

# Act According to Membership

## Administration Will Not be Dealt With, She Says

*you feel about that? What are your reactions?*

continues, throughout the rest of this semester and into next year, the role that black students will play is going to be the one that's extremely important.

**INK:** What about white people? Did you attend the Sister Souljah speech?

**THOMAS:** Yes I did.

**INK:** He seemed to suggest that there was no reason why black and white students should join in a coalition. How do you feel about that?

**THOMAS:** I don't agree. It is my

sincere opinion that this movement would not be where it is today if not for white people. I think though, in order for it to progress to where it must go, there needs to be more involvement of the black community.

**THOMAS:** I think that they expressed a blatant disrespect for African Americans and a disregard for the desire of students in general. If you've seen the (Carolina) Critic, they did a phone survey five hours after his speech. The statistics from their survey prove that 64 percent of the white students polled support a free-standing Black Cultural Center and 70 plus percent of the black students polled support a free-standing Black Cultural Center. That says to me that the majority of the students, both black and white, as quoted from the Carolina Critic, want a free-standing Black Cultural Center. The Chancellor is not doing

leader will be to continually do as I have been doing this week, asking my people, "What are we going to do next?" Until they say, "Now Michelle we want you go talk to the administration," then Michelle won't be talking to the administration, because I don't have anything to say to an institution that does not respect the needs of me and my people.

**INK:** Do you think your stance will be interpreted as more...I guess the word would be militant?

**THOMAS:** (Laughs) Yeah, I think it will be. Yeah.

**INK:** You say that you'll let BSM members decide which direction they want to take. How will you gauge their reaction?

**THOMAS:** There will be votes, and polls can be taken by floor sergeants when they go and do their weekly meetings. I

have no problems with sitting down with a phone list and calling up members and, whoever I can get on the telephone, asking them how they feel about certain issues. There are several ways aside from a meeting to get in touch. One of the things I plan to do next year is hold office hours on Wednesday and Friday on the yard. I'll just go around to black people in general, because although every black student is not a member of the BSM and although the BSM president ought to be representing the Black Student Movement, there exists the public perception that the BSM president is the voice of black students in general. I will be on the yard talking to random students and getting their views.

**INK:** How do you plan to approach

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**Michelle Thomas, BSM President-Elect**

his job, he's not listening to the students. His coming out and saying flatly in the very beginning of his speech, "I do not support a free-standing Black Cultural Center" says to me, "I do not care what students on this campus want."

**INK:** How do you plan to deal with the administration's stance?

**THOMAS:** I personally don't plan to deal directly with the administration until my people say, "Okay, Michelle it's time to go back in there and talk to them again." I don't plan to make any appointments or schedule any meetings to sit down and talk about anything, because the time for talking is over. Basically what I will do as a quote-unquote

**INK:** I'm sure you're familiar with the Chancellor's response to these issues, which he released in a statement on March 17. How do



Kelly Greene/Black Ink

Thomas wants to empower the BSM general body by reducing the size of the Central Committee to less than half of its current 24 members. "One of the things I plan to do next year is hold office hours on Wednesday and Friday on the yard," she said.

other student organizations, such as Student Government?

**THOMAS:** The BSM worked this year to get five African-American students elected to (student) congress, so we are hoping we will have some type of relation with congress through them. The relationship with the Campus Y, I would like to see only grow. It's really strong right now, and I would like for that to continue. At the beginning of the year, Central Committee members will be going to meetings of other non-black organizations and discussing with them what the BSM's mission is,

answering any questions and inviting them to become part of the BSM. So we plan to do some reaching out and educating.

**INK:** Returning briefly to the current movement, do you have any time lines as to when you would like to see certain things accomplished, like a free-standing BCC or an endowed chair for Dr. Stone?

**THOMAS:** That's really difficult to say. The University is saying,

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