

Watt encourages Belles to show pride

By DAMON FORD
THE CHRONICLE Reporter

During most commencement exercises in the Triad, graduates could be seen holding up signs saying "I made it through".

But at Bennett College, one of two black women's colleges in the country, there were no signs, no decorated caps, no streamers and definitely no beach balls being thrown around during commencement exercises last Sunday.

Family and friends looked on while more than 100 women received degrees on campus lawn.

"Thank you Jesus' sounds like the best way to describe how I feel today," said Paulica Musgrave, an elementary education degree recipient.

A lot of the common shenanigans of graduation may have been missing, but the emotion and spirit of the celebration was not lacking.

Senior class president, Keisha Reed was overcome with tears halfway through her speech, but after a brief pause she was able to continue her message.

"Through our years at Bennett, we have been taught to be a phenomenal woman," said Reed.

Commencement speaker Melvin Watt, U.S. Congressman of the 12 District of N.C., left the 1998 graduates with some thoughts to take with them.

"Love Bennett College. Always remember the love, the secrets, the magic here at Bennett College," he said. "Show off your pride that comes with being a Bennett Belle!"

He even had the graduates stand while they waved at and thanked their families for helping

them get through the rough times.

Watt, who also received an honorary doctorate in law from Bennett, was the first male in a number of years to speak at commencement exercises. He didn't let that fact or the prospect of Guilford County being left out of the redrawing of the 12 District lines deter him.

"It's time for you to go ... go make the best of (your degree)," concluded Watt.

Michelle Miller has already taken Watt's words to heart and is ready to use her degree in biology in the Peace Corp this summer.

"I was in ninth grade and one of my biology professors was a Peace Corp volunteer. She really touched my life and I think that's what made me go into teaching science education and go into the Corp," said Miller.

"I feel so relieved (and) I'm just ready to rejoice and give God all of the praise because without him, this wouldn't have even happened."

"It really makes me feel very proud to see (Jan's) accomplishments and it lets me know that this goal is attainable," stated Laila Price, a Fayetteville State University student who came to watch her first cousin Jan Edwards receive a degree in math from Bennett College.

Edwards finished her degree requirements in December 1997 and will receive a masters degree from North Carolina Central University this December.

"She's wonderful, funny (and) outgoing. She possesses all the qualities that are necessary for success," said Price.

NAACP refocuses on civil rights rather than finances

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BALTIMORE — The national NAACP board ended a three-day meeting pledging to fight for civil rights, particularly a Washington state initiative that would end affirmative action in government hiring, contracting and college admissions.

The country's largest and oldest civil rights organization agreed Saturday to spend \$50,000 to fight Initiative 200. The group also agreed to hold its quarterly board meeting in October in Seattle.

NAACP President Kweisi Mfume said the organization is making the effort because the 1996 approval in California of Proposition 206, which outlawed many of the state's affirmative-action programs, caught the group off guard.

The organization suffered through a \$4 million debt, which diverted attention to fund raising from fighting for civil rights. The group finished two of the past three years with more than a \$2 million surplus.



Kweisi Mfume

"We've reached a healthy plateau and we can now afford to look at civil rights issues more closely," said Julian Bond, who was presiding over his first meeting as board chairman.

The group endorsed plans to hold a million-youth march in Atlanta in the fall and support the Congressional Black Caucus' appeal for President Clinton to declare AIDS a national emergency. The disease is now the No. 1 killer of blacks between the ages of 25 and 44.

Carver principal says statistics on drop-out rates misleading

By DAMON FORD
THE CHRONICLE Reporter

There are always two sides to every story, says Carver High School principal Daniel Piggott. And Piggott says statistics about his school's high drop out rates only tell one side of the story.

A recent survey of schools across the Southeast shows that Carver High School has the third highest dropout percentage (6.6) behind alternative schools South Park (9.0) and Independence (48.3) last year.

The survey was done by "The Wall Street Journal," which commissioned SchoolMatch, a company that researches schools and school districts for parents and relocating firms, to compile the listing.

Piggott says it's more important to talk about the accomplishments of his students.

"We put out some good students," Piggott said.

According to Piggott, the senior class of Carver has won \$1.1 million in scholarship money this spring. Seventy seven percent of their students will continue their education after high school.

"(Students) are getting scholarships from all over," he said. "This wasn't just started, it's tradition."

Piggott admits Carver is not perfect, but what school is, he asks. He just wants his school to be seen fairly, which hasn't always been the case.

Instead of worrying about what is said and not said about the school, Piggott, the faculty and the staff "work harder to be the best we can be."

