Blacks at Carolina

With more applicants, more admissions more faculty, blacks' future still uncertain

By Martha Johnsen

Although such publicity as the HEW dispute and the Sonja Stone tenure case has given the University a black eye in recent years, there have been some significant gains for blacks at Carolina in the past decade, say several black administrators and professors at UNC.

For example, the number of black students enrolled at Carolina has increased. "When I came here in 1966, only about one-tenth of 1 percent of the student body was black," says Kelly Alexander Jr., a Charlotte resident and Carolina alumni who now serves as vice president of the state's National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

"In 1969 when I came, there was no full-time recruitment officer," says Richard Epps, a lawyer with the U.S. Justice Department, who became the first black student body president in 1972. "When Dean Hayden B. Renwick was appointed in 1973, he made a great effort to talk with guidance counselors at high schools throughout the state. There was some mystique that counselors would only recommend black students in the top 5 percent of their class."

Through the '70s the number of black students increased from 844, or 4.4 percent in 1972, to 1,581, or 7.5 percent in the fall of 1979, according to the supplement to the annual report of the chancellor of December 1979.

This year more blacks applied to Carolina than previously, and more were accepted; however, less are presently enrolled for this fall, says Renwick, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The slight drop in black enrollment this year is offset by the climbing rate of retention. "In 1973, the black attrition rate was 28 percent," says Renwick. "Now only 10 percent of the blacks who enroll don't graduate."

Among the programs initiated in the past decade to keep minority students at Carolina are the minority student adviser program, peer counseling by academically gifted upperclassmen, an academic tutorial program and an academic warning system to alert parents of students' progress, says Renwick.

One or two more programs, like an early alert warning system to communicate with students after five or six weeks about their academic progress, are planned to begin in the fall, says Renwick.

Although other minority programs could be established, they cannot be initiated without an increase in staff. "This is a heavy burden for two full-time staffers and a handful of graduate students," says Renwick.

Outside these statistics and programs, there are other ways life for the black student has changed in the '70s—for example, housing. "Not long before I came, all black students lived together in a North Campus dorm," says Epps. Now although many blacks live in several South Campus dorms, black and white students are neighbors all over campus.

Curriculum in African Studies and Afro-American Studies first appeared in the catalog in 1971. Since then the program has grown from four courses to 20.

Other specific gains for blacks have been the establishment of the Martin Luther King Jr. lecture series and the Pogue scholarships for minority students, says Charles Daye, law professor and former chairman of the University Committee on the Status of Minorities and the Disadvantaged.

But perhaps the most impressive gains for black students are seen in their individual accomplishment and increasingly recognized influence in student affairs.

In the '70s black students served as student body president, chaired student organizations such as the Campus Y, wrote for and edited student publications, and were elected homecoming queen.

They have been recipients of numerous undergraduate awards, such as outstanding humanitarian contribution, most outstanding junior, unique leadership in student government, as well as most outstanding male and female athlete. Karen Stevenson, a 1979 graduate became the first black woman ever to receive a Rhodes Scholarship.

Collectively, groups such as the Black Student Movement continue to voice the concerns of black students and play an active and influential role in student life.

The individual gains of black students are not entirely a product of their being at UNC, however. "Blacks have accomplished things personally, but perhaps in spite of being here and not because they wre here," says Lee Greene, associate professor of English.

The black presence has increased not only in the number and influence of students, but in growing numbers of blacks in faculty and administrative positions.

"In terms of a black faculty and staff, there has been a considerable increase since 1972 when I came," says Carl Smith, assistant to the provost.

The number of black faculty increased from 15 in fall 1972 to 57 in fall 1979, according to the supplement to the annual report of the chancellor, December 1979.

"We are heads and shoulders above most comparable major universities—we are making progress," says Smith. "There are those who feel we must go faster and personally I'm one of them."

There are presently 34 black faculty in the tenure track and this number is projected to reach 44 by 1983, said Smith.

Blacks who are full professors are rare, however. "There was only one black professor in 1972," says Smith. "In September 1980, there will be five black professors, two of whom are named William Rand Kenan Jr. professors.

"To my knowledge, we are the only university in the country with any black WRK Jr. professors," Smith adds. "This year, for the first time, a black faculty member who entered in a junior rank was promoted to a full professorship.

"Dr. Charles Daye is the only black in the history of the University to do this," says Smith. "Other black faculty are waiting in the wings for their promotions, but that remains to be seen.

"Charles's appointment might serve as 'good ink' to those who criticize this University as a place where blacks cannot progress," Smith says.

More blacks now serve in administrative positions than ever before. "In 1972 I was the only black in South Building administration," Smith recalls. "There are those who say that when I was hired I had the highest position of any black in the University system."

Christopher C. Fordham's decision to place a black in a senior administrative position is seen as an encouraging sign. "The chancellor's move is a step in the right direction," says Smith. "An example needs to be set in the upper positions."

"I feel we're on the threshold of important improvements based on the developments in progress under the leadership of Chancellor Fordham," says Daye.

Although gains in enrollment and employment of blacks have been made, a change in attitude must take place to enhance and increase these gains in the '80s, agree some black faculty and administrators.

"Attitudes have changed," says Greene, "But not necessarily for the better. As the number of black students and faculty increases, this appears as a threat. When there's just 20 or 30 blacks on campus, people don't mind, but when you talk about hundreds, the resistance comes to the fore."

