

City Council Victory for WSSU Senior

Contributed by James Cherry, Brittani Parker -- Black College Wire
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Derwin Montgomery defeats incumbent in primary, wins general election

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Derwin Montgomery, a senior at Winston-Salem State University, won the East Ward seat on the Winston-Salem City Council on Nov. 3. Montgomery, a native of Hopkins, S.C., won unopposed with 741 votes, despite a write-in campaign to keep incumbent Jocelyn Johnson on the council. Montgomery defeated Johnson in the Democratic primary Sept. 15.

"I think it was great," says Sharrod Patterson, a senior and fellow WSSU student.

Patterson compared Montgomery's political accomplishment to President Obama.

"History starts. It started with Obama, and it moved on over to Derwin. And hopefully [we can] keep that student spirit going, voting and actually trying to make a difference."

Montgomery said that he will be sworn in at City Hall, Dec. 7.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to serve in this capacity," he said. "I'm grateful for the opportunity."

Montgomery, a political science major, became the first traditional student in WSSU history to be nominated for that position. "I don't know how to describe what I feel," Montgomery said the day after the primary election.

On campus, Montgomery campaigned with fliers, e-mails, and promotion from student organizations. He also helped register students to vote and started a carpool service to take students to the polls. Student leaders assisted him in carpooling.

"I decided to help Derwin take students to the polls," said Shaun Trotter, senior, exercise science major.

"This was a great accomplishment not only for me, but for the social science department and the University as a whole," Montgomery said.

"The political science department, which is a part of Democracy Now, was very encouraging of my campaign," Montgomery said that the first issues he plans to address are public safety and economic development.

Montgomery holds several leadership roles in campus organizations including Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Followers of Christ Under Salvation, and the Student Government Association Student Senate.

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James Cherry and Brittani Parker write for the News Argus, the Winston-Salem State University student newspaper, which originally published a version of this article.