

JCSU a full-time mission for president Yancy

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quality and caliber of students here, which we've done," she said. "The students that are coming in are brighter than ever. We've not changed the mix in terms of first generation and second generation students, that's the same as it's ever been. We didn't go out and try to find all upper middle class students. We stuck to the university's mission. I wanted to improve the facilities on this campus and make them competitive with any university black or white."

Yancy also improved the faculty. Seventy-five percent of JCSU professors have doctorates and terminal degrees.

She wanted JCSU to be known for technology and in 2000, that happened. JCSU became the first historically black college to offer laptops to all of its students. That next year, the university was ranked by Yahoo Internet Life Magazine as one of the top 50 most wired small colleges in the nation. Yancy said that JCSU was the only historically black college on that list.

Getting Smith ranked nationally was one of her goals. In the last 11 years, JCSU has been ranked in US News and World Report for five years.

The national publication ranked JCSU 45th out of the 106 colleges in the South as a Top Tier Institution among comprehensive colleges that offer bachelor's degrees.

"I always believed Johnson C. Smith was one of the best kept secrets in this country and I think now a lot of people know about our secret," she said.

And those people don't mind donating.

During Yancy's tenure, the university endowment more than tripled from \$13 million to \$45 million. It exceeded the \$50 million goal of the Campaign of the '90s and raised \$63.8 million, solidify-

ing her reputation as one of the nation's best fund raisers.

Yancy said she has a passion for fund raising, education and Johnson C. Smith. "I truly believe we have a product to sell. When we explain what we do at Johnson C. Smith, and where our students come from and where they go and what they contribute to this society, it's hard for you to decide not to give us any money," she said.

Alumni think that the last 11 years under Yancy has lifted the university to higher heights.

JCSU alum Matthew Holland, Class of 1972, said Yancy has done a tremendous job of advancing the university.

"You will not find a more dynamic leader," he said. "She is always marketing Johnson C. Smith University."

He added that because JCSU has so many partnerships with business leaders and the community, Smith doesn't have the struggles that some other smaller HBCUs have.

"Smith has a tight budget like everybody else," Yancy said. "I have to manage every penny I hear people telling me what we should be doing, what we should be buying, what type of programs we should have. But we try to live within our means. That means we can't have everything. We can have some things, but you have to make prudent business decisions. This is a business."

She, however, hasn't been without her critics.

JCSU graduate Ken Koontz, Class of '72, said some people may not always like Yancy's decisions, but she puts the students' and the university's best interests in the forefront.

"Nothing is ever perfect, it's not a perfect world," he said. "But at the end of the

day when Dorothy Yancy goes home and lays down at night she is very satisfied that she has done everything in her powers that's in the best interest of Johnson C. Smith University and its students."

Yancy said she knows what some people say, but she doesn't focus on it, because the business of the university and providing for the students is the most important thing.

Senior Shani Provost said she's worked with Yancy on various projects, the latest one being the development of an academic calendar to be distributed to all 1,404 students at the school.

"Dr. Yancy is very personable," Provost said. "She knows many of the students and she listens to you and takes an interest in what you say."

And knowing that Yancy is the first woman to ever lead JCSU is an inspiration to Provost. "She's already set a standard," she said.

The Johnson C. Smith that Yancy runs isn't anything like the one she graduated from. "Women had no position here (when she was a student). There were no women here and they reminded you that the school was founded for men and we had sort of gotten here," she said.

But the day she was elected president, Yancy said an

older alum of Smith let her know that things had changed and her leadership was welcomed.

"He said, young lady, you're going to do good. The older alumni will support you and the young alumni will support you," she recalled.

Yancy's classmate and president of the Charleston, S.C., chapter of the JCSU Alumni Association, Pamela Middleton Robinson, said she has an extra sense of pride because Yancy is president.

"I think she's done a great job," said Robinson, Class of '66. "She's made the university grow in several different directions and gotten the alumni more connected."

Yancy plans to leave JCSU better than it was when she arrived so that the next president can continue to move the university forward.

"I plan to move through

the SACS process, we're going through our review now and we should be finished with that in June, 2007 and I would like to see us start some graduate programs. We now have the infrastructure to develop some very good programs,"

she said. "We're getting a certain notoriety and that's very positive."

"I think Johnson C. Smith is known outside of the city limits of Charlotte and North Carolina and the East Coast and I think that says something," she said.

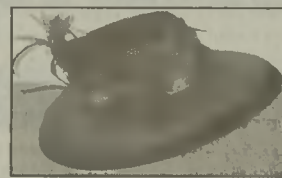
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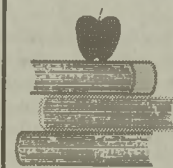
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PHOTO: CALVIN FERGUSON

Johnson C. Smith University President Dorothy Yancy, leading a staff meeting on campus Monday, has seen the school's endowment soar from \$13 million to \$45 million. Yancy also raised \$68 million for the school, solidifying her reputation as one of the nation's top fund raisers.

Documentary, dialogue on black experience in Charlotte-Mecklenburg

By Herbert L. White
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A November documentary will chronicle the black experience in Charlotte from slavery to the future.

The second installment of "Hometown Stories: African-Americans' Journey in Charlotte-Mecklenburg," produced by WTIV (channel 42) will examine those issues Nov. 2 at 8 pm on and again at 10 pm on Nov. 22.

The documentary delves into Charlotte-Mecklenburg's African-American community's culture and history, from slavery to today. Included are interviews of individuals who participated in the Civil Rights Movement; whose grandparents lived free during Reconstruction and whose great-grandparents worked the fields as slaves.

The documentary will include the rise and fall of Charlotte's Brooklyn neighborhood and life in the late 19th century for African-Americans.

The homes, churches, businesses and social events of African-Americans, past and present, will be remembered through first person interviews, photographs and video.

WTIV developed the "Hometown Stories" series as a way to reflect the history and life of ethnic communities.

WTIV will also lead a community town hall meeting in which viewers can talk about the film and dialogue on how race affects Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The forum is scheduled for Nov. 29 at 5:30 p.m. at the Levine Museum of the New South.

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