

Black Leadership Organization Gives First Awards At Banquet

By William James Brock
Post Staff Writer

"Tonight is more exciting than the Grammys," said Dr. Paula Newsome, as she prepared to announce the winners of the first Focus On Leadership awards. "So many people did so much good work—I know it was difficult to select the winners. To me, they were all winners."

Bob and Gerald Johnson, co-publishers of The Charlotte Post, were among the thirteen people who received awards for community service and achievement in categories ranging from arts to politics and religion. The awards banquet was held last Friday at McDonald's Cafeteria on Beatties Ford Road. More than 300 people paid \$15 a plate to attend the awards dinner.

"Rockin' Ray" Gooding, a WBT radio personality, served as moderator of the Focus On Leadership awards banquet. The veteran announcer kept the banquet hall in a light mood throughout the dinner festivities.

"Everybody in the room seems to be running for something," Gooding quipped after introducing several notable political candidates among the night's guests. "When dinner is over, I'm going to start running for the South Carolina border."

In addition to the Johnson brothers, twelve other people were honored with FOL awards. In order of appearance on the program:

Tekita Lockhart, Jonathan Smith, La Shanda Staton-YOUTH AWARD

Richard Campbell-RELIGIOUS AWARD

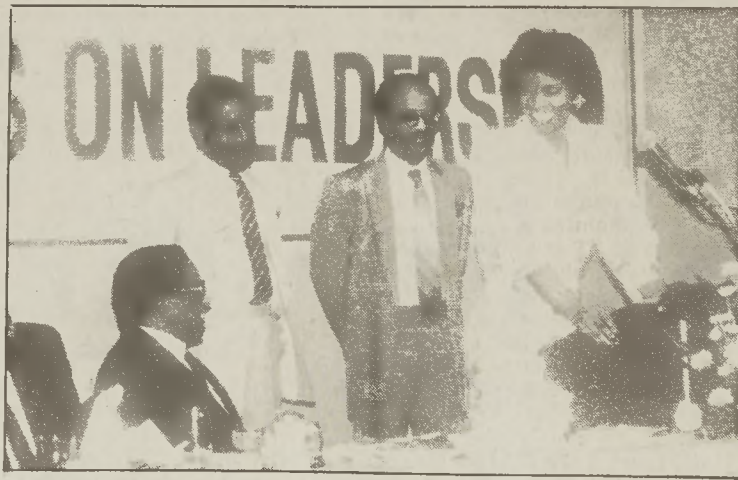
Rebecca Sturgis Taylor-POLITICS AWARD (posthumous presentation)

Dr. Melvin Pinn-HUMAN SERVICE AWARD

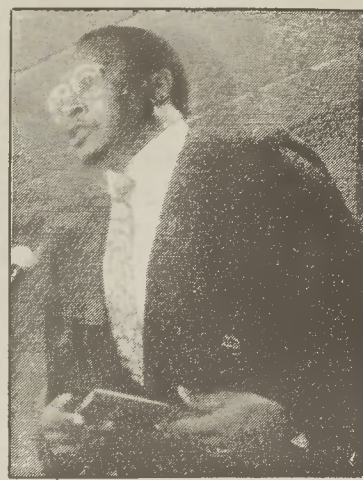
James Underwood-PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Robert Washington



Robert Johnson, Gerald Johnson and Paula Newsome (standing left to right).



John Crawford

Ron Leeper.

The program consists of 18 classes involving leadership skills. Participants pay \$25 to take the course, according to FOL president Kevin Patterson. This includes such topics as black history, black family relationships and business and political leadership in the community. The series of seminars are held at Johnson C. Smith University.

"The achievement awards will be an annual event," Patterson said. "The banquet tickets, program ads and banquet sponsorships generate about 80% of our operating budget at present."

Dianne Barnett, one of those who bought the \$15 tickets, thinks that FOL is a good thing for blacks.

"It gives us a way to develop the community leaders of tomorrow," Barnett said. "Up to now it was just a shake-out situation—with people vying for leadership on a learn-as-you-go basis." Barnett is with the Charlotte office of BarclaysAmerican.

Michelle Thomas echoed those sentiments.

"We need the black role models like Harvey Gantt, Laura MeClettle and Ron Leeper," Thomas said.

"This also helps identify emerging young leaders like Alfred Glover and Sonya McClaughlin."

The FOL awards banquet was not all seriousness and black robes. Robert Washington, who appeared as a surrogate for his honoree wife, brought down the house with a joke about his sex life.

Roosevelt Gardner, a Republican candidate for District 2 Mecklenburg County Commission, managed to crash the banquet. And then insisted the moderator introduce him along with the other candidates at the gala affair.



Michelle Thomas and Roosevelt Gardner.

Photos by M. L. LANEY

John Crawford-EDUCATION AWARD

Mary Battle-BUSINESS/ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

Eleanor Jones Washington-COMMUNITY SERVICE

Tony Feimster-ART AWARD



Kevin Patterson, Ray Gooding, Sarah Stevenson and James Ferguson (left to right).

The aforementioned Johnsons won the Media Award for "keeping the black community constructively informed."

Focus On Leadership came into being in January 1988. It is the result of a three-year dream of former City Council member

Black Students Trailing

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grade. In Wake County, there are 356 black students in programs for those identified by the state as academically gifted — about 2 percent of the black enrollment. That compares to 6,439 whites identified by the state as gifted, or about 15 percent of the white enrollment. Placement in such classes is based in large part on achievement test scores.

