

Covington Heads Health Center

By LORA VANDERHALL
Lifestyles Editor

Valencia Covington entered Johnson C. Smith University at age 16. At 21, she had her masters in public health from UNC School of Public Health in Chapel Hill. At age 25, she received her medical degree from UNC's school of medicine.

Today at age 31, she recently became the health services director for C. W. Williams Health Center located at 3333 Wilkinson Boulevard.

As health service director, Covington is over a staff of three doctors; a family physician, pediatrician and internal medicine specialist; four nurses, an x-ray technician and a pharmacist.

The Center is a private, not-for-profit community health center dedicated to providing area families and businesses with quality, managed, primary medical care.

Before coming to C. W. Williams, Dr. Covington was an emergency room physician at Union Memorial Hospital and she worked for UNCC's student health center.

Most recently, she was in private practice with Metrolina Family Physicians.

"I was on maternity leave when I made the change from private practice to the Center," said Covington. "I didn't go into medicine for the money. I went into it because I have a commitment to helping people."

The idea for the Center came about in 1981. The late Dr. C. W. Williams saw a need for a medical facility within the community that would address the needs of uninsured and underinsured persons.



Covington

The Center, which was previously named Metrolina Comprehensive Health Center, Inc., began operating under the name of Dr. Williams after his death in 1982.

"The Center is partially government funded in order to subsidize the care of patients in need," said Covington. "We offer a wide range of services and we accept all patients including the homeless as well as the paying customers."

"We're committed to providing care for the patient and family as a whole. With our sliding pay scale, the least amount a person will pay is about \$6," she added.

The Center provides health care for approximately 65 people each day. An estimated 75 percent of the patients are black.

The services offered by the Center includes: treatment of illness or injury, radiology services, physical exams, minor

emergencies, pediatric and adolescent care, disease and illness screenings, family planning, immunizations, laboratory, pharmacy, hospitalizations, referrals to specialists, health promotion/diseases prevention and after-hours coverage.

"We also do industrial medicine," she added.

Covington says that she talks to her patients a lot in an effort to make them understand the treatments and medicine prescribed to them.

"When kids come in for physicals that's my opportunity to talk to them...and believe me I do," she said.

As health services director, Covington has some specific objectives for the future of the Center.

"We need more prenatal care in this area. Right now residents on the westside have to go to Charlotte Memorial for prenatal care," Covington said.

"I want to start some outreach programs within the community. I want to try and identify some of the health problems and go into the community and teach."

In addition to health care issues, she also wants to help build a more positive image for the center.

"I want to improve the image of the area so that patients will not feel threatened to come here," said Covington. "Some people think they'll get mugged if they come here but with the general clean up of the Wilkinson Boulevard area we will become more accessible."

Covington has very little spare time, but when she does she spends it with her husband J.R. and their four-month-old daughter, Kimisha Valene.

Community Bulletin Board

•The "Association of Couples for Marriage Enrichment" will have a meeting at the WomanReach Center on Friday, March 17, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at suite 605 Midtown Square, The Gallery.

•The PTA Thrift Store Auction will be held on Friday, April 7 from 6:30-10 p.m. at Alexander Graham Junior High School, 1800 Runnymede Lane.

•Eastover Elementary School will sponsor a Family Workshop on Family Nutrition and Parenting Skills at the Little Rock Apartments off of West Boulevard on March 16, 6-8 p.m.

•The Nar Anon Family Group meets weekly on Sundays at Mercy Hospital at 2 p.m. The group is for family members or those who are concerned about a problem of drug addiction in a loved one.

•The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Urban League's Word Processing Training Center is accepting applications for their next class which begins April 3. For more information call 376-9834.

•The Senior Employment Services at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Senior Centers has a variety of job opportunities available for people 55 and over. For more information call 334-3056.

•Former students, faculty and friends of Logan School are asked to contact Elmira Polk or Margaret Mathis at P. O. Box 3174, Concord, N.C. 28025. A reunion is planned for June 29-July 2.

•The 1962 graduating class of West Charlotte Senior High will meet every fourth Sunday at the Greenville Neighborhood Center at 3:30 p.m.

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The Charlotte chapter of the National Council of Negro Women recently held a program saluting the achievements of famous Afro-American women. Various youth from the community portrayed these women. Pictured above are some of the participants along with members of NCNW: first row (l-r) June Davenport, Adeline Williams,

Mamie Thompson, Rev. Walter Ingram, Thomasenia Johnson; second row (l-r) Mesdames Abernathy, Alleean Conner, Rachel Davidson, Tiffany McCaskill, Tameka Davis, Melanie Ingram, Nichole Grier, Ethel Guest, Gladys Ingram, Amy Davis; third row (l-r) Vernell Howard, Nancy English, Rosa Robinson and Emily Ford.



Mr. and Mrs. Walter Horsley are the first winners of the Charlotte Post 15th Anniversary Drawing. The Horsley's won a limousine ride to

a banquet, courtesy of Elite Unlimited. Lonnie Massey, owner of Elite, is also pictured above.

Carole's Corner
With Carole Ricks

hard, as far as I can tell. I get really upset when my brother says he's looking for the "right" kind of job. This brother of mine has been in and out of many jobs ever since he graduated. My parents are encouraging my brother to be the way he is by waiting on him. When I tell my parents to put my brother out, they tell me to mind my own business.

I love my parents and my brother, but how can I help them?

A Loving Sister

Dear Loving Sister,

You seem to be a very caring and concerned person. You can

only help your parents and your brother as much as they will let you help them. Tell your brother, privately, what your feelings are about the situation. He may listen to you. Don't talk in a critical manner. Don't talk in a "holier than thou" manner. Do offer constructive suggestions for job hunting. However, if your brother has become very comfortable financially, physically and emotionally, he has no reason to move out. Try to talk to your parents and ask them to encourage your brother to be on his own.

If these efforts fail, all you can do is to leave your parents and brother alone, with each other and continue with your own life.

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All letters should be received no later than May 1, 1989. Winners will be announced in our "MOTHER'S DAY" special edition.