

# Phillips steps in as Hunt aide

By GARY TERPENING

After 16 years of school, Jim Phillips was worn out and tired of academic life. Although plans for law school were uppermost in his mind, he realized a one-or two-year break was necessary and sought a meaningful job to fill the time before returning to school. The day after graduation, he went to work as appointments aide for Gov. Jim Hunt in Raleigh.

Phillips, who served as student body president at Carolina last year, views his job with a self-confident poise that belies his 22 years. "The job is tough, and I have a lot to learn," he said, "but I would never change. I love it."

Working in an office next door to Gov. Hunt's, Phillips maintains a close working relationship with the governor. He received and reviews applications and recommendations for state appointments and presents his findings directly to Gov. Hunt. His input into the governor's decision-making process is considerable.

Despite the awesome responsibility of his position, Phillips said he grows more comfortable each day. Initial

apprehensions were eased during his first day on the job, which he recounted with more than a hint of pride in his voice.

"I got the opportunity to become acquainted with Governor Hunt during a helicopter ride to Charlotte, where he was going to deliver a speech for Law Day," Phillips remembers. "It was an excellent way of getting to know and trust one another."

Phillips, who has been involved in politics as long as he can remember, expresses an admiration for his employer that borders on awe. "If I had a political idol," he stated matter-of-factly, "it would surely be Hunt. He's the best governor I can remember."

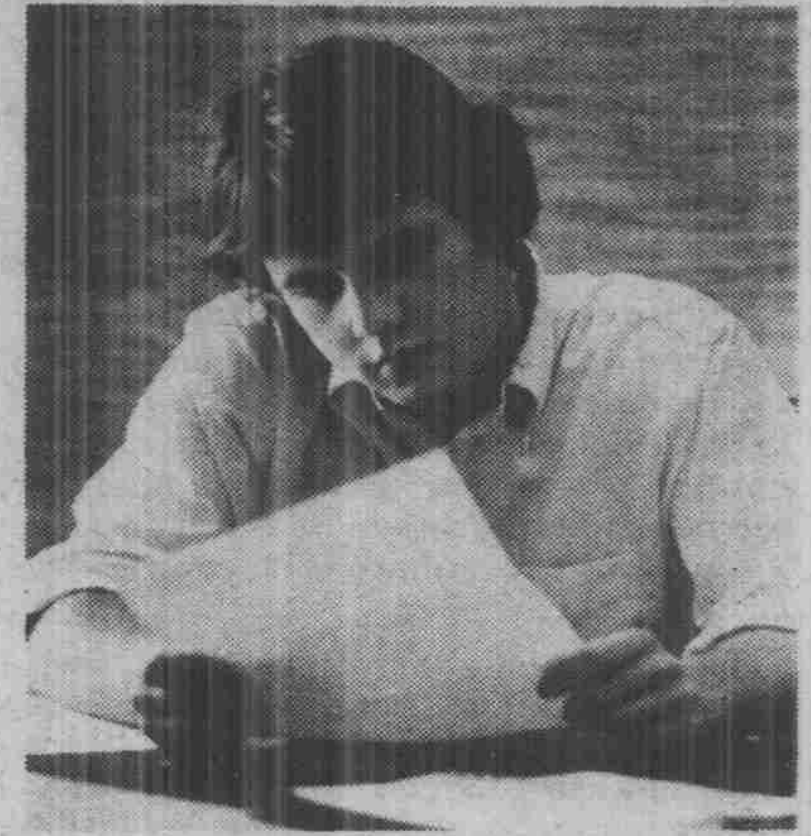
A rash, precocious statement? Perhaps. But Phillips' familiarity with North Carolina politics suggests otherwise. His family includes some very important political figures, and Phillips grew up in a highly political atmosphere.

His father is the district manager for U.S. Congressman Steve Neal from Winston-Salem. His uncle, Charles Winberry, managed Robert Morgan's successful campaign for the U.S.

Senate and will probably leave his law practice in Rocky Mount next month to fill a federal judgeship. He was nominated for the position by President Carter earlier this year.

Phillips discounts the probability of his own political career. After law school he plans on opening a practice in the state. But if a political opportunity presents itself, he just might take advantage of it.

"I love North Carolina," Phillips said. "There are a lot of things I believe in and want to see for the state. Politics might be the way to accomplish them."



Jim Phillips—newest Hunt staffer

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