000 from the Simmons Council, an organization inside the union of 12,000 Simmons workers. In mid-July the council voted to

give its entire \$21,000 treasury to support the Charlotte strikers. "The union is 100 percent with you," said Murray. The strike in Charlotte has brought national attention within the union because the Thonet plant moved here a year ago from Munster, Indiana. Shortly thereafter the company closed down the Indiana plant. "The move was to avoid a national contract that Simmons workers have negotiated over the years in the company's other 22 plants," claimed Murray. The union calls the company a "run-away shop." They come to the South because labor is cheap," said Parker. The strikers are angry because in Indiana the starting pay was \$5.76 and hour, with top wages at \$11. In Charlotte wages start at \$3.25, and top pay is \$4.07. "We deserve to be paid the same for doing the same work," said Parker. The union is demanding the reinstatement of Harrison and King, with full pay, seniority and back pay. They also want serious and regular contract negotiations with the company. Thonet has retained Ed Dowd of Central Piedmont Industries to represent its side in the negotiations. The Charlotte-based organization offers labor management advice to its 250-member companies in the Piedmont. Union organizers in the area call it a "union-busting organization."

Dowd could not be reached for comment. Union organizer Jim Newell claims CPI is using delaying tactics in an effort to break the union. The company wants to negotiate every other week for 3 or 4 hours. "You don't negotiate a contract under those conditions," said Newell. "We want Central Piedmont Industries out of the picture so we can deal directly with the company." Marks said plant production is continuing with handful of non-union employees and supervisory personnel. He admitted the strike is hurting the company's production. If the Charlotte strike isn't settled soon, Thonet-Simmons may face trouble elsewhere. Murray declared at the rally

### Welfare Of All Blacks Threatened?

Special to the Post  
A measure of the economic hardships endured by most American families, if multiplied several times over, will give one an approximate measure of the economic impact on black families says economist Karl Gregory. A professor of economics and management at Oakland University, Dr. Gregory describes himself as pessimistic about the economic future of the black family. He made his remarks here at Eastern Michigan University during a summer colloquium on the contemporary family.

Although the median income of Black families has risen substantially in the last 30 years - from \$1614 in 1947 to \$9821 in 1976 - the concurrent rise in white family income - from \$3157 in 1947 to \$15,537 in 1976 - has maintained existing inequalities. Similarly, Gregory asserted, while the number of Black as well as other families below the poverty level has decreased significantly, in 1974, 25 percent of all Black families were still living below the standard level, while only seven percent of white families were in the same situation.

Gregory cited the years from 1969 to 1976 as a period of arrested progress, the median income for white families rising only slightly during this time and the median income for Black families actually decreasing somewhat.

These economic facts have Gregory worried. He charges that several national and international factors threaten the economic welfare of all families, but particularly Blacks. The astronomical increase in housing cost, the price tag of a house rising from a median of \$29,000 a few years ago to its current level at approximately \$49,600, has put single family dwellings beyond the means of most people. And the situation is getting worse, claims Gregory.

He also blames the oil boycott of November, 1973, as the cause of financial difficulties for many families. The increased cost of energy and energy produced products has affected transportation, utilities and housing.

Gregory sees an irony in the fact that a disproportionate number of low income families live in decrepit, badly-insulated houses and have to bear high fuel costs, though they are the least able to afford the increase.

Despite his gloomy view of the economic future of Black families, Gregory claims to hold a more optimistic opinion of the strength of the Black Family. The Black community would have perished years ago if not for the extended family," he declared, adding that he has hope that dedication, a return to Christian values and family strength will weather the powerful negative forces working against the family.

## People United For Justice Invites

## President Carter To Visit Charlotte

By Eileen Hanson  
Special to the Post  
Supporters of the Wilmington 10 and Charlotte 3 are inviting President Carter to come to Charlotte August 5, when he visits North Carolina tobacco farmers in Wilson. At a press conference last week, Carrie Graves and Rev. James Barnett said their organization, People United for Justice, had sent Carter a letter asking him to bear their side in the controversial case. Recently the White House called on Governor Hunt's office to explain his decision in the Wilmington 10 case. Carter's human rights aides are concerned that the case is hurting the administration's human rights campaign around the world. Last January Governor Hunt reduced the sentences of the prisoners, but refused to grant them a pardon of innocence. The letter said, "We are concerned that the President would not want to examine all the facts that caused the Wilmington riots, the role played by the 'Rights of White People' vigilante group, the questionable jury selection, and especially the perjured

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Rev. James Barnett  
...Heads rights group  
testimony of two witnesses.  
The group wants Carter to

speak to lawyer James Ferguson, to the families, to North Carolinians who support them and to the defendants themselves. Rosalyn Carter visited Dalton Village Public housing project during her husband's 1976 presidential campaign. "She said you were honest and fair and wanted to give all people a chance to be heard," continued the letter. "This is the opportunity to do just that. The Wilmington 10 and Charlotte 3 are political prisoners. Let any Human Rights project begin at home." See PEOPLE on page 11.



MIDDLE AGE is when a person starts thinking about resigning from the JET SET and joining the SET SET.

See FIRMING on page 11.