

## Fayetteville State University

### *Women's History Month Project*



Rose Rosenfeld Freedman and the tragedy of the sweatshop fire that killed several of her co-workers in the Triangle Factory, at the turn of the century in New York, are not well-known historical facts. The incident became the rallying point for the institution of International Women's History Month, a formal observance of global significance. Another important response is the formal resolution of the American Congress. Our celebrations at FSU expanded the traditional conceptual framework that was the impetus for our first celebration, while solidly affirming the Congressional Resolution. Themes from the past metaphorically defined women in a relational definition: **Celebrating Women: Our Multiple Selves, 1998, A Century of Women: Contemplating the Fem-Millennium, 1999, A New Millennium: A New Resolve, 2000. Celebrating Women: Mind, Body, and Soul 2001** extended the

definition of community, erasing physical boundaries and reconstructing bridges to eradicate gaps among academia and the community, men and women, adults and children, the ideal and the real, praxis and theory. The month's activities were intellectually, spiritually, historically, poetically, and culturally stimulating, while fulfilling the promise of providing a forum for cross cultural discourse on all facets of women's achievements. Our 2001 Project marked the beginning of a somewhat different thematic focus. While the past celebrations seemed to emphasize the woman as an individual of multiple identities, many of which are taken from somebody or something outside of herself, this celebration highlighted the woman as a separate identity with a life of her own. The emphasis was on a definition that first began within and then moved outwardly. Nothing better symbolizes this outward motion than the Candlelight March vigil to remember, recognize, and honor university and community women from the past, present, and future. Although commemorative in nature, the event had an intimacy of spirit and purpose that called upon each participant to look within and then move outwardly. The vigil, our commemorative angel, and logo were exciting milestones of the 2001 Project Celebration.

Committee members have worked diligently to ensure that each year's Project was rewarding and that it brought distinction to everyone in the community and the University. This year's 2002 committee members include Blanche Radford Curry and Beverly Miller, who have worked together since the 1998 Project, as well as, Derick Smith, Pamela Smith, Norma Campbell, Priscilla Manarino-Leggett since 2001, and Annie Butler, Theresa Thompson-Pinckney in 2002. Other former members included Earnest Curry, Kelli Cardenas Walsh, Theresa Taylor, Janice Leggett James, E.J. Williams, Soni Martin, Jilly Ngwainmbi, and Susan Franzblau, and a host of student work scholars listed on our 2002 bookmark. Many individuals listed on our 2002 bookmark and several august sponsors have been very gracious in their support: Barnes & Nobles, Inc., EYP Productions, The Challenger, Cumberland Community Foundation, Cumberland Community's Women's Agenda, Fayetteville News & Observer, The Fayetteville Press, Junior League of Fayetteville, The Links, Inc. of Fayetteville, NC, Math Central Station, National Organization of Women, The Rise, Inc., Salomon Smith Barney, Inc., Member of Citigroup Foundation, USA-airways, Up and Coming Magazine, "Impact," WUKS 107.7 KISS FM/WZFX FOXY 99.1, Express Mortgage, Inc., and Shaw Food Services. With our 2002 Project, CELEBRATING WOMEN: NEW HORIZONS, we hope to encourage active dialogue of ideas and exchange information, to offer insights, and to make inquiries -- keeping alive the communal dialogue first began by the establishment of the International Women's Day around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

*Blanche Radford Curry & Beverly Diane Miller, 2001*