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Student takes a spin on "Wheel of Fortune"

JANUARY 2, 2007

When the Wheel-Mobile rolled into Savannah one spring day Crystal Tyson, a Georgia Southern University broadcasting student, was overjoyed.

When Tyson, a self-professed "Wheel of Fortune" junkie, heard that the show was looking for contestants in her hometown, she almost didn't believe it. "I went to their Web site to verify it," she said.

Two sessions were held for the hundreds of would-be contestants who were selected randomly to participate in the first round. Tyson's name was not selected at either session. A few weeks after the Wheel-Mobile rolled out of Savannah, Tyson received a call from a contestant coordinator informing her she had been randomly selected for a final audition. With more than 100 people at the final audition, Tyson knew she would have to stand out from the rest. "I knew this would be the only chance I would have to shine, because they had no other record of me," she said.

After a round of puzzles with the large group, all participants took a written test before the field was narrowed to 20. "When they called my name I was so excited," Tyson said. "Then they broke us into groups of three to have a mock game. When I got the next puzzle I started yelling and cheering.

"We were told that we probably wouldn't know if we had been chosen for about two to four weeks. I received a letter the following week saying that I had been selected," she added. The letter informed her that she had been selected, but that it can take up to 18 months before being called for filming. "At the end of August, I received a voice mail from a contestant coordinator asking if I would come out in two weeks to tape for College Week. I called her back immediately and said yes," said Tyson.

In September, Tyson, her mother and her aunt traveled to Culver City, Calif. On the day of taping participants had to arrive at the studio at 7 a.m. to meet the other players and familiarize themselves with the game. "After meeting everyone we went onto the set to practice on the wheel. When I first walked on the set I was in awe and I didn't realize how heavy the wheel was until I tried to spin it the first time," she said. "They taped six shows that day and mine was the sixth.

"During the taping I solved the second toss-up puzzle and the next puzzle," she added. "I had been in the lead since the beginning of the game and knew the third toss-up, but when I buzzed in to answer my mind went blank. During the next puzzle I got a letter wrong and the wheel never came back around to me.

'Even though I didn't go on to the bonus round I had a great experience. I'd tell anyone interested to give it a try, but number one, you've got to love the game and two, be a critical thinker. When you're in front of the wheel, it's much harder than when you're watching it on TV.'

College Week airs the week of January 8, 2007.

Bernice King to speak for MLK celebration

JANUARY 2, 2007

Rev. Bernice King, youngest daughter of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King, will speak at Georgia Southern University Tuesday, Jan.16, for the campus-wide celebration of Dr. King's birthday. Her presentation is at 7 p.m. in the Performing Arts Center.

A nationally known orator, Rev. King has inspired thousands of people from all walks of life. First called to the ministry at age 17, King preached her trial sermon at Ebenezer Baptist Church in 1988 and was ordained in 1990. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Spelman College. On the morning of her ordination she was awarded both a master of divinity degree and a doctor of laws degree from Emory University.

King is the assistant pastor at Greater Rising Star Baptist Church in Atlanta, where she oversees the youth and women's ministry. She is a member of the board of directors of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change.

She is also an attorney and a member of the Georgia Bar. Previously, as a law clerk in the Fulton County Juvenile Court System, King experienced first-hand the growing number of teens who have become victims of the legal system. As a result, she has become an advocate for the rehabilitation of at-risk youth.

King is the author of *Hard Questions, Heart Answers*, a collection of her sermons and speeches, and is working on a second book. She has been named by *Ebony Magazine* as 'one of the 50 leaders of tomorrow.'

For more information about King's presentation contact the Multicultural Student Center at 912-681-5409.