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ECSU... Broadening Horizons For Many Area Residents

ELIZABETH CITY — As Elizabeth City State University moves toward full status as a regional university, old myths of the formerly segregated institution are broken as discovery is made by a growing number of white minority students that the educational community maintained by Black

educators for 88 years is, indeed, a rich heritage for all Northeastern North Carolinians.

While the white minority enrollment grew from 10 per cent to approximately 15 per cent during the past year, those who are participating in the highly marketable degree programs in 12 academic departments say too many are by-passing the opportunities available to area residents.

"Untapped Gold Mine" "The community is now on the verge of discovering what they have in Elizabeth City State University," says Garry Mickey, 27-year-old senior. Garry is a full-time student majoring in the social sciences before entering Southeastern Baptist Seminary.

"There's a gold mine here that has not been touched," he comments. "There is no reason why ECSU cannot be looked on the same as the University at Chapel Hill or N. C. State. A lot of my friends went away to UNC and State. They could have gotten it all right here." But like his friends who went away, the first thing Garry did when he left the Air Force in 1977 was to seek out admissions information from Chapel Hill and N. C. State. It was his minister, Glenn Greenway of Berea Baptist Church, who suggested ECSU.

Charles Crozier, 29, returned to Powell's Point in lower Currituck County when he completed eight years with the U. S. Navy. It was the career-oriented Geoscience Department that attracted him to ECSU and he now travels 70 miles four times a week as a

second year student.

Crozier said the first thing he wanted was a degree. "I talked around, found many people unable to progress, although knowledgeable and teaching people who have degrees...increasing salaries for others, while their own income and position stalemated," he said. He feels many area residents are by-passing the opportunity for job advancement by not taking advantage of educational programs at ECSU.

Holding an associate degree in science from the College of the Albemarle, Ben Terry, Jr., 24, was working at Winn Dixie and saving his money to go to another university, unaware of the Geoscience Department at ECSU. "I always had heard it was a second-rate institution. Then I read a story about Dr. (Maurice) Powers (Chairman of the Geoscience Department)," he recalled. Today he is a rising senior with plans to go on to graduate school after receiving his degree...and a first-rate education in geoscience.

John Workinger, 29, faces a choice of job opportunities when he graduates in Industrial Technology in May. He began while stationed in Elizabeth City four years with the U. S. Coast Guard, taking advantage of the extended day degree programs. "This place (the University) offers such a good opportunity. People in town just don't use it like they should," he said.

Teri Copeland, a 4.0 history major from Hertford, said she entered ECSU "after attending summer school classes in Education

and Psychology under Dr. Lois Green, who really energized me." She transferred credits from Greensboro College and immediately recruited her sister, Karen Ferrell of Weeksville. "Coming here, I can work and carry on activities, not to mention that it's cheaper," she said.

Accommodations have been made by agency heads to assist Mrs. Axie White of the Pasquotank County Department of Social Services and Mrs. Nora McDougald of the Public Health Department to allow time for classes as they have studied for a degree in social work. Mrs. McDougald's daughter, Denise Lewis, is an ECSU graduate now teaching Social Studies and Language Arts at H. L. Trigg School, across the street from the university.

Mrs. Elaine Holland, 42, walks only five blocks to the school from her home at 1508 Crescent Drive. She moved to Elizabeth City four years ago from Virginia Beach. Her husband, Dale Holland, is computer analyst with the U. S. Coast Guard. After receiving a degree in business administration she plans to take the CPA exam and return to work.

For some, like Mrs. Laura Forbes, 53-year-old grandmother and former mill worker, ECSU is "a beautiful miracle and a dream come true." Mrs. Forbes always wanted to go back to school and last year took the GED "and passed it the first time round." She entered ECSU expecting to need assistance in adapting to studies through the Basic Skills Program, but quickly moved out of that assistance to As and Bs. "I don't know just what I plan to do,

probably I'll go into Special Education," she comments. Now in General Studies and with the adventure of education unfolding, "anything is possible," she claims. With two of her six children at home and of school age, along with two grandchildren, Mrs. Forbes' husband, James E. Forbes, an electrical contractor, chips in to make the household chores easier for his "college student wife."

A daughter, Peggy Williams, 33, also entered the freshman class last fall with her mother. "We made the decision together," she said. Peggy has entered campus life, serving as treasurer of the freshman class.

"I've become a grandmother figure," Mrs. Forbes commented. "The students have accepted me and also confide in me."

With white minority enrollment approximately 15 per cent at present, Mrs. Elaine Williams, member of the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank School Board and ECSU Board of Trustees, sees a growing number of first-year freshmen entering the school with the development of a Graduate School in the near future.

"There is a growing awareness that ECSU is changing into a regional university," she said. "I know teachers throughout the area are pleased to see the development of a graduate school. Once teachers are participating in our graduate program, they will reflect to students the quality of education found at ECSU and we look for many more first year students in that event."

For the present she said,

the economic feasibility of having a regional university should spur first-year enrollment from area high schools.



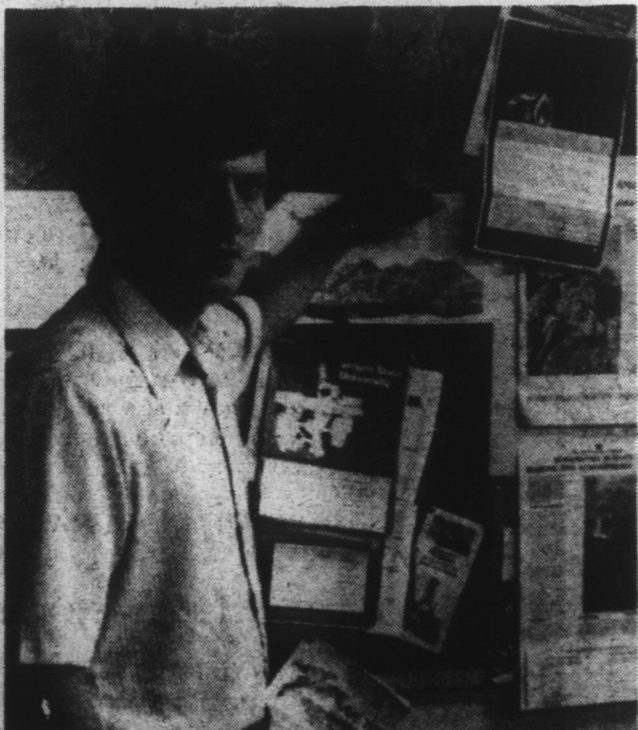
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Mrs. Sandra Faircloth, 33, housewife and mother of two children, like many women today, "felt she was not accomplishing too much at home, had time on my hands." With help of husband and mother, she attended the College of the Albemarle, received an associate degree in the liberal arts and was counseled to go to East Carolina University for degree in Business Education. "The superintendent (Dr. John B. Dunn) asked why, why not ECSU? He was the one who would be hiring me, so I came to ECSU."



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Ben Terry, Jr., a rising senior at ECSU, plans to go on to graduate school...after receiving a first-rate education in geoscience. He had "always heard it was a second-rate institution."



Expanded job opportunities have occurred for Nora McDougald of the Public Health Department (left) and Axie White of the Social Services Department. Both are working toward degrees in social work at ECSU.



Garry Mickey calls ECSU "a gold mine...that has not been touched" by area residents.

"Opening The Door Of Opportunity"



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