

Participate in student teacher recognition program

Prominent educators discuss educational trends

By RANDY BRANTLEY
Director of College Relations

Two prominent North Carolina educators recently addressed a gathering of colleagues and student teachers on the Chowan College campus.

Dr. Michael E. Ward, executive director of the North Carolina Standards Board for Public School Administration, and Vernestine Kent Taylor, North Carolina's Teacher of the Year for 1995-96, discussed future trends in public education and the teaching profession. The college's Department of Education invited Ward and Taylor to participate in a student-teacher recognition program held on February 19.

Ward, who is a candidate for State Superintendent of Public Instruction, serves as vice-chairman of the North Carolina Education Standards and Accountability Commission. In his presentation "Facilitating Learning for All Students," Ward presented a number of the commission's recommendations.

According to Ward, the General Assembly charged the commission with the task of establishing standards for graduation and assessments. After a series of statewide hearings—many of which were attended by Governor James B. Hunt, Jr.—the commission presented its second annual report to the State Board of Education, the General Assembly and Governor Hunt in July of last year.

"Our publics raised a lot of questions about how public schools are preparing youngsters for a challenging new world," Ward stated. "By the year 2000," he noted, "only 15 percent of the American workforce will be unskilled laborers as compared to 60 percent in 1950."

The commission recommended ten skills as those in which high school seniors must demonstrate their ability to use content. Included on the list of skills are reading, writing, speaking, listening, observing, using numbers and data, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving and working as a member of a team.

Ward noted, "These skills are the building blocks by which any content is mastered. By

content, I am, of course, referring to the sciences, social studies, fine arts and so forth."

"Teamwork will be a new and positive requirement," Ward stressed. "Teachers will assess the product of work groups. And the assessment ought to be ongoing, not just one instance of testing."

The Class of 2000 will be the first to graduate under the commission's new standards.

Taylor, a mathematics teacher at Hunt High School in Wilson, was named Teacher of the Year in May of last year. Taylor explained that "today's student body may include teenage parents, drug dealers, gang leaders and young people who are HIV positive."

"A number of students," she continued, "have single parents, gay parents or come from latch-key situations."

"Teachers are the only positive role models for some students," Taylor stated. "Education goes beyond content. A lot of teachers may need to go back to school themselves to learn how to prepare today's students. Some teachers,

unfortunately, don't like to change."

A graduate of Elizabeth City State University and North Carolina Central University, Taylor has been a teacher for seven years. She explained, "In the beginning, I was prepared for math but not for the students." After five-and-a-half months, Taylor left the profession. Some colleagues even encouraged her to leave.

Some time thereafter, Taylor returned to teaching and began to apply her own style to the classroom. She explained, "I learned to look beyond the personal faults and see the educational needs."

Taylor even learned to speak and understand the students' slang terms. "I hope that students will outgrow their coolness and keep the education," she commented. "Today, a teacher serves as parent, role model, confidante and disciplinarian."

Taylor recalled the teachers who inspired, reprimanded and encouraged her. She concluded, "I became North Carolina's Teacher of the Year because I had great teachers."

Students told of new standards, assessments



Dr. Charles Bentley (left), chairman of the Department of Education, recently welcomed Vernestine Kent Taylor, North Carolina Teacher of the Year, and Dr. Mike Ward, executive director of the North Carolina Standards Board for Public School Administration to the campus to participate in a student-teacher recognition program.

Seminary president delivers second annual Heritage Lectures

Dr. Thomas Henry Graves, president of Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, VA, delivered the second annual Heritage Lectures on March 11 and 13 in Robert Marks Hall amphitheater.

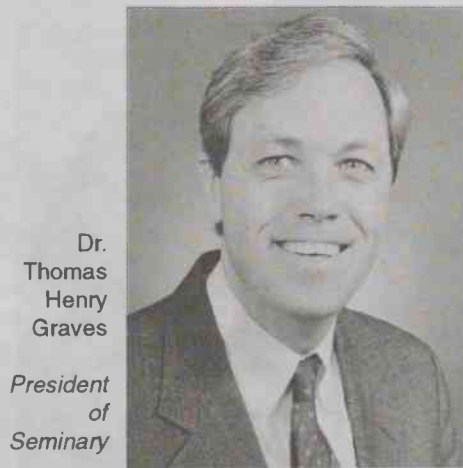
Utilizing the general topic "Towards An Educated Ministry: Baptists and Theological Education in America," each of the two presentations in the lecture series addressed a specific aspect of this broader theme.

The lecture on Monday, March 11, was "Making Room for Freedom in Baptist Education," and the concluding presentation on Wednesday, March 13, was entitled "American Theological Education: The Case for Reform."

A native of Virginia, Dr. Graves holds degrees from Vanderbilt University (B.A.), Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (M. Div., Ph.D.), and Yale University Divinity School (S.D.T.M.)

He served as pastor of Christiansburg Baptist Church, Christiansburg, KY, 1973-76; First Baptist Church, Lake Park, FL, 1977-79; and St. John's Baptist Church, Charlotte, 1987-91.

Graves has held numerous positions in higher



Dr. Thomas Henry Graves
President of Seminary

education, including: instructor, Department of Communications Arts at Bellarmine College, Louisville, KY, 1970-72; Garret Teaching Fellow in Christian Philosophy, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1974-76; assistant professor, Department of Religion, Palm Beach Atlantic College, West Palm Beach, FL, 1976-77; professor, Philosophy of Religion,

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC, 1979-87; and president, Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond since 1991.

Graves served as editor of *Faith and Mission*, a publication of the faculty of Southeastern Baptist Seminary, 1982-86. Graves' articles have been included in such other professional journals as *Perspectives in Religious Studies*, *Process Studies*, *Review and Expositor*, and *The Student*.

He has also been a contributor to collections of essays and/or sermons published by HarperCollins, Mercer University Press and Smyth & Helwys.

Terms of the endowment of the Heritage Lectures stipulate that expendable funds therefrom are "to provide financial assistance for a lecture/program series to be selected and sponsored by Chowan College's Department of Religion and Philosophy, with a focus upon religious personalities and movements as contributors to an understanding of the Judeo-Christian heritage. Frequent emphasis is to be given to the contributions of Baptists."

Series sponsored by Department of Religion and Philosophy