Handling this resistance is one thing Greene feels needs to be done in the coming decade. "The University will have to look at how to deal with the built-in resistance to affirmative action," he says.

Hayden Renwick also sees the resistance as a problem. "Ninety percent of the people know how to get around affirmative action and 100 percent of those 90 percent do it," he says.

Although the *Brown v. Board of Education* case banning segration in public schools took place over 26 years ago, those working to improve the conditions of blacks at this University still see much more work to be done.

"The only way we can succeed is by ignoring the prejudices and biases of the alumni and state constituents who are against the progress of blacks at this University, and get on with the issues at hand—to provide adequate resources and personnel for the job to be done," says Renwick. "It has been well documented what it takes to be successful in providing adequate education for blacks—now we need to follow those guidlines."

"There is a lot that can and hopefully will be done," says Smith. "It's a job that everyone has to pitch in on and do their darnedest to bring about, but conditions are favorable."

South Building

New Univer

By John Royster

UNC Chancellor Christopher C. Ford
outlined the responsibilities that will be en
newly-created positions of vice chancellor
Affairs and full-time affirmative action off

The affirmative action officer will have d
those of the present part-time officer, Fordh
means overseeing the University's pol
opportunity in hiring, promoting and adr

Fordham said the new vice chancellor's w
two main areas—supervision of the offices o
student financial aid, records and
institutional research and undergraduate ad
"asssisting the chancellor in working at the e
issue of enhancing the presence and
minorities."

Committees to assist Fordham in fill
positions have already begun meeting. Rep
the positions will be filled sometime in the

A brief history: Blacks, long excluded from the University, have made

By Craig Brown

For more than 150 years, by force of law, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill systematically excluded blacks from its student body.

Thus, the history of black students at UNC is relatively short. It is a history of legal confrontation, of a slowly growing black student population, of a campus reacting to and accepting the presence of blacks.

With black student enrollment approaching 10 percent of the student body in 1980, the University is in the process of reassessing its affirmative action policies.

Before one can examine race relations in the modern era, however, a brief historical review of the black presence at UNC is clearly in order.

On March 27, 1951, the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the University must admit black students to the School of Law. Pursuant to that decision, four blacks entered the Law School on June 12, 1951.

Even though UNC was the first white university in the South to admit black students, the reaction of the campus was rather quiet. There were no protests, no national guard troops, no governors standing on any schoolhouse steps.

In the fall of 1955, black undergraduate students entered the University for the first time.

The first instances of racial strife in the area began in 1963. Most involved sit-ins and protests against segregation in public accommodations, which resulted in 1,400 arrests from December 1963 to December 1964.

Primarily through Student Government efforts, greater attempts were made to attract black students to UNC. In November 1967, the Carolina Talent Search was established, while the National Achievement Scholarship Program was created in 1968. Partly as a result of these student-initiated recruitment efforts, black student enrollment began to increase steadily.

This slow growth in the black student population, coupled with dissatisfaction with the more conservative NAACP, culminated in the November 1967 birth of the Black Student Movement. Initial BSM objectives included a full-credit black history course, Student Legislature funding, seats in the Student Legislature and more black faculty members.

The years 1968 and 1969 were years of racial demonstrations and confrontation on the UNC campus.

Black demonstrations on Feb. 15-16, 1968, were incited by the deaths of three blacks in Orangeburg, S.C.

Then tension flared on campus following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. on April 6, 1968. On the day of King's funeral, April 9, black students and faculty boycotted classes, Chancellor J. Carlyle Sitterson proclaimed a half-day recess for the University, and many downtown businesses closed for the day.

On Dec. 6, 1968, the Faculty Council accepted the recommendations of an ad hoc committee appointed to study minority affairs at UNC. The committee found the proportion of black enrollment (1.5 percent of the student body in 1968) to be unacceptable, and recommended aggressive recruitment of black students, a non-competitive admissions program, more black staff and administrative personnel, a summer school bridge program for disadvantaged students, creation of an administrative position to coordinate minority affairs and a permanent standing committee of the faculty to provide continuing oversight.

While 1968 marked the University's first step toward concrete policies designed to enhance minority presence at UNC, the obvious difference between paper commitments and actual change left the black student community frustrated.

On Dec. 11, 1968, representatives of the BSM presented 29 demands to Sitterson which, among other things, called for creation of a department of African and Afro-American studies, appropriation of Student Government funds to the BSM and minority representation on the student courts.

On Jan. 24, 1969, Sitterson rejected the BSM demands, stating, "the University cannot, in policy or practice, provide unique treatment for any single race, color, or creed. To do so would be a step backward..."

Since the initial rejection of these demands, the University has taken concrete steps to meet some of them. A University Committee on the Status of Minorities and the Disadvantaged was created in 1969. A Curriculum in Afro-American Studies was established that same year. Two black assistant directors were appointed. A special admissions program for disadvantaged students began in 1970, while a Minority Counseling Office was created in 1975.

While action on these demands was delayed somewhat, the demand for action was immediate. On Feb. 7, 1969, 450 students and faculty marched in support of BSM's demands, with approximately 100 protesters occupying South Building.

Within Student Government, the Student Legislature began appropriating funds to the BSM in 1969, and black representation on the student courts and legislature was ensured by reforms which culminated in 1974.

On the campus itself, race relations