The problems have persisted despite the promises that accompanied integration.

"Black students now have access to more books, more microscopes and better-prepared teachers," said Lloyd V. Hackley, chancellor of Fayetteville State University and former Univer-

sity of North Carolina system vice president.

"Still, they are not doing absolutely or relatively better," Hackley said.

But William Peek, senior associate state superintendent, said there had been improvements for all children since integration.

"Where we fall down is in our expectations — we want to move faster and when we don't, we get discouraged," Peek said.

Ideally, Peek said, the state should require an individual education plan, like those compiled for special-education students, for all students. "Ultimately, we have got to look at kids as individuals, not as groups," Peek said.

Economic Sanctions Campaign In N.Y.

New York - The escalating racist violence in New York has prompted African American leaders here to return to an old but effective strategy of the civil rights movement — economic withdrawal. On Friday, February 19, the Committee for Economic Sanctions Against Racism in New York announced that two New York-based companies, Macy's Department Store and Sterling Drugs, Inc. (maker of Bayer Aspirin, Philip's Milk of Magnesia and D-Con), would be the Committee's initial targets.

The targets were announced to an overflow crowd of more than 2,000, which packed Bethany Baptist Church in Brooklyn. As one member of the audience pointed out after the rally, "This is the first time I've seen this many people come out for anything besides a major racial incident. This group is serious." The meeting at Bethany was the culmination of a series of mass meetings which the Committee had held throughout New York since January.

The Committee is a coalition of over 40 African American leaders in New York from established clergy, business, labor, civil rights, community and youth organizations. They began plans for the economic sanctions campaign in December of 1987. The committee has called its effort an "economic sanctions campaign" to underscore its long-range scope and to indicate the broader purpose of the campaign.

The Committee's research revealed that both Macy's and Sterling Drugs maintain relations with South Africa do not deposit in African American banks in New York, do very little advertising with Black media or Black advertising firms and make minimal use of African American contractors and ven-



Photo by Judy Richardson

The Committee for Economic Sanctions Against Racism in New York announced that Macy's Department Store and Sterling Drug, Inc. were its initial targets. At a mass meeting in Brooklyn, NY which kicked off the sanctions campaign are:

(at podium) Rev. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., Executive Director of the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice; (to left of Chavis) Mr. Kermit Eady, President of the Black United Fund of New York.

dors. Additionally, Macy's relegates most of its African American employees to visible but low-paying cashier and sales jobs, while promoting its white

employees to executive management positions.

The Committee for Sanctions is hoping to nationalize its campaign in the coming months.

Particularly as the Easter season approaches. As one organizer declared, "We have a profound responsibility not only to struggle, but to win!"

N.C.'s Top Democrats

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support him in the race," said Poole, who was Sanford's 1986 campaign manager.

Poole noted that in the 1986 Senate primary, Jackson endorsed Theodore Kinney, a black real estate agent from Fayetteville, who ran against Sanford.

"We didn't take that as a personal thing," Poole said. "I'm sure that Reverend Jackson doesn't take Senator Sanford's endorsement of Senator Gore as a personal thing."

"I think Governor Hunt and Senator Sanford's position in support of issues important to the black community is longstanding and historical, and that hasn't changed in any way," Poole said.

Any bruised feelings seemed unlikely to spill over into this fall's governor's race, because Lt.

Gov. Bob Jordan, the likely Democratic nominee, remained neutral in the primary.

"I think Bob kept himself pretty much above the fray and kept himself clean," Michaux said. "He conducted himself in a way that Hunt and Sanford should have. I don't think he ticked off anybody."

Rep. Daniel C. Blue Jr., D-Wake, state chairman of Jackson's campaign, said Gore's performance was not particularly impressive, noting that he attracted only about one-third of the Democratic vote.

"They (Sanford and Hunt) basically activated the entire Democratic network they built over the last quarter-century," Blue said. "Notwithstanding that, the runs Jackson and Dukakis were pretty darn impressive."

Local Candidates Prepare For May

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lection in House District 60. He was first elected to the seat in 1984 and was reelected in 1986.

Shirley Fulton, a District Court Judge, is running for a newly created Superior Court seat.

The Duke Law School graduate was an assistant District Attorney in Charlotte before Gov. Jim Martin appointed her to her cur-

rent post last year.

Yvonne Evans, 36, is trying to succeed Fulton in the District Court. Another Duke Law graduate, she is a practicing attorney in Charlotte.

Evans is best known as counsel to Westside Coalition Against the Garbage Dump, a group of citizens trying to block construction of a recycling center on LaSalle Street near a black neighborhood.

Westside Recreation Center Talks

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Cunningham says he was encouraged to initiate an effort to develop the property as it was originally intended. Cunningham proposed in his letter to Northwood Estate residents that the community could share in developing the property. He invited the residents to visit the site the first Saturday in March at which time he presented schematic drawings and details of the proposed project.

"We can make the decision as to what we want in our neighborhood by investing in our own neighborhood," says Cunningham, who has already solicited

a commitment from 100 interested persons.

Estimating that the purchase and development of the property will total approximately \$400,000 - \$500,000, Cunningham is looking for at least 1,000 investors at \$500 per investor.

Saturday's meeting will be the last public meeting on the project, says Cunningham. "We will have a lay-out of the property and offer suggestions as to how the property can be developed. Attorney Calvin Brown will be on hand to answer legal questions and make recommendations."

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