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COURTNEY JOHNSON

Myers Park senior

17-Year-Old

Courtney Johnson's Heart Is Set On Becoming A Doctor's Assistant

By Jalyne Strong Post Staff Writer

Courtney Johnson, a 17-year-old senior of Myers Park High School, is so active in school she had a hard time remembering exactly all the organizations she participates in.

The group of most interest to Courtney these days is HOSA, a high school organization or students interested in health occupations. Courtney is definitely one. "I want to be an office medical assistant," she relates. "I've always liked people and doctors amaze me."

Courtney works at McDonald's on Sugar Creek Rd. Through school she recently made it to the state competitions of DECA in restaurant marketing. The contest will be held in Winston-Salem, N.C., and Courtney will be asked to display her restaurant marketing skills while competing against young people from all over N.C.

"HOSA is having a competition coming up in China Grove," tells Courtney. The aspiring young lady will be in this contest also. Undoubtedly she's extremely excited about this one.

As you can see, Courtney is a hard-working young lady but she's also quite vivacious and friendly. For fun, Courtney confesses, "I talk on the phone all the time." According to her mother and grandmother, she talks on the phone "too much."

Courtney also likes to go out with her girlfriends and have a good time. She describes herself as "bright. I like being around people laughing," she notes.

"Patti LaBelle makes black women look real good," points out Courtney. "I love the way she sings and talks." Courtney has one sister, Vanessa, 18, who attends A&T State University. "We're very close," she says.

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grandma Thompson and her great grandmother, Ninny, are about the best people in the world. "All of them raised me in a way," says Courtney. "I learned a little of everything from all of them."

More people she admires, according to Courtney, are her mother, Joan, and Patti LaBelle.

About her mother, Courtney relates, "She does things that make your eyes get big." What? "I mean she talks and makes you understand things easily."

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Charlotte Post And Neighborhood Groups To Form Partnership

By Jalyne Strong Post Staff Writer

"I think it's a wonderful idea. People will see the good happening in black neighborhoods, especially the things they helped to make happen. And the information will motivate people to do more."

This statement elicited from Betty Sanders, president of the Washington Heights neighborhood organization, is an analysis of a proposed concerted effort of the 54 organized predominantly black neighborhood groups in Charlotte, with the Charlotte Post newspaper and certain key people including Melvin Whitley, Charlotte Organizing Project (CHOP) director and Elizabeth Neal.

The idea is for the Charlotte Post and the neighborhood organizations to join in a mutually beneficial alliance. On Thursday, February 13, 7 p.m., at McDonald's Cafeteria, Beatties Ford Rd., members and presidents of the 54 neighborhood organizations will meet with publisher Bill Johnson and staff members of the Charlotte Post to work out the specifics.

However, the initial plans for the pact is for the Charlotte Post to work closely with the neighborhood groups in covering their communities' news. In exchange, members of the organizations will be involved in selling Charlotte Post subscriptions. Moreover, the community organizations will receive a percentage of the sales to go towards their community improvement actions.

"We're excited about the opportunity to meet with community leaders and we're looking forward to the development of a partnership that would be most beneficial to both the Charlotte Post and the 54 organized, predominantly black neighborhoods," states Charlotte Post publisher Bill Johnson. "We're also looking forward to



Melvin Whitley CHOP director

working with the groups to improve community news coverage. The meeting will focus on ways to better serve each neighborhood by going public with their weekly activities in the Charlotte Post Newspaper," he adds. Melvin Whitley, who has substantial experience working with community groups through CHOP, was instrumental in the first stages of the alliance. Johnson comments, "His input is invaluable in helping us to get the message to neighborhood groups." Johnson also gives credit to Elizabeth Neal for her assistance in getting things off the ground.

Now that the ball is rolling, interest is peaking and the neighborhood groups are responding in a

positive manner. It's intimated that the idea has put a spark into the dynamics of the neighborhood groups.

"The news media gets the message across," notes Sanders. "Once people begin to see in the newspaper what communities are doing, they'll in turn know ways they can help improve their neighborhoods."

For example, the Washington Heights area already has information to share, such as, ways to get home improvement loans and soliciting the skilled talents of retired residents to help in community beautification.

