

OSC Gets New Assistant Dean

By Jacqueline Charles
Editor-in-Chief

Intelligent, dynamic, aware and outspoken are just a few of the words that describe Darryl Lester, the new Assistant Dean for the Office of Student Counseling (OSC).

Since last week, the 30-year-old who has a master's degree in Counseling Education from North Carolina State University, has been making his presence known from his office on the second floor of Steele Building.

"I think working in this office, where there is a concern for African and Native-American students and all students of color, will help me to help them affirm themselves," Lester said.

"I want to build not only on the programs in the Office for Student Counseling, but also be visible for the students."

Lester, who came to the University from his post as the

assistant coordinator of African-American Student Affairs at NCSU, will be, among his many duties, assisting the office with the Minority Adviser program.

Associate Dean of the OSC, Rosalind Fuse-Hall, said she's looking forward to a good working relationship with Lester.

"I think he is marvelous," Fuse-Hall said. "His energy and enthusiasm is refreshing."

Beverly Hester-Stephens, OSC's administrative assistant and academic skills coordinator, said Lester's presence is a welcomed one.

Since Assistant Dean Harold Woodard resigned last semester to devote more time to teaching, Hester-Stephens has been busy trying to keep the office running smoothly while also trying to meet students' varied needs.

"I think that his disposition is such that he'll be someone the students will be able to relate to," Hester-Stephens said. "I'm happy



Darryl Lester

to have the position filled."

While he hasn't completely settled in yet, Lester is making himself comfortable. Already, he has met with this year's minority advisers, acquainted himself with the faculty and routine of the OSC.

"I'm here to serve the students," said Lester, who has a B.A. in economics and finance. "Hopefully, students will come by and just talk to me."

A South Carolina native, Lester, who once played college basketball, has come a long way since his \$12,000 a year job at a

bank back in 1986.

After earning his graduate degree in 1990, Lester took a job at Shaw University in Raleigh as the university's counselor and coordinator of Career Planning and Placement.

In addition to his regular duties at Shaw, Lester also taught a class where he exposed students to black scholars and historians.

But after giving Shaw "two hard years of my service," Lester returned to NCSU in 1992. There, he continued working with black students, facilitating sessions on self-esteem and self-confidence.

"The first lesson they got from me was on 'Who Am I,'" Lester said. "If you don't have a good firm hold on who you are as an individual, it will mess you up," he said.

While it was sad for Lester to leave NCSU, he said it was time to move on, and he wanted to

have greater input where student's college careers were concerned.

"It was hard for me to leave and it was hard for them to let me go," Lester said.

Away from the University, Lester can still be found interacting with adolescents as a consultant and motivational speaker in the community.

"Our communities right now are in such a crisis," said Lester, who has been taking his cultural workshops on the road since 1988. "Young brothers, not feeling good about themselves, don't have a problem taking one another's life."

Hoping to help change this attitude, Lester shares his message of self-love and self-respect with anyone and everyone he meets.

"There's nothing that makes you feel better than when you know who you are," he said.

UNC Offers Training in Matters of Diversity

UNC News Services

A new University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill diversity training program offers faculty, staff and administrators new insight and skills in dealing with multicultural issues.

The campuswide program began last month with a training session for 30 employees. It is the latest of a growing list of educational initiatives at UNC aimed at expanding multicultural education.

The sessions use methods such as role playing and "speak outs" to correct inaccurate cultural and racial assumptions, increase awareness of diversity issues and develop skills that can improve work performance. The daylong program is offered on request. To date, four more have been scheduled.

Pat Fischer, program director and professor of health policy and administration in the School of Public Health, said she plans to offer many training sessions for

students, staff and faculty throughout the academic year using a diversity training model developed by the National Coalition Building Institute of Washington, D.C.

"The university is ready for diversity training," Fischer said. "In fact, there are already a number of related initiatives under way. Without exception, people have been interested and supportive of the project and enthusiastic that the University is putting resources behind it."

Strong support for Fischer's new program comes from UNC's Division of Student Affairs.

"Issues of diversity have always been important to us in the Division of Student Affairs," said Donald Boulton, vice chancellor and dean of student affairs. "Training is essential if we are to meet the challenges of an ever increasingly diverse faculty, staff and student body."

Besides the training sessions, the program will provide a clearinghouse for information

about a variety of other campus initiatives dealing with diversity issues.

"People who want to learn more will have a range of models to choose from," Fischer said. She cited the Sonja Haynes Stone Black Cultural Center's Cross-Cultural Communications Institute, several ongoing Campus Y projects and several foundation-supported diversity training projects.

"We already have a variety of training programs on campus," Fischer said. "More people need to be aware of what's going on. We will collect information and publish it so that everyone knows that is available."

Many of UNC's diversity programs have received sizeable grants from national and regional foundations, including the Hughes Foundation, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and Jesse Ball duPont Fund, which provided the University more than \$300,000, part of which has funded the two-year-old

VISIONS diversity workshops.

"By taking a strong stand, the University of North Carolina is becoming a leader in multicultural education," said Sherry Magill, executive director of the duPont Fund, based in Jacksonville, Fla. "We've been impressed by their success and their willingness to take risks. I have no doubt that students are already benefitting from the increased awareness of faculty involved in the projects we have funded."

All universities should acknowledge the challenges posed by national increases in ethnic and other kinds of diversity, Fischer said.

"The population of the nation's workforce and cities has changed radically in the past few years. The university community has changed as well," she said.

"This program recognizes that communication across the boundaries of ethnicity, race and gender must be worked at. Professors, for example, realize that they've got a different kind

of audience. The teaching techniques they used 10 years ago won't necessarily work now."

Other diversity-related initiatives at UNC include the Carolina Minority Post-Doctoral Scholars Program, the Rainbow Institute in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and the Minority Undergraduate Research Assistants Program.

The new training programs signal an expansion of UNC's efforts to meet the changing needs of the campus community, said Richard L. McCormick, executive vice chancellor and provost.

"This program will increase the impact of other projects that are helping the University become a leader in multicultural education," he said. "As a public university, we have a special commitment to making sure that the educational environment helps all students to achieve to their highest levels of ability."