

NEWS

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Photo by Callie Jennings

Whitesides Hall was dedicated to Alfred J. Whitesides Jr. Feb. 19 for his many contributions to the Asheville campus and community.

New name for New Hall: UNC Asheville Board of Trustees honors former president

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Community members, students, faculty and staff joined together to recognize Alfred J. Whitesides Jr. with the renaming of New Hall to Whitesides Hall, on Feb. 19.

"He has done a lot," said Maya Newlin, student body president. "I know that he integrated his high school, he is a native from Asheville, he was part of AS-CORE (Asheville Student Committee on Racial Equality), he was a trustee here and a chair of our board. He's very deserving."

Whitesides also supported the Bulldogs with more than 15 years of service to the university and many more to the UNC system. He is a board member of the UNC Asheville Bulldog Ath-

letic Association (BAA), having served as president of both the BAA and the UNC Asheville Board of Trustees. He also received an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from UNCA in 2012.

According to campus officials, he is known as a successful businessman, a community leader and a living touchstone to the city's struggle to eliminate segregation.

Honoring Whitesides in February seemed like the perfect choice, according to Newlin.

"Al is black and we are in Black History Month and it just so happened that the board of trustees meeting fell in February," Newlin said. "So, we thought it would just be a really iconic time with all of the programming that the Multicultural

Student Programs we're doing and Center for Diversity Education. We thought it would be a good 'bang for our buck' and honor our history that has already happened and start a new history and move on from there."

The larger issue of changing buildings' names was brought up last April.

"The conversation had started before I began, but last spring, some students had talked about the names of our buildings and how we are looking at our history," said Mary K. Grant, chancellor of UNCA. "They reflect points in time; they reflect people and some of them are fascinating in terms of what they've done and the differences that they've made."

Grant said this talk among students occurred simultaneous-

ly with several conversations across the country about what names should be on buildings. Earlier in the year Vance Monument in downtown Asheville and Vance Hall on UNCA's campus were some of those topic discussions.

"Myself, Keith Knox, James Whalen and Lee all presented to the Board of Trustees about Vance Hall and renaming New Hall to Carolyn Briggs, who was our first black graduate," Newlin said. "From my understanding none of us were really devoted to the name Carolyn Briggs, but we wanted the name to be after someone of color because it hadn't been named yet — New Hall was just a label."

Honoring Whitesides has been a conversation topic amongst the

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The Blue Banner is UNC Asheville's student newspaper. We publish each Wednesday except during summer sessions, finals week and holiday breaks. Our office is located in Karpen Hall 019.

The Blue Banner is a designated forum for free speech and welcomes letters to the editor, considering them on basis of interest, space and timeliness. Letters and articles should be emailed to the editor-in-chief or the appropriate section editor. Letters should include the writer's name, year in school, and major or other relationship to UNCA. Include a telephone number to aid in verification. All articles are subject to editing.

Corrections:

The headline for Lee Elliott's article included the quote, "We are the buzzkills of Paris." The quote was actually, "We were the buzzkills of Paris."

Salman Rushdie was misspelled in the headline as Simon Rushdie.

In Issue 4, June Bunch was misspelled as June Bench in the *Train Kids* article.