Sanders is also excited about the prospect of raising money through selling Charlotte Post subscriptions. "We've talked about fund raising but hadn't quite gotten into it," Sanders says of her neighborhood organization. "But I see the money going towards such things as fixing curbs and walkways in the neighborhood and one of our first goals: a miniature park for small children."

"The meeting will be the opportunity for people of different communities to put their heads together. I really can't speak for everyone else but anything that helps create new ideas and improves where we live is fantastic," concludes Sanders.

"The initial response is great and we expect a great attendance of the majority of neighborhood groups," projects Johnson. Everyone interested is welcome to attend.

Congressional Clearinghouse Hopes To Pave Way For Future

Special To The Post

Illiteracy and the rapid increase of senior citizens are just two of the problems facing 21st century

America, according to a feature in the February issue of Black Enterprise, black America's guide-book for success.

Congress is attempting to address these and other issues through a unique bipartisan group of about 100 congressmen and senators who form the Congressional Clearinghouse on the Future.

"Our job is to identify new issues and emerging trends and match them with new opportunities," Rob McCord, the eight-year Clearinghouse executive director, told Black Enterprise.

According to a 1983 U.S. Department of Education estimate, 27 million adults are illiterate and that number increases by 2,250,000 annually. Representatives Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) and Tom Tauke (R-Iowa) believe this could cause a shortage of industrial, blue-collar workers in the future.

In anticipation of this crisis, the Clearinghouse suggests the establishment of a volunteer corps for literacy instruction, the development of programs to teach prison inmates basic literacy and job skills, and increased funding of adult and continuing education programs.

The "senior boom" is seen by many members as the most pressing problem.

"In 1960, 16.5 million people in the U.S. (10 percent of the population) were over 65," says McCord. "With the aging of the baby boomers, 67 million (20 percent of the population) will be over 65 by the middle of next century."

The February issue of Black Enterprise is available on newsstands or by sending \$1.95 plus \$1 postage to the publisher, 130 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10011.

UWC Chairman Don Steger Finds Campaign Interesting, Challenging And Frightening

By Jalyne Strong Post Staff Writer

On the occasion of his selection as chairman of the 1986 United Way Campaign for Mecklenburg and Union counties, Don Steger told an assembly of United Way workers they were "in a rut."

"A rut of winning," he clarified. "And I have no intention of getting us out of it!"

Steger, assistant city manager of Charlotte, is the first black United Way campaign chairman in the annual drive's 32-year history in this area.

It is a position he finds "interesting, challenging and frightening," he admits. "For the last 31 years, the Mecklenburg-Union counties' United Way Campaign has reached and exceeded its goals," he reveals. Steger, of course, wants to keep up the proud tradition.

His previous experience with United Way strengthens his position. He has been involved with the organization for approximately 10 years, first drawn into it when he was the deputy city manager of St. Petersburg, Fla.

At that time, it occurred to Steger to find out exactly what the United Way deductions taken from his checks were all about. He called



Don Steger Assistant city manager

the organization's office in St. Petersburg and after answering all his questions to his satisfaction, the United Way people replied, "Glad to see you're interested in United Way.

We could use your help in the campaign." Steger served as vice president of the Board of Directors of United Way in Florida for three years.

In 1979, he relocated to Charlotte and found the City employees were "very involved" in the United Way campaign. By 1981, Steger chaired the division of United Way for public employees. In 1983, he became vice chairman of Mecklenburg-Union counties' United Way campaign.

Steger's nomination, by the top corporate leadership of the Charlotte community, to lead the campaign this year came as a surprise to him. It is a large responsibility, however Steger comments, "I consider it an honor. It's the first time anyone except a businessman has been nominated and also the first time a black person has been asked."

"I think that says something positive about our community and blacks' role in the community," he adds.

Then again, Steger's resolve to work with United Way is cemented by the many aspects of the organization he respects. First, the Mecklenburg-Union County United Way helps support 31 different agencies. To name a few: the Urban League, the Speech and Hearing Clinic and Contact Counseling Service. "What I like about United

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TURTLE-TALK



Don't expect too much from the man who talks about what he did instead of what he's doing.