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Lisa Torrence  
 ...Enters Health profession

## Lisa Torrence Finds Medical Office Assistant Job Satisfying

By Russell Clark  
 Post Staff Writer

When Lisa Diana Torrence was a senior at South Mecklenburg High School in 1984, she had no idea that her professional career would launch in less than nine months.

Now, she is a medical office assistant for Dr. Harold S. Pride in the Independence Plaza and is finding her job to be satisfying. "I've always been inspired by health occupations," says this weeks beauty with a happy smile. "In my senior year, I was undecided about my career until representatives from Kings College came to recruit students during Career Day. They talked to us about the different courses that they offered. I asked them about their health occupation programs and they informed that they had a eight- and a half-month medical office assistant program. This was a good choice for me because I didn't want to go to a two or four year college for something I could earn in almost eight months," she mentions.

If you walk into the office, she's usually the first pretty face you see. Whether she is doing book-keeping, typing, patient preparatory, filing insurance information or scheduling appointments, she's working diligently in her snow-white uniform with matching shoes.

Sharing duties with her are Margie Doster and Octavia Hemphill who graduated from Kings with Torrence. "We work well together and we get along fine in and out of the office. Occasionally, we spend our

lunch hour together and we also go out together after work hours," points out Torrence who usually watches soap operas during lunch.

Born to John and Mamie Torrence of Charlotte, she has three brothers—Johnny, 25, Jeffrey, 22, William, 16, and two sisters—Shelia, 23, and Tamela, 15. "We have a close family, but I wish we could spend more time together doing things as a family. My mother is very inspirational to me and she gives us our freedom to make our own decisions and I can always count on her to lift me up when I'm down," relates the Gastonia native.

When not tied up at work she enjoys spending time reading novels and watching music videos. "I don't have a favorite entertainer right now because there are so many that I like. Music videos are very entertaining and they can persuade me to like particular songs," adds Torrence who listens to rhythm and blues the majority of the time.

## Kelly Alexander Confesses He's "Mystified" Over Complaints

By Jalyna Strong  
 Post Staff Writer

Kelly Alexander Jr., Executive Secretary of the Charlotte Branch NAACP and former Branch President (1982-86), confesses he's "mystified" over the surfacing complaints about the local organization. In connection with this, he says the complainants attempts to go outside the organization, airing their grievances to the press, is "an attempt to bring pressure on the Branch to do what they think ought to happen."

Ironically, the complainants, who are members in good standing with the Branch, are the first to admit Alexander is correct in this assumption. They are in accord stating their desire is to bring changes in the Branch. Because they feel their concerns are not being acted upon nor heard within the organization, they claim going public is their only recourse. They perceive that "walls" have been built within the organization hindering making changes from inside and certain questionable strategies have been employed to silence their voices of opposition.

Specifically, in a letter to Alexander, dated January 16, 1987, four-year Branch member General Frazier alluded to practices "cronyism and nepotism" within the branch. Her contention is based, in part, on the outcome of the 1986 Branch election which resulted in three members of the Alexander family and one employee of the Alexander family business securing four of the eight Branch offices. Moreover, although Kelly Alexander in 1986 resigned his seat as President of the organization, Frazier says, "He stepped into a more powerful position as the Executive Secretary." It is a position that is described as chief advisor to the president.

The current Alexander family members who are office holders are Kelly Alexander, executive secretary; his brother Alfred Alexander, first vice president; their mother Margaret Alexander, membership secretary, and a cousin-in-law, Allen Rousseau,



Ties That Bind?

Charlotte Branch NAACP members have complaints that Alexander family members are tying up the Branch's official positions, not allowing for participation from other members. Pictured clockwise: Margaret Alexander, Membership Secretary; Kelly Alexander, Executive Secretary; Alfred Alexander, Second Vice President; and Allen Rousseau, Third Vice President.

third vice president.

Linda Crite, an employee of the Alexander Funeral Home, serves as the Branch's treasurer. Frazier also points out in her letter that the Branch's Nominating Committee that recommended this slate of officers was structured in direct violation of NAACP Constitutional rules.

Stated in the Constitution (Article III, Section 2), "The president shall be ex-officio a member of all committees except the Nominating Committee." Alexander it seems circumvented this rule when he as president did hold a seat on the Nominating Committee.

However, Alexander, who has

yet to respond to Frazier's complaint in writing, now says Frazier's allegations of cronyism and nepotism are "absurd."

"Each one of my family members who are involved in these offices have a history of involvement in the organization," he maintains, citing his family's long history in the Charlotte Branch NAACP which goes back to his grandfather and includes his father's integral activity. Alexander did not comment on the fact that the Branch's treasurer is employed by the Alexander Funeral Home. He did say, the violations that occurred on the Nominating Committee were "inadvertencies." "They were not a conscience attempt to subvert the Constitution," he defends. "And the violations were not brought to anyone's attention prior to January," he says.

