

## Not Another Dilapidated Building

By Alisha Murphy

Discussion about the university's future for the home of Fayetteville State's third President, E.E. Smith, will resume in early April.

FSU officials and representatives of the City of Fayetteville will meet the first week of April to discuss ideas for Smith's former home on 135 Blount Street in Fayetteville.

The home, which is now surrounded by commercial property, was set for demolition early this year, but has since been saved in hopes of restoration. The redevelopment of the area is said to include new business space and an overall cosmetic adjustment to the area.

In 1902, Dr. Smith purchased the two-year-old, two story, three bedroom, one bath home for \$100 dollars. During his era, the community was home to many professionals and a "thriving black community" according to Andrew Barksdale, a reporter with The Fayetteville Observer.

Over the years the home has accommodated several families, as well as a local business.

The City of Fayetteville now owns the property, but hopes the community will be able to contribute to the project. Budget cuts and lack of information and involvement have halted any further discussions about the home's restoration.

Dr. Bertha H. Miller, FSU historian, said the university is spearheading efforts to raise money for the project and is proposing that FSU alumni, E.E. Smith alumni, and the state contribute.

According to Dr. Miller, Dr. Smith was a "very generous man, who raised and donated funds to purchase the first 40 acres of land where Fayetteville State currently sits." As an advocate for community involvement, Dr. Smith's legacy would benefit from direct community collaboration, but it seems that funds are just not available at this time.

While all parties agree the project will be costly, no ideas have yet been discussed as to what would be appropriate or preferred for the restoration, nor has a budget been drawn.



Courtesy of Zillow.com

Second home owned by E.E. Smith located at 135 Blount Street here in Fayetteville, shown in a dilapidated condition.

## Federal Reminders

Taxes must be filed with the IRS by April 15 at Midnight  
All students must renew their FAFSA if you want Financial Aid for 2012-2013

## FSU Reminders



Voice Photo By Jennifer Lucas

Returning FSU students it is time again to register for On Campus Housing. For Application dates and details log on to [uncfsu.edu/reslife](http://uncfsu.edu/reslife) or call the Office of Residence Life at (910) 672-2599

## Are You Graduating?

By Jalynn Jones

Are you aware that African American's national average graduation rate from four-year colleges is 41 percent? Fayetteville State University's current graduation rate is 11 percent. If you look around your classroom, only 11 percent of the students who came in as incoming freshman will graduate in six years. Statistical information can be confusing so, in laymen's terms, less than half of blacks enrolled in four-year universities are graduating in six years.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities typically admit students with lower grade point averages to provide opportunities to attend higher education institutions. This practice has a direct effect on overall graduation rates. FSU recognizes that there is a problem and continues to create programs and hire nationally renowned individuals to improve the retention rate among all students.

Dr. D. Jason De Sousa was recently hired as FSU's Vice Chancellor of Retention. De Sousa has over 10 years of experience in higher education and a passion for "helping students push forward." He has held various administrative positions in higher education institutions but he said he enjoys working with students face to face. Although Dr. De Sousa is concerned with retention in the general student population, he specializes in the improvement of African American males' retention rates.

African American males are the most at risk group in higher education, according to Dr. De Sousa.

"African American males with bachelor degrees tend to provide state and federal government with better tax pays. Meaning that, they can get jobs and pay taxes and contribute to society in ways that are needed. It's in the best interest of the United States for African American males to graduate at greater levels than previous was the case. Much is at stake here."

The statistics are stacked against African American students, but that does not mean students of color are defeated. According to the Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, the graduation rate for black males has improved from 28 percent to 36 percent over the past 15 years. Students need to recognize generational obstacles and other road blocks that may stand in the way of finishing their education. On the other hand, black women continue to have steady gains each year and currently have a 46 percent graduation rate.

FSU's Student Government Association recently held a panel discussion titled "Can You See Yourself through All That Smoke." The panel was designed to give students the opportunity to get advice from college graduates and staff about staying in school. Panel members explored several obstacles that prevent students from finishing school. Issues, such as too much involvement in clubs and organizations and financial setbacks were addressed. In the end, the question still remains: Are you graduating?



Courtesy of facebook.com

Dr. D. Jason De Sousa talking with a group of students.