



ANGELOU'S SUGGESTIONS

August 14, 2003

Perhaps the first two original economic development strategies to be offered in this area in a long time were presented Tuesday by Angelos Angelou, whose firm is doing a study of an eight-county Northwest North Carolina area.

Angelou made many suggestions and observations in a two-hour presentation at the Greater Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce offices, but two in particular stood out.

The industry group dealing with design, from graphic arts to industrial product design, and the computer software needed to pursue design concepts, could be an ideal niche in which Winston-Salem could differentiate itself from the competition, Angelou suggested. He also suggested that business recruiters concentrate more effort on the small- and medium-size companies.

In a presentation that clearly impressed the audience, Angelou demonstrated why his firm, AngelouEconomics, is one of the top consultants in the field.

In suggesting design, Angelou pointed out that biotechnology is a relatively small field, already crowded with many players who have more experience and more resources than Winston-Salem does, despite the top reputation of the Wake Forest University and Novant medical complexes.

Again, he urged the city to help the N.C. School of the Arts to develop a visual arts program concentrated on the technology end, with computer animation and graphics and design software.

Speaking less than a block from the Loewy Building, which is named after perhaps the best known American industrial designer, Raymond Loewy, Angelou made it clear that he didn't think the city should abandon its biotechnology emphasis, but that it shouldn't "put all its eggs in that one basket."

Another area thwas the field he called "informatics," particularly bioinformatics. He explained that medical research is relying more and more on computer simulation and less on the laboratory. Computer software that can handle the complex human genome and the study of what genes do what is a rapidly growing field.

Angelou also recognized the huge importance to the area economy in the future of the FedEx distribution hub at the regional airport and talked about logistics and distribution as another industry area Winston-Salem recruiters should target.

Several weeks ago, Angelou poked a hornet's nest when he reported on preliminary results from a survey of the eight-county area and what its residents thought. There was criticism of the local Chamber of Commerce that sparked a flurry of rebuttals and some backtracking by the consultants.

If anyone was seriously wondering whether a mistake had been made in hiring AngelouEconomics, that concern was eliminated Tuesday. Angelou provided some original and

first-rate strategies. Of course, ideas are easier than their implementation. But Angelou has given us a starting point and a goal. The two hours Tuesday morning were well spent.

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