



ATTORNEY VERNON RUSSELL

...With law firm partner, Sharif Abdulah

Reputable Black Law Firm Transcends Color Barriers

By Melvin Walton
Special To The Post

When attorneys Sharif Abdulah, 31, and Vernon Russell, 26, arrive inside their Concord law building in the early mornings, they roll up the blinds to let the sun in on the office plants, and a 10 to 12 hour work day wherein they will see client after client, and handle case after case begins.

As the only black attorneys in the city of Concord, they have, in the eight months of their partnership, built a reputable law firm that transcends the color barrier.

"Prospective clients ring the telephone off the hook," says Russell, a bachelor and UNC Law School graduate. "I sometimes get as many phone calls at home as I do in the office."

"We are building the kind of practice that other lawyers in this community can't approach, regardless of race," adds Abdulah, a family man and graduate of Boston University School of Law.

The young attorneys agree that the reputation and success of their law practice is the result of one underlying factor. "There is an element of trust in our

practice," admits Russell. "A lot of our Black clients seem to have a distrust for white attorneys. For many Blacks the white practices seem to carry the connotation of theivery."

"The blacks here want honesty. And what better place for them to find trust," says Russell, sitting at his executive office desk only a few miles from the Concord side streets where he grew up, "than here."

Russell is seen by his fellow Concordians as "the good ol' home boy who has gone away and done well." The only difference, he says, is that unlike many, he came back home.

"Black people who invest in youth, usually find them going away and benefiting someone else," Russell says. "Usually the power structure."

"I wanted to do something for my own community where I was given a start."

And while the law partnership of Abdulah and Russell has made its mark in the Black community, they find it no mystery that many whites seek their legal services as well.

"This is the other set of

factors that made us want to set up practice here," says Abdulah. "The whites here had no lawyers with a different set of viewpoints and practices. They were looking for someone who was not a part of that good ol' boy network, and who were not afraid to take cases because they eat lunch with Joe Blow."

"But we don't have any sacred cows and people we feel that we can't sue," he says.

And there is a track record to prove it, including a recent settlement victory in a suit filed against the local Concord sheriff's department.

"It's interesting," smiles Abdulah, "how the white power structure views us."

"I remember," he recalls, "when we were setting up the practice how a white attorney approached us and said, 'Yeah, why don't you just set yourself up a store front office down there in the Black Logan community and represent them clients?' He is surprised that we did more than that."

The two attorneys met and became friends while working with Legal Aid Services in Concord. It was this work experience, they say, that made them more sensitive to the legal needs of the different segments of the community.

"But with the cutbacks and threats from the Reagan Administration," says Russell, "we were not comfortable with the outlook and survival of these agencies."

So with Abdulah's suggestion and initiation, the two joined forces and opened a private law practice that is noted for its highly technological equipment, as well as the competence of its attorneys.

"Our commitment of providing top quality legal services to the people has not changed," stresses Abdulah. "It's just that our battle ground has changed."

In Prestigious Contest

Miss Moore Captures Second Runner-Up Position

By Loretta Manago
Post Staff Writer

Parades came equipped with beautiful young girls riding floats. In this year's Thanksgiving parade, one of those young ladies was Cynthia Moore, reigning Harding High School Queen.

The first Black to compete in the Carrousel Princess pageant, Miss Moore was the second runner-up in the prestigious contest.

Conducted like a regular pageant Miss Moore was judged on beauty, poise and talent, along with a luncheon presentation and an interview that was critiqued by five panelists.

Although the competition was stiff, before the night was over, Miss Moore emerged a winner, walking away with a \$600 scholarship.

Miss Moore's ascension to the Carrousel Princess Competition was directly influenced by her position as "Miss Harding." She has demonstrated that she possesses true leadership ability through the organizations and clubs of which she is a member.

A senior at Harding, Miss Moore is the president of the Executive Council, vice-president of the Science Club, parliamentarian of Future Business Leaders of America, a Keylight, member of the

Recycling

Defrays Xmas Expenses

The festive holiday season is upon us. Help defray Christmas expenses and ring in the new year by recycling aluminum.

Save the many aluminum items found around the home during the holiday season and receive cash for them every Tuesday through Saturday (except December 24 -

January 4 due to holiday) from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1-4:30 p.m. at the Coliseum Shopping Center, 3700 East Independence Blvd., and at the Reynolds Aluminum Recycling Service Center, 1501 West Independence Blvd.

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Cynthia Moore
...Runner-up Spanish Club, an Ivey's Teen Board member, a cheerleader (from ninth through 11th grades) member of the Debate Team. She has attended several student council work-

Aside from being so involved in school activities Miss Moore also manages to maintain a B average and is a member of the Honor Society. Last year during "Student Appreciation Day" at Harding she was selected to be honorary "Mayor of Charlotte" and this year (1982-83) Miss Moore is a Delta Sigma Theta Debutante.

When not so studious Miss Moore enjoys meeting

people, traveling, modeling and communications.

Almost over the hurdle of high school Miss Moore is concerned with thoughts of college and careers.

Having applied for a four-year Milliken Scholarship at Converse College in Spartanburg, S.C., Miss Moore has included UNC-Greensboro on her list of possible colleges to attend as well.

It is her aspiration to

study law and do graduate work at UNC-CH. A career in communications is Miss Moore's alternate choice of college study.

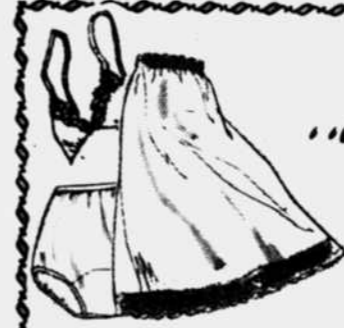
At New Zion Baptist Church where Miss Moore is a member, she is a member of the Youth Department. She works as secretary for her father's business, W. W. Moore Grading Company.

The daughter of Woodrow Wilson and Barbara Ellen

Moore, Miss Moore has one brother, Reginald.

For one person who has accomplished so much Miss Moore recognizes that it all has been due to friends, teachers and parents.

Ten years passed (1972-1982) before Harding High chose another Black queen to represent them. For those who know Cynthia Moore it was certainly worth the wait.



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Toys can be delivered to the Cablevision of Charlotte office at 6407 Idlewild Rd., or can be picked up by Cablevision at the time of installation. Persons interested in contributing a toy for Christmas are asked to call Cablevision, 568-5370, for information. All toys collected by

Cablevision will be presented to the Christmas Bureau on Tuesday, December 21.

Registration Set For Adult Degree Programs

Sacred Heart College, Belmont, announces registration for the January semester of both its day college and Adult Degree programs.

For the day college, registration and advisement will be held Monday, January 17 in McCarthy Library from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Day classes begin Tuesday, January 18.

For the Adult Degree Program registration will be Thursday, January 13 in McCarthy Library from 6-8 p.m. Adult Degree classes begin Monday, January 17.

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