

## Business affairs preparing for success

**B**OTH challenges and opportunities faced the office of business affairs during the 1996-97 academic year and the divisions of finance/accounting, human resources/institutional services, buildings and grounds, bookstore, food service and housekeeping are all embracing a period of vast changes to prepare Chowan for the twenty-first century.

To improve financial systems and reporting, student record-keeping, availability of campus-wide information and a multitude of other timesaving features for registration, report writing, recruitment and student services, Chowan began the evaluation and selection process for a new administrative software system. The target date for installation is late 1998.

Campus-wide fiber optics were installed underground to connect each building to the college's new network system and internal wiring was installed to all existing administrative and academic offices during the academic year. Interior wiring to each residence hall room was completed during the summer.

Negotiations for an upgrading of the campus-wide telephone service in order to expand capabilities and lower the cost to both students and administration led to the purchase of a new switch. With existing trunk lines maximized, switch capacity goals included providing a telephone to each residence hall room, adding additional office extensions and providing ample capacity for growth.

A committee was formed to survey the campus and suggest procedures for adding handicapped accessibility to Chowan's campus. Following the first recommendations, curb cuts were added to sidewalks on campus and handicapped parking spaces, with appropriate signage, were added to lots.

Building renovations were extensive during 1996-97. During the Christmas holiday season, Thomas Cafeteria had walls removed to enlarge the dining area, booths added for additional seating, carpeting installed to reduce the noise level and create a more comfortable dining experience, lighting upgraded for improved atmosphere and food stations consolidated for better traffic flow and to separate the dining area into more intimate eating areas. In addition, the dining area was painted and redecorated.

Moisture problems seemed to plague many areas of campus. During the spring, all new windows were installed in Parker Hall to eliminate water problems during heavy rains and a wall of Mark's Hall, that had exhibited dampness since construction, was dried out with an improvement to an air-conditioning drainage system.

An exterior wall of Penny Hall had drainage tile set and waterproofing completed to prevent leakage and a reconfiguration of the exterior drainage system of Camp Hall prevented seepage into the auditorium.

With extensive moisture problems developing on the roofs of many buildings, a roofing consultant has been hired to investigate conditions and make recommendations for maintenance and replacement needs. New roofs scheduled for completion during 1997-98 include the Columns Building and Whitaker Library.

New elevators replaced the originals in eight-story Parker Hall during the summer months and after a late-night protest by students, undesir-



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able shower heads in the women's residence halls were replaced with improved models providing increased pressure and reduced water and fuel usage. The Braves Den recreation center was painted, its furniture reupholstered and several offices were upgraded. Renovations in the Beacon complex provided additional physical education offices, lab space and a multi-functional room for programs. An antiquated filtering system in the Helms Center pool was replaced by state-of-the-art equipment and Marks Hall auditorium received a new projection screen and updated painting. Men's laundry facilities, formerly requiring a trip to the Braves Den, were relocated to the men's residence halls and laundry facilities in Parker Hall were moved from the basement to the first floor to be accessible by elevator. The Helms Center, Simons Hall and Mixon Hall all received new carpeting.

The purchase of a new biology research boat required the construction of a garage facility on the southern edge of campus and two additional 15-passenger vans were leased for various transportation needs.

Approaching the next millennium with extensive capital project proposals, Chowan faces many new challenges demanding the exploration of various financial plans such as revenue-enhancing programs, cost-reduction measures, a capital campaign and bond issue. Projects under examination in the near future include a new student center, football stadium, enrollment management and visitor's center, fine arts facility, intramural structure,

upgraded classrooms, pool renovation, office expansion and library computerization.

The college is also exploring ways to maximize investment earnings by reallocating assets under the proper mix of risk levels among investment managers. Successful results will help hold down future tuition increases, expand academic programs and improve physical facilities.

In order to enhance the residence life of Chowan students, a comprehensive residence hall preventive maintenance program and renovation schedule will begin during the 1997-98 academic year and proposals under evaluation for the food service program include expanded menus and a wider variety of meal plans. To better serve the entire college community, bookstore services will be analyzed for competitiveness, range of products and hours of operation.

Plans were formulated to upgrade stage lighting, replace curtains and add an exceptional surround sound system to Turner Auditorium during the fall of 1997.

Building a framework for alternatives to the college's health care plan for employees, in order to provide better benefits at the same or lower costs, a consultant was hired to evaluate the health care benefits package and make recommendations for improvements. In addition to health care review, plans are underway to study the pension plan for an improved participation schedule and to evaluate and grade all staff positions for consistent classification and salary structure.

Chowan plans to meet the future with preparation and success.

## Athletic department experiences challenging, active year

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pool area, improvements to the air-conditioning system in the locker room areas and weight room, expansion of the training room facility, additions to locker room space for women's teams and aeration and fertilization of the outdoor fields will all receive examination. The athletic department will also investigate the feasibility of a divider screen for the main gymnasium to create multiple spaces for team practice during inclement weather and a variety of teaching stations and recreational use.

The 1997-98 academic year was one of considerable progress. However, it is imperative that strengthening and expansion be continued for all athletic programs of the college.

## Academics moves into strengthened position

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longer awards tenure to professional librarians although they continue to hold faculty status.

Members of the faculty hold rank as follows: professor 8 (12.3%); associate professor 21(32.3%); assistant professor 27 (41.5%); instructor 9 (13.9%). Counting the current year, the average age of the full-time faculty is 46.7 years. Including the current year, the 65 members of the full-time faculty have served a total of 685 years. The average length of service is 10.5 years.

The full-time equivalent (FTE) instructional faculty members number 62.3. (This includes part-time faculty equated to full-time. Further, health and physical education faculty with both teaching and coaching responsibilities are counted only on the basis of their time allocated to instruction.) The FTE student enrollment is 748,

consequently, the faculty/student ratio is 1:12.

Of the 61 members of the instructional faculty, 31 (50.1%) hold the earned doctorate or are in the final stages of pursuit of the degree. Three other persons hold the M.F.A., which is the terminal degree in their particular discipline. Consequently, 34 (55.8%) of the instructional faculty hold the terminal degree. The 65 full-time faculty members hold undergraduate degrees from 48 different institutions and graduate degrees from 54 different institutions.

Profound progress has been made in expanding and strengthening the academic programs of the college making the future of Chowan both challenging and bright. As programs are further enhanced and become more well known, the public's perception of Chowan as a senior institution will become established.

*Improvements being made to physical plant; new administrative computer system being installed*

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