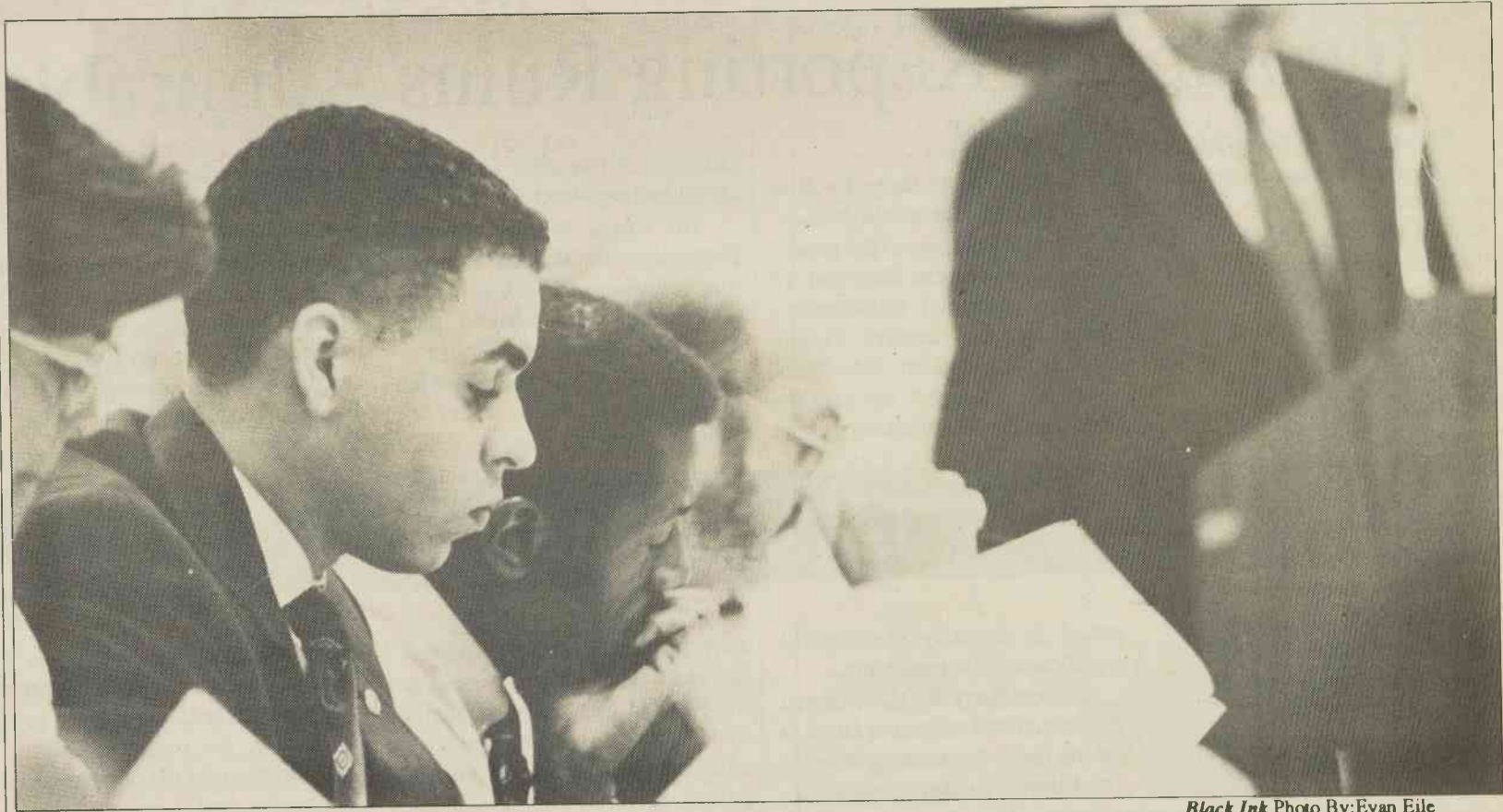


Chief Justice Bibbs Says Blacks Need to Get Involved

The Collegiate Black Caucus, political voice of black students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, recently sponsored a leadership workshop for minority freshmen interested in becoming involved in Student Government. The facilitator was Mark Bibbs, a senior Political Science major and president of the University of North Carolina Association of Student Governments, the student governing body for the 16-school system.

Bibbs, the first student elected to the UNC Board of Governors and Chief Justice of the campus Student Supreme Court, took a few moments to answer questions from the Black Ink about the role of blacks in the political life of the University. Bibbs, who has been involved in campus politics since his Freshman year, lost a close race for student body president in a run-off with Bill Hildebolt in the spring semester of 1990.

Ink On-Campus Editor Lee Richardson conducted the interview.



Black Ink Photo By: Evan Eile

Chief Justice Mark Bibbs sits in on his first meeting as student representative to the Board of Governor's.

BLACK INK: Why, would you say, have blacks not been more prevalent in Student Government?
BIBBS: I don't think blacks realize the importance of getting involved. During my freshman year, (friends) told me that UNC would not accept blacks in Student Government.

(Black students) think we will not be able to make a significant difference. They feel that we will be limited in our capacity. I disagree. I believe Blacks would make more significant changes and contributions in addition to those already made.

INK: What was the ultimate purpose for this (minority leadership) workshop?

BIBBS: The ultimate purpose of this workshop was to encourage black students to participate actively in traditional Student Government, to expose them to the way the game is played at UNC—who the players are and how to break into the establishment. In addition, I hope to motivate the students who attend to actively seek and win campus political office.

INK: What strategies were you prepared to use to assist those interested in Student Government?

BIBBS: Strategies I discussed were the methods of networking, campaign finance, advertising strate-

gies, how to be a credible candidate, and how to get people out to vote.

INK: Why was this workshop (and similar workshops) important for the future of Blacks in Student Government?

BIBBS: As those of us who have become campus leaders move on, it is important that we cultivate new leadership, that we pass the torch, so to speak. I feel many times black politicians, black leaders, and politicians and leaders of all races, often become involved primarily for self-gain and often run on issues that are just important at that time.

I feel all politicians, especially blacks, should reach back to those after them to help to inspire, train, and serve as a mentor to develop their leadership potential.

INK: What do you see as the future for blacks in UNC's Student Government? Must there be change?

BIBBS: This minority freshman class plays the major role on the future. They need to maximize their effort to ensure (that) minority leadership is developed to its fullest potential. For any minority freshman who wishes to participate in Student Government or any other leadership position, education on the significance of the system is important now because what we do

now will determine our course in the future.

I hope to see the workshop continued, to keep developing new fellowship. I hope to contribute significant, helpful information to the overall future of minority leadership on campus.

INK: What/Who was your ultimate driving force to excel in Student

Government?

BIBBS: My ultimate driving force was to make a difference, to help contribute my part to the University, to demonstrate leadership, to help other minorities the best way I could, and to serve as a role model for other black students.

I am very appreciative and eternally grateful for the support that I

have received from blacks on this campus. Had it not been for their support, loyalty, and dedication, I would not have been able to achieve many of the goals and other things that I have accomplished. The black students on this campus have given me much support, moral and active. For that, I am thankful.



Black Ink Photo By: Evan Eile

Mark Bibbs is sworn in to the UNC-System Board of Governors.