



Rev. Waymon Monroe Jr. leads a crowd in prayer outside of City Hall.

Photos by Kevin Walker

**Vigil**

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God to City Hall to publicly speak out about the senseless deaths and call for a community-wide solution to youth-perpetrated violence.

"This city is full of youth who are scared, who are afraid, who don't know what to do," he said.

Already this year, there have been six homicides - an unusually high number for a city that only had 15 the whole of last year. All the victims - Delroy East, Anthony Ivry Lee Johnson, Christopher Rashawn Thompson, Christopher Dasean Jones, Tyrahn Rashad Elliott, Christopher Shane Larkin and Jerome Dwayne France - were black males; four of them were under the age of 24. All the men were killed with guns, except France - the latest victim - who was purposely hit by the driver of a pick-up truck on April 27. (Many count Jermane Darnell Clark among the city's fallen, although the city native was murdered April 30 in neighboring Greensboro.)

The violence had already sparked similar calls to action from the community. In mid-March, Diggs Memorial United Holy Church held a panel discussion to dissect the roots of black-on-black crime. A similar summit was held at the Carl Russell Sr. Community Center last month; the center is planning a follow-up awareness march on June 7.

Monroe would like to see a more concerted effort - one that involves not only the faith community, but city, police officials and corporate leaders, too. He said there are too few positive alternatives to the streets for young people and that, along with a lack of employment opportunities, are driving them to act irrationally.

"I feel the community, even the church, has been too silent ... I think everyone has to take responsibility," said Monroe, who believes action is needed urgently, as he fears summer idleness will spur more violence. Monroe and his congregants opened and closed the vigil by singing "We Shall Overcome," whose defiant words helped it become the anthem of the Civil Rights Movement.

Crystal Thompson believes that a vigilant fight is needed now to curb gun violence. Her son Christopher became the city's third homicide victim when he was shot just steps from his front door on March 23; his murder remains



Solid Rock member Pat Johnson (center) reacts to Pastor Monroe's words during last week's event.

unsolved. Solid Rock's was the third vigil Thompson has attended since her son's death. She said with each subsequent murder, she relives her own loss, so there's been little peace as of late.

"It has been an uneasy rest," she said.

Both Thompson and Monroe said they are not under the illusion that

prayer alone will stem the tide. Thompson believes the solution must include parents.

"Some of them are out there doing this because they aren't getting attention at home," she said of young perpetrators. "They don't realize that these things they're doing are harming people, harming the community."

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**A&T approved for MBA program**

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University recently received approval from the University of North Carolina General Administration to change the name of its Master of Science in Management Program (MSM) to the Master of Business Administration (MBA). The change will become effective in the fall semester 2014. The renaming will enhance the visibility of graduate programming in the School of Business and Economics at North Carolina A&T State University.



Whitehead

The MBA program will continue to offer prospective students opportunities to focus on concentrations in accounting, human resources management, and supply chain systems. In the near future, the MBA will also offer more interdisciplinary opportunities to individuals with STEM backgrounds.

"This is an excellent opportunity for North Carolina A&T to showcase its wealth of knowledge and expertise. This MBA program will prepare more qualified and highly marketable employees who understand the business process," said Joe B. Whitehead Jr., provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at North Carolina A&T State University.

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