

Stone Task Force Mobilizes

BSM President Epps Harrassed for Involvement in Group

By Scott Johnson
Ink Staff Writer

Black Student Movement President Arnie Epps said recently he has been the victim of continual harassment for his role in the honoring of the late professor Sonja H. Stone.

The BSM, trying to keep the legacy of the popular professor of Afro-American Studies alive, has pursued three goals on her behalf: the naming of the Black Cultural Center after Stone, the establish-

ment of an endowed chair in her name, and achievement of departmental status for the African/Afro-American Studies curriculum.

But harassment of Epps began almost as soon as the Stone celebration kicked off on August 20th. During the two weeks of events, which were designed to celebrate the philosophies and ideals which Stone brought to Chapel Hill, Epps received several threatening phone calls.

The caller told Epps his life would be in danger if he did not stop

the BSM drive for the three objectives. The phone calls consisted of profanity and repeated warnings threatening the BSM president's life and safety.

Beginning on August 29th and continuing into the latter part of September, Epps received phone calls in his Mangum Residence Hall room and the BSM office. The phone calls, occurring sometimes as soon as he stepped foot in the BSM office or dorm room, implied that someone was watching him, Epps said.

On Aug. 31, Epps and his roommate were awakened at 6 a.m. by loud knocking on their room door that caused their message board on the door to fall. After a couple of minutes, Epp's roommate went out and confronted the individuals who were responsible. He repeatedly asked them to leave the premises, and after a short while, they left the Mangum hallway.

A few minutes later, Epps and his roommate were disturbed again by the pounding of rocks on their window. This time, Epps called the

campus police, but the assailants had a chance to escape before police arrived.

The harassing phone calls have diminished lately, Epps said.

Epps' case has not been the first involving Mangum Residence Hall. Last year, a Harvey Gantt campaign poster was defaced with racial slurs prior to the Senatorial election between Gantt and Senator Jesse Helms.

BCC Named for Stone; Task Force Realizes First Goal



Michael Bowden/Black Ink

Task force members remove the first "stone" Friday

By Tonika M. Tillman
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As 50 members of the Sonja Stone Task Force waited outside, the UNC Board of Trustees voted in a closed session Oct. 25 to rename the Black Cultural Center after late professor Sonja Haynes Stone.

During the meeting, task force members held aloft posters with Stone's picture on them and slogans demanding the renaming of the Black Cultural Center.

Before entering the Carolina Inn, task force demonstrators were charged by their leaders to "conduct themselves in dignity and in complete silence" in order to maintain peace and unity in the proceedings.

UNC Chancellor Paul Hardin spoke before the board and noted the dignity and determination of the student demonstrators. He expressed his "respect and appreciation" for the showing of the students and the exemplary way in which they carried themselves. The Chancellor added: "They have my support."

During the first of two executive sessions, the task force demonstrators quietly talked among themselves in an air of anticipation.

Trish Merchant, a task force member, said the major implication behind the renaming of the BCC was that it would be the first building at the University to be named after an African American. She said it would become part of a "continuing the legacy."

At the conclusion of the first executive session, task force members filed quietly back into the full meeting where routine BOT members conducted routine business.

William Darity, one of two black members on the board and Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, noted the report of UNC Student Body President Matt Heyd at the meeting. Heyd, a non-voting board member, gave a very in-depth report strongly supporting the renaming of the Black Cultural Center and the other goals of the task force.

Shortly after the committee reports, the BOT held the second executive session and voted to rename the center, with only one member voting against the measure.

Denise Matthewson and Scott Wilkens, co-chairs of the Stone Task Force, said realization of the first of the group's three goals would give added momentum to the push for the other objectives, an endowed chair named for Stone and the conversion of the African/Afro-American Studies curriculum into a department.

"We are in the process of formulating a nationwide committee to raise funds for the endowed chair and we are working with the faculty in the African/Afro-American Studies Curriculum to help achieve departmental status," Wilkens said.

"Trudier Harris, chair of the African/Afro-American Studies Curriculum is formulating a proposal to submit to Stephen Birdsall,

Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, for consideration."

Following announcement of the BOT decision, the demonstrators walked to South Building where they picked up one of the three

Styrofoam "stones" which serve as a memorial and reminder to the school's administration of the three demands. They then marched to the Dr. Sonja Haynes Stone Cultural Center for a victory reception.

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