

Shhh! The President Is Talking . . .

Commentary From BSM President, Kristi Booker

Ever since Carmen asked (forced) me to write this article for the Black Ink, I have been struggling over exactly what I should write about.

The truth is that I'm absolutely terrible at writing things like this. If it's a specific topic for class, I have no problem; but leave me to write about anything and my mind is all over the place. Not to mention my fear of the fact that a lot of talented writers are going to be looking at this, already I'm worried about my punctuation, 'speling', and word choice.

For those of you who don't know me, I am a senior, Spanish and Communications major from Charlotte, N.C. I've been involved with the Black Student Movement since my freshman year when I joined Ebony Readers Onyx Theatre and the Political Action Committee. My

involvement with the BSM has increased every year and has now culminated with the honor of being its president.

It's really funny to me how people say, "Kristi is always protesting!" They think I yelled at the doctor for smacking me when I was born. (I didn't do that by the way.) People associate me with militancy and black power but I'm not as 'black power' as people think. I am militant to the point of being ready, which is what militant means. I realize that there is a time when taking action is necessary, when words just aren't enough. If I feel that that time has come, I won't hesitate to act. I will always speak my mind and I will always stand up for what I believe in, but always with a purpose.

I am truly excited about this year and the opportunity to lead this organization.

When I ran for president, I wanted to emphasize both the political and cultural aspects of the Black Student Movement. We have accomplished that through the success of our Coronation Ball, our co-sponsorships with groups such as Sangam and the Muslim Student Association, and our upcoming racial profiling forum with Chief Poarch of the campus police.

I must commend the general body for its amazing support of every BSM function we have had this year. None of these things would be a success without you, and I hope to see your continued support throughout this year.

I apologize if this seems a bit random but right now, I'm going to throw caution to the wind and write exactly what's on my mind. I'm sure that like many of you, the events of September 11, 2001 made me reevaluate the priorities I've made in my life. I don't think any of us will forget that day, nor will we forget exactly what we were doing and thinking as we learned of what was going on in our country.

My only sister is a reporter in D.C., and I still get chills when I think about those 15 minutes (which seemed like hours) when I couldn't reach her. I didn't know if she was scared, if she was safe, or if she was hurt. Thank God she is fine, but I hope I never experience that feeling again. I also think about the people who, like me, scrambled to reach their loved ones, and still, a few weeks later, have not gotten a response, and maybe never will.

In my Comm 63 class, Performance of African-American literature, we just finished reading "Their Eyes Were Watching God." There is a segment in the book when a hurricane rips through a town. The wind is blowing, rain is pouring, trees are being uprooted, and buildings are falling apart. In the midst of all this, the author describes the people as having their eyes focused on God. That's how I feel about our country now, as the threat of war looms over us. We hold peace vigils, we donate blood, we lead ribbon campaigns, we try to return our lives to some semblance of normalcy, but our eyes are watching God.

Now, I would like to encourage all of you to not take anything for granted. Take the time to enjoy your surroundings and the people that fill them, call that friend you haven't spoken to in months, forgive that person you haven't spoken to in years, find success in every situation, celebrate all your victories, and cherish all your celebrations. Most importantly, keep your eyes focused on God.

