

Robinson Featured Speaker At Annual UNCF Luncheon

Rocky Mount - Nash-Edgecombe County kicked off their 1986 United Negro College Fund Drive last week.

Dr. Prezell R. Robinson, President of Saint Augustine's College in Raleigh, was the featured speaker at the luncheon held at the Carleton House in Rocky Mount. Saint Augustine's is one of two UNCF schools in the area.

Speaking to representatives of business, industry, and community organizations, Robinson said that what has happened to the UNCF since its inception was "almost a miracle." There are currently some 45,000 students enrolled in UNCF schools (about 3,000 in the two schools in Raleigh).

"One of the things that has made this country great is its pluralistic education. We are the only major industrialized country in the world where an effort is made to educate every person who wants an education," Robinson said.

He emphasized that there are about one million black students enrolled in post secondary education programs in the U.S.

"Where else on this globe

can this happen? Education is the great equalizer of the condition of man," he added.

The renowned educator, who himself is a product of a UNCF institution, the one he currently heads, told his audience that his message was a simple one, "Please help the UNCF schools educate our young people."

Robinson said UNCF institutions reach out to young people who might otherwise not have the opportunity at larger universities, not because they don't have the mental capacity, but, because they have not had the support mechanisms they need.

The cost to incarcerate a prisoner for one year in Central Prison in Raleigh is about \$17,000, but it only costs about \$5,000 a year to give a young person an education at a UNCF school.

Robinson said we (Americans) have lost ground in the past few years. In the past decade, he said, the Japanese have taken the lead in producing engineers and they almost completely control the electronic industry. The Germans now control the tool and dye industry, and Koreans control the steel

supply for ship building.

"I would suggest, if for no more than enlightened self interest, that we need to support UNCF institutions to provide the youth who will help this nation find its niche in the world."

In 1944, the first year of the organization, UNCF only raised \$360,000. This year, to date they have raised more than \$8 million.

Richard Futrell, Senior Vice President of Planters National Bank, and Co-chairman of the Nash-

Edgecombe UNCF campaign, urged his business peers to support what he terms such as worthy cause. Dr. Clifford L. Coles, the other co-chair-

man, and a graduate of Shaw University, the other UNCF school in the area, praised Robinson and the job he has done since becoming President of Saint Augustine's College, and reminded the group that much of the leadership to communities like Rocky Mount and Tarboro come from historically black

colleges and universities.

Futrell urged the group not only to give now, but

the put the UNCF campaign in their budgets for the coming year.

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Black History Festival

February is Black History Month, and the Belmont Center Branch of the Public Library is celebrating! Learn about the life of George Washington Carver, famous black scientist, who worked his way through college and developed more than 300 products from peanuts. See the thrilling story of William and Ellen Craft, who devised a clever plot to escape to freedom. Enjoy the heart-warming story of the "Tap-Dance Kid," and taste the bitter drama of "Strange Fruit," based on

Lillian Smith's novel.

Filmstrips on black culture will also be shown. All programs are free, and will be shown each Wednesday in February at 3:30 p.m. at the Belmont Center Library, 700 Parkwood Avenue.

For more information, call 336-2740.

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