

# Statewide Project Institute Conducts Science Seminar

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## "Horn In West"

Horn In the West, the nation's third oldest outdoor drama, will honor residents of Wake County on Saturday, July 8. All residents, regardless of age, will be admitted for \$4.50 each, half of the regular adult admission price.

Reservations are required for this special discount, and the reservation must be made by 6 p.m., July 7. The tickets may be purchased from 2 p.m. until 8 p.m. on Saturday, and proof of residency must be shown at that time. This proof may include a driver's license, power bill or other document with the resident's name and a Wake County address.

For reservations call Horn at 704-264-2120

GREENSBORO—On July 15, the Greensboro affiliate of the National Black Child Development Institute will conduct a math and science career seminar for black girls and their parents at the Marriott Airport Hotel from 9 a.m. to noon. This is part of a statewide project funded by the U.S. Department of Education to encourage black girls to study math and science.

Two other chapters of the institute are also participating in the project. BCDI-Charlotte inaugurated the workshop series at Discovery Place science center on May 20-21. Approximately 100 girls ages 10-13 brought sleeping bags with them to the museum to spend an evening touring the facility and listening to a panel of black women in technical career

fields. These included a chemical engineer, an accountant, an architectural engineer, a computer programmer, a science teacher, and a nurse. The Durham affiliate will host the final seminar in September.

Dr. Walter Childs, III, regional science coordinator at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and consultant to the project, describes the problem BCDI seeks to address: "In most math and science competitions and classes, I have found few black girls who were willing to be competitive. I believe that because of negative expectations by teachers and students, black girls fear they will be isolated if they are successful in these subjects."

Tresca Byrd, a mathematics teacher at Page Senior High School,

adds, "As a mathematics teacher, I am also painfully aware that a disproportionately low number of black girls enroll in key math classes. These classes are the stepping stones to institutions of higher learning and careers in the math and science area."

The NBCDI's project is aimed at exposing black girls ages 10-13 to a wide range of technical careers and motivating them to enroll in math and science courses when they reach junior and senior high school.

"For the past several years, the Greensboro affiliate has focused on education," stated Sarah Herbin, project coordinator and founder of the organization. "We feel that it is crucial that black girls begin at an early age to prepare for the kinds of

job opportunities which will be in demand by the time they reach adulthood. Being literate in the areas of math and science will be a necessity for the high-tech jobs of tomorrow."

The July 15 seminar will feature workshops for girls and their parents hosted by Dr. Walter Childs, Dr. Vallie Guthrie director of the Greensboro Area Mathematics and Science Education Center, as well as an architectural engineer, physician, and chemist.

In addition, Ms. Eunice Dudley, co-owner of Dudley Products, will speak about the need for girls to prepare themselves in the areas of math and science as well as how math and science provide the basis for her business. Seminar participants will



**ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP**  
Clarence C. Coleman, Jr., has been admitted to the medical school at UNC in Chapel Hill. Coleman received a four-year academic scholarship and this summer works as an assistant instructor in a federally-funded medical education program. He just received his BS in biology at UNC. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Coleman, Sr. of 810 Delany Dr. His father is a pharmacist at Hamlin Drug Co.

## Tuskegee Gains Fame As Pioneer, Continues Trait

TUSKEGEE, Ala.—Tuskegee Institute gained increased fame 73 years ago after Dr. George Washington Carver, nationally acclaimed scientist, authored a pamphlet, "How to Grow the Peanut and 105 Ways of Preparing It for Consumption." History records that shortly afterwards, the boll weevil struck the South's King Cotton, and farmers turned to Dr. Carver and the peanut, successfully transforming their dying agrarian economy in the process.

Today, Tuskegee University is on the verge of helping astronauts survive long, intergalactic trips in space by eating the nutritious sweet potato grown in a soilless culture on spaceships.

After three years and a \$600,000 grant from the National Space Agency, 11 scientists at the famed Tuskegee institution are on the verge of successfully growing hydroponic sweet potatoes.

Tuskegee University is now a National Center for Sweet Potato Research. Dr. Walter Hill, dean of the Department of Agriculture, is director of the project. Experts have projected manned space missions of up to 20 years or more in the next 15 or 20 years. Food production in space, then, they say, will be essential to support these extended missions.

Dr. Phil Loretan, the program's coordinator, in a telephone interview, told NNPA that the project is probably three years from full completion. Right now the Tuskegee scientists are experimenting with spacing of plants within channels. Presently, they are 10 inches apart, but they are shrinking this space to five inches in attempts to maximize production since space in the spaceships will be of limited capacity.

Loretan said the sweet potato was chosen as "one of eight crops," because of its overall nutritious carbohydrate value. "Its yellow or orange flesh is a good source of vitamin A and the white flesh variety can be alternated to cut out the vitamin A which can accumulate in the body causing toxicity." He also said that the potato vine tips can be used as a nutritious green vegetable. They are also experimenting in attempts to get larger yields by changing nutrient solutions. These solutions contain major elements of nitrogen, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, and calcium, Dr. Loretan said, with minor elements of boron, iron, and manganese.

Scientists are also learning about the amounts of chemical elements plants require. "In earth farming, we never knew precisely how much they absorbed or the optimum amount of each required," Loretan said.

These nutrients are pumped out of a reservoir through a pipe at the upper end of the channel. The nutrients flow as a thin film across the bottom of the channel, nourishing plant roots, then back into the reservoir. This recycling process is also important. Nothing can be wasted in space, he said. "Everything will have to be used. The cycle must be closed."

One of the tough problems yet confronting the Tuskegee scientists is how to utilize the fibrous roots of the plants. "The Kennedy (Space) Center in Florida is looking at these non-edible parts. The roots are highly nutritious. So maybe they can be ground up and used as a nutrient again," Dr. Loretan told NNPA. He also revealed that experiments had been successful in clipping the final tips of the potato every two weeks without affecting the growth of its roots.

The hydroponic potato, which some experts predict will have a major impact on earth farm production of the future, requires about 120 days to attain mature growth, Loretan said.

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