

LE JOURNAL

West Virginia State College Office of International Affairs Newsletter

Vol. 2, Number 3

Fall 1999

West Virginia State College receives \$200,000 grant from the International Development Partnerships Agreement between the United Negro College Fund/The College Fund and the United States Agency for International Development

West Virginia State College has been awarded a \$200,000 grant to enhance the development of an International Program at WVSC. It will further expand the program developed between the National University of Benin (NUB) and West Virginia State College through connecting our libraries. Under the terms of the grant, six librarians from WVSC will travel to Benin during the next three years (1999-2002) to learn about African librarianship, and six librarians from NUB will come to Institute, WV to learn about American librarianship. It will include an introduction to public and technical services, archives, and technology. At the end of three years, the Drain-Jordan library will become a depository of Benin government publications. It will help academic and other scholars interested in doing research on Benin by allowing them to come to the WVSC library for their research needs rather than travel to Benin. An official announcement of this grant will be made at a banquet on October 7, 1999 in Institute, WV. Guests will include the Honorable Ambassador of Benin to the United States.

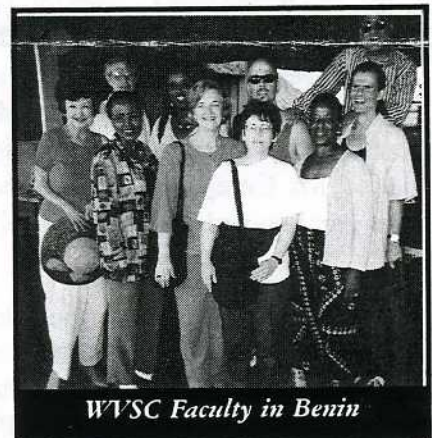
West Virginia State College faculty travel to Benin

After many months of preparation, including a one-month French language summer training session, a group composed of faculty and administrators from WVSC made the long trek across the Atlantic Ocean to the West African nation of Benin. Faculty from the departments of Poli-Sci, MFL, English, Business, Sociology, & Comm., used the trip to gather cultural and language data in order to revise courses for the new international studies minor. The study trip was made possible by a grant from the Department of Education Title VI Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program.

During their stay, the group met with officials and faculty counterparts from the National University of Benin, the US Ambassador to Benin, USAID and American Cultural Center representatives, and other individual contacts during their two week stay. The group also visited several towns in the southern part of the country: Cotonou, Porto Novo, Abomey-Calavi, Ganvie, Abomey, and Ouidah.

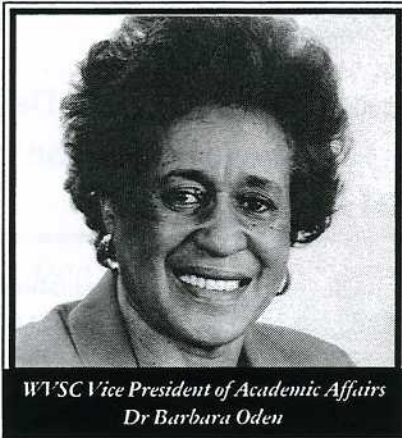
Drs. Sharma, Natsis, and Ford-Ahmed used this time to meet with the National University of Benin Library Director, Dr. Pascal Gandaho, to develop the final details of the 3-year partnership between the West Virginia State College Drain Jordan Library and the National University of Benin library. The partnership will begin with a librarian exchange in the Fall 1999.

The faculty prepared for their trip to Benin in the month of June through a special French Language Institute that included a special guest lecturer from Benin, Dr. Simon Adetona Akindes. Dr. Akindes presently teaches Instructional Technology at the University of Wisconsin parkside in Kenosha, Wisconsin. It was, in fact, Dr. Akindes who suggested to Dr. Ford-Ahmed that the group choose Benin for the faculty work-trip. The two had met in Athens, Ohio while working on their Ph.D.'s at Ohio University. Dr. Akindes prepared a Power Point presentation for the group and fielded a countless number of questions throughout his two-day visit. The group also watched a film on women in Benin and neighboring countries of the region. Dr. Akindes concluded his visit by participating in the French language classes.



WVSC Faculty in Benin

Reflections from across the ocean ...



*WVSC Vice President of Academic Affairs
Dr. Barbara Oden*

Last November WVSC Vice-president of Academic Affairs, Dr. Barbara J. Oden had the opportunity to spend a week in England. The purpose of her trip was to solidify plans for an exchange agreement between West Virginia State College and the University of Exeter. Looking back on her experience in England, Dr. Oden was struck by the notion of time and history found on a continent that holds the keys to much of our own past. She was fascinated by the many historical sites and areas that reflect a past that, although very different from ours in this country, nonetheless reminded her of the relationship over the years between the two nations. Dr. Oden also relished the slower pace of life in England compared to our more "frenzied" way of doing things in the United States. She feels that we can learn a lesson from the Europeans by relaxing more and enjoying some of the simple things in life.

International Affairs Profile: Christine M. Corey

Christine M. Corey, Senior Program Officer in the Office of International Education and Graduate Programs Service, U.S. Department of Education, was West Virginia State College's 1999 graduation keynote speaker and recipient of an honorary doctorat. Ms. Corey has been with the Department of Education since 1987, first working with the Fulbright Seminars Abroad program, and for the past 11 years the Title VI Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language program. The Undergraduate program provides two- or three-year grants to institutions of higher education to plan, develop and carry out programs to strengthen and improve undergraduate instruction in international studies, area studies and foreign languages. Over this eleven-year period, Ms. Corey has administered over 300 grants made to two-year and four-year state and private liberal colleges and universities.