But differing on this particular statement, Branch member Anna Hood relates, "When Alexander's name was advanced from the floor (for his inclusion on the Nominating Committee), I questioned it and was told it was legal for the President to sit on the Committee.

"If I was in the chair I would not have been a member of the committee," reasons Hood. "Sometimes committees are not free to think and act if the group's leader is sitting there." Asked why she felt Alexander maintained a seat on the Nominating Committee in conflict to the Constitution, Hood answers, "I guess he had a purpose. The people on the Committee had the chance to block certain people." Hood does not specifically cite nepotism in the Branch but she does say, "There are family ties there."

The obvious "family ties" in the controlling offices of the Branch is pointed out as the major obstruction to other Branch members: a block to their voices being heard or their concerns acted upon. This fact also gives weight to allegations that all members are not getting fair opportunities within the Branch.

Says Branch member Dana Bost, "I'd like to see more people getting involved and given re- See KELLY On Page 12A

## U.S. Death Penalty Appears Arbitrary, Racially Biased

The use of the death penalty in the U.S. appeared to be arbitrary and racially biased, and clearly violated international treaties signed by the U.S. Government, Amnesty International said recently.

The worldwide human rights organization said the evidence suggested that the penalty had become "a horrifying lottery" in which politics, money, race and where a crime was committed could play a more decisive part in sending a defendant to the death chamber than the circumstances of the crime itself.

Launching a worldwide campaign against the U.S. death penalty, Amnesty International said the rate of executions was accelerating - 57 prisoners had been executed in the past three years against 11 in the previous seven. A record 1,888 prisoners were on death row as of the end of 1986, waiting to see if they too were to be "electrocuted, gassed, poisoned, hanged or shot dead" - the different U.S. methods of execution.

Those executed and the inmates still on death row included mentally ill or retarded people and prisoners who were still under 18 or who had been juveniles when their crimes were committed, it said.

Imposing death sentences on juvenile offenders was barred by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the American Convention on Human Rights, both signed by the U.S. in 1977, Amnesty International said.

Two prisoners who were juvenile offenders were executed in 1986 and another 37 were on death row - including four who were aged 15 when their crimes were committed.

The execution of mentally ill prisoners contravened guidelines set by the United Nations in 1984, the organization said - but in 1985, for instance, a black farm worker in Virginia was executed for murder after he had been diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic with a mental age of

eight. Blacks convicted of murdering whites had been found more likely to be sentenced to death than any other category of offender - but whites had only rarely been sentenced to death for killing blacks. Over 40% of death row prisoners were black.

Between 1977 and 1986 nearly 90% of prisoners executed had been convicted of killing whites - although there were nearly as many black victims as white ones.

The death penalty was only imposed for certain types of murder and prisoners on death row had been convicted of brutal crimes, Amnesty International said. But the penalty itself cruelly violated the right to life and the organization rejected the view that such treatment of prisoners could ever be justified.

As evidence of cruelty, it cited cases like these:

"It took 17 minutes to execute William Vandiver in the electric chair in Indiana in 1985, and re-

quired five charges of electricity before he was pronounced dead.

"In Mississippi, Jimmy Lee Gray was executed by lethal gas that induced violent convulsions for eight minutes, during which Gray gasped for at least 11 times as he repeatedly struck his head against a pole behind him.

**Blacks Convicted of murdering Whites had been found more likely to be sentenced to Death**

"In Texas, James Autry's executing by lethal injection in 1984 took at least 10 minutes and throughout much of that time he was conscious, moving about and complaining of pain.

Spearheading Amnesty International's campaign is a new 80,000-word report on the use of the death penalty in the U.S. since its reinstatement in 1976 after a nine-year moratorium. Of 50 U.S. states, 37 have death penalty laws - 12 have executed prisoners

since 1976 and another 21 have prisoners on death row.

The report says that chance can play a big part in death sentencing, and points to the wide discretion given to U.S. prosecutors, juries and judges.

A sentence might hinge on where the crime was committed and there are wide disparities in death sentencing across the nation - more than two-thirds of all executions since 1977 have been in the southern states of Florida, Georgia, and Texas.

Calling for abolition of the penalty in the U.S., it points out that, even with the most stringent safeguards, it may be inflicted on the innocent - at least 23 wrongly convicted people are reported to have been executed in the U.S. this century.

The organization's campaign is part of its work against the death penalty worldwide - target countries for abolition campaigns during the 1980s have included China, Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, South Africa, and the Soviet Union.

TURTLE-TALK



The man who moved the mountain began by carrying away small pieces.