"We use these types of things as stepping stones," Piggott said. "I definitely do not believe Carver is one of the 10 worst schools in the Southeast. We are a nurturing school. We believe in our students."

That confidence and work has translated into results, he says.

Twenty two percent of Carver's students made the honor roll every quarter last year. Fifty six percent have made the honor roll at least one time.

Piggott is also quick to point out the accomplishments of the school's graduates.

His daughter, Dionne, was the only Morehead Scholarship recipient among public school students in the County in 1994. She's graduating from UNC-Chapel Hill this year and will enter medical school in the fall.

John Mark Oliver, a 1990 graduate, graduated of Morehouse College and attended Chapel Hill's School of Dentistry.

Nineteen eighty-nine graduate, Erica Johnson-Brooks, received a law degree from Duke University in 1996.

These students and others speak for the school's reputation, Piggott says.

"Carver is a good institution," he said.

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Classic Boys

Age Group (Birthdates)	Dates	Time	Field
U18 (8-1-80 to 7-31-81)	May 28-30	10:00 AM	SL 4,5
U17 (8-1-81 to 7-31-82)	May 28-28	7:00 PM	SL 4,5
U16 (8-1-82 to 7-31-83)	May 28-28	5:00 PM	SL 4,5
U15 (8-1-83 to 7-31-84)	May 18-20	5:00 PM	SL 2,3
U14 (8-1-84 to 7-31-85)	May 20-22	7:00 PM	SL 4,5
U13 (8-1-85 to 7-31-86)	May 18-20	7:00 PM	SL 2,3
U12 (8-1-86 to 7-31-87)	May 20-22	5:00 PM	SL 4,5
U11 (8-1-87 to 7-31-88)	June 1-3	5:00 PM	SL 4,5

For information call: Barry Orrell 463-2197 (H); 176-6140 (W)

Classic Girls

Age Group (Birthdates)	Dates	Time	Field
U18 (8-1-80 to 7-31-81)	May 29-31	7:00 PM	SL 6
U17 (8-1-81 to 7-31-82)	May 29-31	5:00 PM	SL 6,7
U16 (8-1-82 to 7-31-83)	May 29-31	7:00 PM	SL 4,5
U15 (8-1-83 to 7-31-84)	May 29-31	5:00 PM	SL 4,5
U14 (8-1-84 to 7-31-85)	May 26-28	7:00 PM	SL 1
U13 (8-1-85 to 7-31-86)	May 26-28	5:00 PM	SL 3
U12 (8-1-86 to 7-31-87)	May 26-28	5:00 PM	SL 1

For information call: Bill Walker 773-2417 (H); 725-0583 (W)

Challenge Boys

Age Group (Birthdates)	Dates	Time	Field
U15 (8-1-83 to 7-31-84)	June 4-6	7:00 PM	SL 4
U14 (8-1-84 to 7-31-85)	June 4-6	7:00 PM	SL 6
U13 (8-1-85 to 7-31-86)	June 4-6	7:00 PM	SL 5
U12 (8-1-86 to 7-31-87)	June 1-3	5:00 PM	SL 6
U11 (8-1-87 to 7-31-88)	June 1-3	5:00 PM	SL 4,5
U10 (8-1-88 to 7-31-89)	May 18-20	5:00 PM	SL 6

For more information pick up a flyer @ Soccer Unlimited or call: John Daly 788-9444 (W)

Challenge Girls

Age Group (Birthdates)	Dates	Time	F
U18 (8-1-80 to 7-31-81)	June 4-6	5:00 PM	SL 5
U17 (8-1-81 to 7-31-82)	June 4-6	5:00 PM	SL 5
U16 (8-1-82 to 7-31-83)	June 4-6	5:00 PM	SL 4
U15 (8-1-83 to 7-31-84)	June 4-6	5:00 PM	SL 6
U14 (8-1-84 to 7-31-85)	June 1-3	7:00 PM	SL 4
U13 (8-1-85 to 7-31-86)	June 1-3	7:00 PM	SL 6
U12 (8-1-86 to 7-31-87)	June 1-3	7:00 PM	SL 5
U11 (8-1-87 to 7-31-88)	May 19-21	7:00 PM	SL 8
U10 (8-1-88 to 7-31-89)	May 19-21	7:00 PM	SL 7

For more information pick up a flyer @ Soccer Unlimited or call: Steve Mabe 768-5214 (H)

** If you cannot attend the tryouts in your age group - call the person listed for information under your group for details. Good Luck !!

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