*T. Ford-Ahmed enjoys an afternoon with
Christine Corey and mother Mary Corey*

Ms. Corey comes to the field of international education through her seven years of experience as an English as a Second Language instructor. Her first teaching position was with Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland, where she taught for one academic year after receiving a M.A. in Linguistics/TESOL from the State University of New York at Stony Brook in 1980. From 1981-1988, Ms. Corey continued to teach, working at a number of local Washington, D.C. universities and colleges, such as The American University, The University of the District of Columbia, and Montgomery College. During this period she also worked as a historical interpreter at the Woodrow Wilson House Museum.

Besides her role as a program officer, Ms. Corey gives a minimum of 8-10 presentations annually on federal funding opportunities to academic associations and organizations throughout the country. She also contributed a chapter to the American Council of Education's publication, "Internationalizing the Undergraduate Curriculum: A Handbook for Campus Leaders". In February, 1999, Ms. Corey co-chaired a 3-day conference in Merida, Mexico, titled: "Global Impacts, Local Responses: The Case of the Americas," which was convened to facilitate a better understanding on the impacts of globalization in the Americas for the academic community in both the U.S. and Mexico.

Experiencing and understanding other cultures has always been important to Ms. Corey, and she has made this a high priority in her life, traveling to Mexico, Central and South America, as well as to North and Sub-Saharan Africa and Western/Eastern Europe.

The 8th Annual Multicultural/International Awareness Festival & Disabilities Day

took place on Thursday, April 29, from 10:00-2:00 p.m. on the Student Plaza. The event was sponsored by Collegiate Support and Counseling and the Office of International Affairs, and hosted by David Reese and his assistant Aaron Davis from the campus radio station WVSC 106.7 FM. Activities included free campus picnic, music, dance, stepshow, folklore, international food sampling, fashion show, displays and booths. Although most activities took place on the Student Plaza, students set up booths in the Student Union featuring Asia, Japan, South Africa, Spain, Puerto Rico, and Quebec, Canada. The International Student Union organized "taste of" booths outside as well. While the main activities and booths were spread throughout the Student Plaza and the Student Union, WVSC's resident scholar, Dr. Rauof Mama, Benin folklorist, captivated an audience in Davis 103 for the faculty lecture series. He gave a talk on "Western Images of Africa."



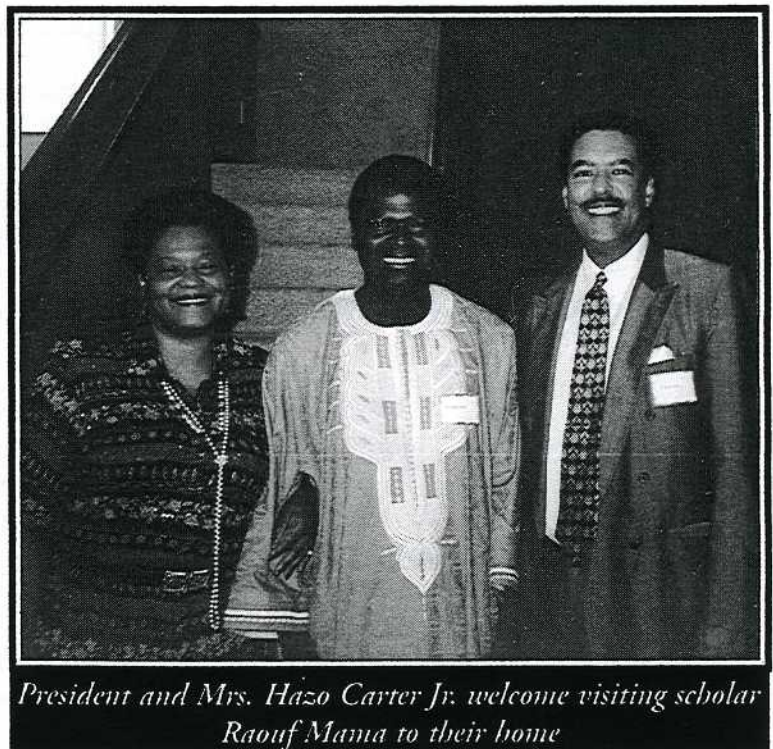
Barbara Cary directs participants for the fashion show



Russian folklore group Tostinato performs Russian folklore

On April 28, a group of faculty, staff, and students were treated to a special luncheon at President Carter's house by WVSC's First Lady, Phyllis Carter. The event was held to honor our visiting resident scholar, Beninese folklorist, Dr. Raouf Mama. The guest list was comprised mainly of international students and faculty with international interests. The luncheon offered a fine occasion for faculty and staff to meet and speak with Dr. Mama, as well as to mingle among themselves.

Thanks to Pat Cline's honed organizational skills, the Multicultural/International Fair was a success by any means of measure. Kellie Dunlap and participants of the Disabilities Day element of the fair added a unique dimension to the overall ambiance. Barbara Cary did a fabulous job of organizing and hosting the special fashion show that took place on the center stage. The fair reached its peak with the "as good as you'll ever get" *a capella* performance of the National Anthem by Quandora Hornbuckle. Other events of the day included the Russian folklore group Tostinato, Tom Swanke's Irish folklore, and the AΦA step show.



President and Mrs. Hazo Carter Jr. welcome visiting scholar Raouf Mama to their home

