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Short breaks and travel expenses keep international students here

by Darlene Campbell
Staff Writer

Where do you go and what do you do when you are pursuing an education far from home in a foreign country and the university at which you are studying allows a holiday break? What are your feelings toward being so far from home? Do holiday celebrations in America conform to those in your country? These are just a few of the questions asked to many international students at UNC while inquiring about their holiday plans for Thanksgiving and Christmas break.

There are 382 international students studying at UNC, as approximated by the International Center. Most of the international students chose to remain at UNC over holiday breaks due to the short spans breaks and the high travelling expenses. Siyomana Stanisla, a graduate student whose major is geology, plans to remain on campus over Thanksgiving break. He plans also to remain on campus during the Christmas holiday. Stanisla is from Borundi, a small country located in central East Africa. "It's hard to be away from my family," stated Stanisla. "I just go home over the summer — it is a small world." When asked whether he would rest or study over the holiday breaks, Stanisla responded puzzlingly "how

can a graduate student in a geology rest?"

John Binnie, a junior majoring in Accounting is one of the few international students who left the Chapel Hill area during a holiday break. Although Binnie is spending his Thanksgiving break in the United States (Atlanta, Georgia), he plans to go home, Yorkshire, England, for Christmas. "A plane trip to Yorkshire would require at least twenty-four hours" said Binnie, "that's why I can only go home when breaks are longer."

Unlike Binnie, Fred Ndoboli plans to remain in the U.S. for all forthcoming holiday breaks. "I'm just going to stay around the area over the holidays," said Ndoboli, a graduate student in Public Health from Uganda, East Africa. Being in the U.S. for only two months, Ndoboli did not understand Thanksgiving, when inquired about it. When asked his feelings toward being so far away from home, Ndoboli replied, "I would feel better at home, but I don't feel bad because I have an objective."

From Bombay, India, Sunile Parikh, another international student, is doing his graduate studies in Business. Parikh, like most, is spending his Thanksgiving break at UNC, however, his present plan for the Christmas holiday includes touring parts of the U.S. Parikh, who has been in America since July 1982,

said that he definitely missed home but that he had realized that he would before he left. Parikh went on to contrast the celebration of Christmas in his country to that in America. "Christmas is not a big festival in India," he said. "It is a holiday, but in the majority of the country, it is not considered a religious festival. This is because of the very small population of Christians in the country. Most people do not know of Christmas, except those in major cities, but there is a festival similar to Christmas signifying the birth of Lord Krishna of the Hindu religion."

With brief breaks being one of the problems constraining international students from visiting home, high travelling expenses are more domi-

nant. The fare for a round-trip to Borundi would cost Stanisla approximately three-thousand dollars. Ndoboli estimated his expense to go home at approximately four thousand dollars.

Although brief breaks and high travel expenses constrain international students from returning to their home countries for holiday breaks, most of them feel that the pursuance of their education in the U.S. is well worth their tedious absences at home. "I definitely do miss home, but I realized that before I left," repeated Parikh. "I'm having a super time in Chapel Hill. There are many friendly people, an excellent school, good teachers, and 'lots' of work" he concluded. ■

Acting affirmative action officer appointed

CHAPEL HILL — Harold Wallace, vice chancellor for university affairs, has been named acting affirmative action officer for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chancellor Christopher C. Fordham III has announced.

Wallace was named to the position to replace Benjamin E. Rawlins as acting affirmative action officer after Rawlins resigned to become assistant to the chancellor of N.C. A&T State University.

A member of the University's administration since 1973, Wallace became vice chancellor in 1980. He is responsible for the offices of the registrar, student financial aid, records and registration, institutional research and undergraduate admissions. He also assists the chancellor in enhancing the presence and experience of minority

students and staff.

A South Carolina native, he graduated from Claflin College in Orangeburg, S.C., and he holds a master of divinity degree from Duke University.

Fordham said Wallace would serve as acting affirmative action officer until a new affirmative action officer is appointed and available to take over the post. A search committee has been considering candidates for the position.

"We, of course, regret Mr. Rawlins' departure, thank him for his many good services to the University and wish him and his family continued success and happiness for his willingness to assume this added responsibility for what I hope will be a sharply limited period of time." ■

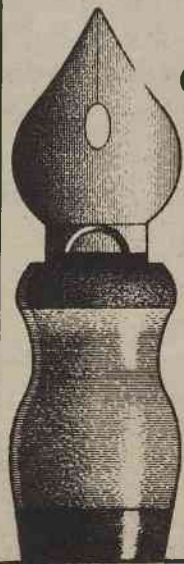
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OUTSTANDING STAFF MEMBER OF THIS ISSUE

This honor goes to **Sonja Payton** who serves as our news editor. Sonja has worked on the Ink for four years. She served as the 1982-1983 editor of the Ink. This semester Sonja has given us much of the journalism experience needed to run this paper. The editors and staff want to congratulate Sonja for a job well done.

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