

Thomas Earns "Young Career Woman" Award

By Jalyne Strong
Post Staff Writer

Michelle Felicia Thomas, Human Services Coordinator for the Charlotte Housing Authority, has recently been awarded the title of "1986-87 Young Career Woman" by the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Organization.

It's an honor of distinction earned by the 24-year-old Thomas, daughter of Mrs. Jane Elizabeth Love Thomas and the late Mr. Herman Thomas of Charlotte. A 1983 graduate of Spelman College in Atlanta, Ga., the young professional has many notable achievements to her credit.

While a psychology major at Spelman, Thomas' name appeared on the Dean's List and the Honor Roll. She was the corresponding secretary for the Student Government and from this organization she received the "Outstanding Service Award." She was also listed as one of the "Young Personalities of America" and is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Thomas is affiliated with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations as a Dispute Settlement Mediator, and Teenage Parent Services (TAPS), as a member of the Board of Directors. She is, additionally, an advocate for abused and neglected youth through Juvenile Court Appointed Ad Litem. She has received supplementary certified training from the Charlotte Council on Alcoholism, Inc., the Dispute Settlement program of the American Bar Association and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Mental Health Services.

She was nominated for the "Young Career Woman" award by Kitty Huffman, a member of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority. Thomas maintains that Huffman has served as an inspiring role model for her. "She is impressed with me as a person," Thomas explains. "She has a sensitivity for others and has been dedicated to anything I'm interested in."



Michelle Thomas
.....Human Service coordinator

Thomas, herself, has been impressed by many persons who have been positive influences in her life. Primary are her mother and her late father, parents who, she attests, brought her up to be unselfish and giving. "I am an only child," says Thomas, "but I was raised to help others. I enjoy helping people. And God plays a very important role in my life," she reveals. "I believe that the gift He gave me was to help others through my profession."

This belief has been reinforced to Thomas by significant people in her life, such as: her surrogate father, Harold Clawson, principal at Steele Creek Elementary School, who has maintained his role since her father's death; and, Betty Harris, Community Services Director of the Housing Authority, Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Urban League and owner of Harris Freight Trucking Co. Thomas says of Harris, "She's career-oriented and an entrepreneur and she's taught me to 'seek God first.'" Then there's John Crawford, initiator of the Housing Authority Scholarship Fund, whose work with the community Thomas deeply respects. And finally her

supervisor, William Simmons. With such supportive people as backup, Thomas envisions a bright future ahead. The fact that she is only 24 years of age, she considers a plus. "It feels good," she smiles, "that at my age, through work and volunteer activities, I'm setting the foundation to build upon for my goals."

There are three purposes Thomas desires to accomplish in the next 10 years. "I, first, want to establish a scholarship fund in memory of my father," she notes. She goes on to tell how when she began college she was denied financial aid, but her father was determined to get her through. He did so, and sadly, the year his daughter graduated Herman Thomas learned he had cancer.

Her other goals are to become a member of City Council as an "honest politician," and she wants to own her own consulting firm specializing in youth employment.

"Success begins with a woman's will," is a line from a poem Thomas has selected to serve as her motto. Apparently her will to succeed has brought her far in a short time. Thomas will go on to compete in the district competition, as the "Young Career Woman" from the Charlotte area, at the Cabarrus County Country Club on April 12. She's also planning to attend the SCLC Women's Convention and Martin Luther King Award Dinner in Atlanta, Ga., courtesy of the Housing Authority. And if Thomas is ever questioned as to

whether she'll go on to do greater things, she'll more than likely respond with the last verse of her inspirational poem: "The woman who wins is the woman who thinks she can." It has served her well so far.

CPCC Seminar

A seminar on Professional Development for Secretaries will be sponsored by Centrak Piedmont Community College.

The April 22 seminar is designed to help secretaries and other office professionals develop skills and strategies needed to increase their responsibility and prestige in the office.

Through lectures and demonstrations, those who attend will learn how to project a professional image through communication and wardrobe coordination, how to communicate and listen actively, the importance of telephone communication, and how to create good first impression.

Nancy Bryan and Margaret Hobbs, Secretarial Science instructors at CPCC, will conduct the seminar.

The seminar will be from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Room 220, Citizens Center on the CPCC campus. Registration fee is \$12 and the deadline for registration is Tuesday, April 15. For details, call Shirley Luckadoo at 373-6781.

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Sunday School Lesson



INTRODUCTION

Today's text from Jude contains some rather strong words denouncing false teachers who had come among the churches. Even stronger words appear in verses 5-16. It would be easy to charge Jude with harsh judgmental negativism. But look again at the first and last paragraphs of his letter. His original purpose was wholly affirmative. He set out to write a careful treatise extolling the Christian faith. But then he learned of a condition that needed attention right now. The resulting emergency letter might be rough and sharp, but it would serve the purpose of Christian love—to protect the people and the principles he held most dear. And before that letter was concluded, it would plead for the rescue of the very offenders against whom his sharpest judgment was leveled.

Jude's letter reminds us of Jesus, the embodiment of divine love, who on occasion denounced violently the scribes and Pharisees with words that made Jude's expression seem mild in comparison. The most loving protector can become a terror when the beloved little ones are in danger.

THE LESSON

"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ and called, Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." (Jude 1-4)

With the humility taught by Jesus, Jude identified himself as the servant (bondservant) of Jesus Christ. The Lord had said that the relationship of faith in Him was more important than blood relationship to Him. Perhaps for this reason Jude did not mention his blood relationship to Jesus. For further identification, then, Jude referred to his brother who was well known in the church.

Jude's greeting speaks something more than good wishes for his friends. It prays for them eternal blessing with present dividends. Mercy is God's gift beyond our deserving. Peace is that wholeness of body and spirit that mercy conveys and serenity enjoys. Love received without measure from God, flows through Christians to one another so that each receives his portion of abundance. When God pours out His blessings, no man has room to receive the whole of it.

Jude seems to have been engaged in preparing a pastoral letter of encouragement and instruction, but was impelled by the circumstances to substitute a hurried note of warning against the false teachers who had come among the churches.

The salvation about which he was eager to write to God's provision for life eternal in Christ. It is the basis for the hope that motivates the believer in all he does. The salvation is common in that it is available to all men alike, and is shared by all believers.

The faith is the substance of Christian teaching. It is Christ. It is what the apostles taught and the saints believed. It is summarized in 1 Corinthians 15: 3, 4 and 2 Corinthians 4:18-21.

The threat to Christian hope and faith is personal. Just as the faith itself centers in the person of Christ the opposition centers in Satan and his servants. If the false teachers were called by name, the message would mean little to us after their departure.

Jude has given to all of his readers a difficult—even humanly impossible—assignment in the face of the threat he has outlined. He has charged them to keep themselves by keeping one another in God's love and to build up themselves on the foundation of their faith. On the face of it the prospects for their guarding their hope seem hopeless. But hope rests where it always did, in God.

Since the Christian faith comes from God by revelation, any challenge or threat to that faith must be met in His power. Would we defend it from attack? Would we revive it in weak and uncertain believers? Would we advance it among those who may be brought to believe? All these things are possible, but only in His way and according to His word and His power. "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." (Psalm 121:2) "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:31, 32)

Almighty God, stir our hearts to thanksgiving for the glorious hope that comes through Christ Jesus. Amen.

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