

Carolina's Other Jordan

By Michelle Anderson

The Sonja Haynes Stone Black Cultural Center now has a new face following the appointment of Dr. Joseph Jordan as the center's director this past July. Jordan replaced Harry Amana, a professor of journalism and mass communication at the University, who had served as the BCC's interim director since 1999. Black Ink staff writer Michelle Anderson spent an afternoon getting to know about Jordan.

When asked of his first impressions of UNC-CH, Dr. Joseph Jordan said that while he thought the campus atmosphere was good in general, he noticed reservations and coolness from some students. Jordan said the uneasiness might be because of feelings shared by students that are not necessarily said out loud.

As the new director of the Sonja Haynes Stone Black Cultural Center, Jordan said he wants to reverse that impression. His goals are to work hard with integrity and consciousness, and create a new way to understand the Africana experience. He said he hopes to do this by going beyond the center itself and speaking to the sensibilities we help to create in people's minds. And he wants to have a good time while doing it.

Jordan said his immediate concerns at the time are a number of political issues including the high incarceration rate in black communities, finding ways to

understand black communities and the ways to understand black cultural formations in an age of unbridled capitalism. He said he is also interested in the continued fight for African freedom as well as ties of solidarity between Africans and other progressive peoples.

Jordan, the former head of Atlanta's Auburn Avenue Research Library on African-American Culture, was appointed as the center's new director in July. "This is my first opportunity to address the community in the role

transition into a permanent space and when everyone is totally committed to the Center's continued success". Jordan said he looks forward to the moment when Amana's words will truly be "history" and when everyone can fully realize the vision and dream of Dr. Stone.

Jordan was born in East Elmhurst of Queens, N.Y., the grandson of Trinidadian immigrants. Jordan moved to Portsmouth, Virg. when he was a little boy. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Norfolk State University. He also holds a Master of Arts in African American Studies and a Master of Science in Preventive Medicine from Ohio State University. Jordan earned his doctorate in African Studies from Howard University.

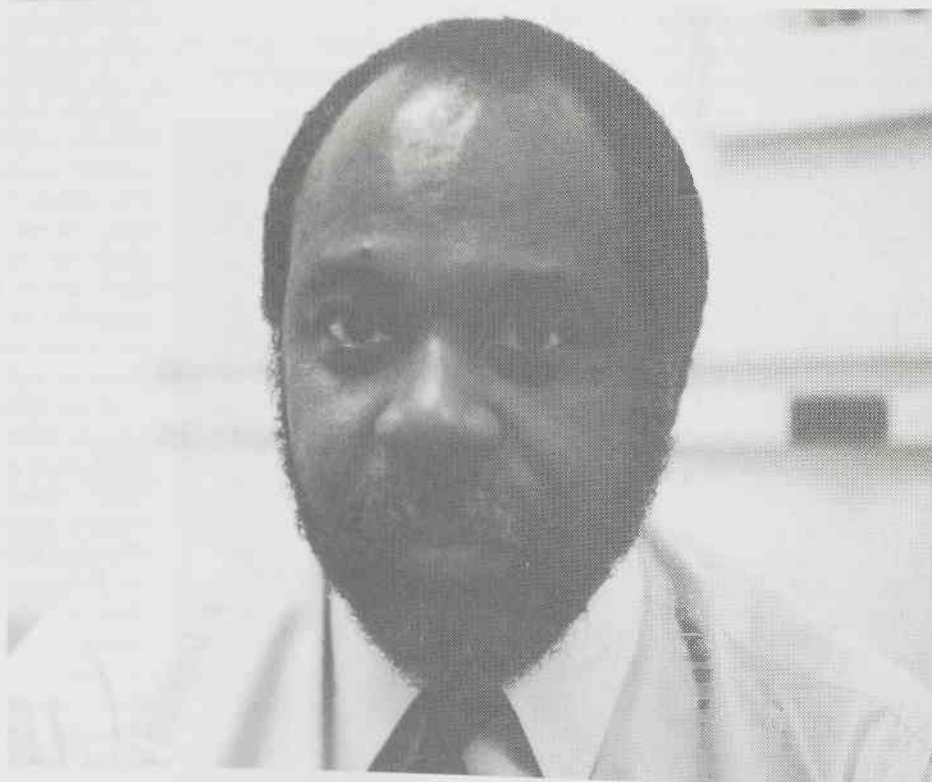
Jordan said he enjoys traveling to other countries, including Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America. He said he

likes political music from different places including the genres of Latin jazz, charanga, son, and some salsa Trinidad calypso. He enjoys all aspects of the Africana cultures. Also, he prefers reading and looking at films with political themes.

Jordan, who describes himself as "painfully impractical," said actions are more important to him than

"well meaning words". He said his inspirations include Ella Baker, CLR James, Amilcar Cabral, Che Guevara, Herbert Apthekar, Geronimo, Tecumseh, his mother, and many others.

Jordan said his vision for the BCC is to ensure that it encourages all who worked for its creation to keep pressing on. He also hopes that the freestanding building will be known nationally and internationally as a place where culture, consciousness, careful intellectual reflection, and uncompromising scholarship are nurtured.



of Director of the Sonya Haynes Stone Black Cultural Center," Jordan said in July. "At the outset I would like to thank the search committee and the students, staff and faculty who took time to talk with me during the search process."

Jordan said that he quickly learned the important significance of the Center and the legacy of Dr. Stone, much of which he learned from then-interim director, Harry Amana. Earlier in the year, Amana said "The new director will be privileged to take the reins at a time when all systems are go; when preparation will begin for the