

# LE JOURNAL

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## 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.

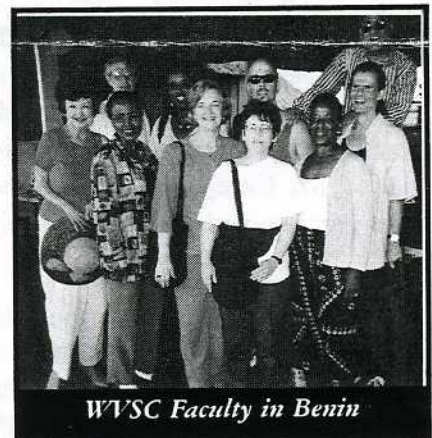
## West Virginia State College faculty travel to Benin

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

