

Philanthropic intersection

# Spangler Foundation giving \$10 million to UNC system

UNC President C.D. Spangler Jr. says his family foundation's gift will support distinguished professorships on UNC's 16 campuses.

By TODD COHEN

As president of the University of North Carolina system, C.D. Spangler Jr. faces a big challenge shared by his counterparts throughout the U.S.:

How to attract and retain top-notch faculty members at public universities in the face of offers few can refuse from well-heeled private institutions.

Like his public university counterparts, Spangler can try to wring dollars out of state lawmakers intent on spending fewer dollars to meet rising needs.

But as one of the wealthiest individuals in the U.S., Spangler can do something else. And he did just that last month, announcing that his fami-

ly foundation would give \$1 million a year for the next 10 years to UNC campuses to establish and support distinguished professorships on UNC's 16 campuses.

Spangler says the gift creates opportunities "to reach beyond [state salaries] and attract people of national repute by having additional funding."

Directors of the \$50 million-asset C.D. Spangler Foundation, which is named for Spangler's father and mainly funds higher education, will

decide each year how to divide the annual \$1 million gift among the 16 UNC campuses.

Spangler says he hopes the money will create endowment trust funds on each campus for a distinguished professorship, and help complete funding for existing professorships.

Income from the endowments would supplement state salaries for the distinguished professors.

Chairs to be established by the first \$1 million gift include the Raymond H. Dawson Distinguished

Professorship in Political Science at UNC-Chapel Hill and the Julia Jones Daniels Distinguished Professorship at the North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston-Salem.



C.D. Spangler Jr.

## REPORT

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they are ones we can't pretend don't exist if we operate in the public trust."

While there was widespread agreement about the validity of the survey findings, there was less unity when it came to discussion of strategies to address racism.

Brenda Williamson, director of the Women of Color Program at N.C. Equity — a statewide advocacy group for women — is among those favoring a one-on-one approach.

"We have to begin on an individual basis," she says. "I happen to have not only white, but Native American and Asian friends who have talked about the issue with me. Unless you have personal relationships and can ask honest questions and get honest answers, you're not really going to do a whole lot."

On the other hand, the Rev. Collins Kilburn, executive director of the North Carolina Council of Churches, believes the focus needs to be on changing institutions.

"Our understanding of racism is that it's not just a matter of personal feelings, it's a structural issue," he says. "I want to underscore the need for racial justice that involves equal economic opportunity. Racism is not just people not understanding people or having negative stereotypes. The much more serious part is when one group of people is twice as likely to be unemployed as another."

For those working in government and social-service agencies, confronting racism is a necessity, not a luxury, says Wake County Health Director Leah Devlin.

The county health agency has taken a two-pronged approach to the problem by encouraging service providers to be more sensitive to people of different races or ethnic backgrounds and, at the same time, giving residents of minority communities better access to health care.

The newly-created Southeast Raleigh Center for Health and Community Development lets local residents define their own health priorities.

"If they say it's streetlights and crime, we have to respond," Devlin says. "We're trying to be more community focused."

Linda Jones, director of Family Services for the Greensboro Episcopal Housing Ministry, believes the key is not only what programs are offered to poor and minority communities, but how.

"In a lot of organizations, whites are the ones who have control over services and goods," she says. "Right there, that sets up a situation of 'You need and I have.'"

For the past two years, the Housing Ministry has been part of a neighborhood rebuilding project in the mostly-black Eastside Park section of Greensboro that gives residents responsibility for running safety patrols and doing renovation work.

"I think the race relations answer lies in people of different backgrounds growing to care about each other," Jones says. "We need to

invent some opportunities for people of different races to just simply get to know each other in an environment that has nothing to do with money, giving and receiving - where everyone is equal."

Where will the push for improving race relations come from?

Nancy Trovillion, assistant director of the North Carolina Arts Council, sees the arts as a likely arena for increasing tolerance.

"They are so universal and appealing. And it's a good way to expose people in a very entertaining and educational way to other cultures."

Lena Epps Brooker, who manages diversity programs for The Women's Center in Raleigh, believes the workplace is a natural starting point because that is where people of different races now have the most contact.

"Employers have a new call to provide the kind of training that creates an environment where people feel safe in talking about differences," she says.

Among the other North Carolinians who are working to end discrimination is Tom McNeel, superintendent of the New Hanover County Schools.

McNeel has joined an ad hoc committee of local educators and community leaders that recently ran a full page newspaper advertisement under the headline, "Racism Hurts Us All."

In Durham, North Carolinians Against Racist and Religious Violence has been holding "teen summits" in which high school students of different races and economic backgrounds come together to talk about their experiences.

"Young people bear the brunt of things that adults can choose not to deal with," says Executive Director Christina Davis McCoy. "Students come to school with all kinds of issues that are not being talked about or addressed. We feel teens have the answers to problems but their input is not being sought."

The Reynolds report was limited to black-white relations because

blacks and whites make up most of the population in North Carolina.

Some nonprofit leaders were critical that it did not also include the views of Hispanic, Native American and Asian-American residents.

Although he believes the results are solid, polling expert John Shelton Reed warns that surveys about race must be viewed with some skepticism because people often reply in ways they feel will be "socially desirable."

"A classic example is that in 1942, 98 percent of southern whites said they were in favor of segregated schools," says Reed, who directs the Institute for Research in Social Science at UNC-Chapel Hill. "By 1980, that was down to 5 percent."

"Plainly, in 1980, some of these people were not telling the truth. It just wasn't respectable to say you were a segregationist in 1980. In 1942, some of those people probably weren't telling the truth" for the opposite reason.

Since releasing the survey, the Reynolds Foundation has formed a

committee to look at solutions to racism. Foundation leaders are already holding forums with state human relations commissions, community groups and others who have expressed interest in the survey findings.

When asked what he would like to see done with the report, John Kernodle, executive director of the Community Justice Resource Center in Greensboro, has this response:

"I think this information needs to be shared with and discussed not only by policymakers in the criminal justice field, but service providers. It's the kind of information that ought to influence public policy."

C. Edward McCauley, president of the Cary-based North Carolina Hospital Association, also wants the findings to be more widely publicized.

"If this report is accurate, it speaks a lot about why we're not making more progress than we are," he says. "I think making groups like ours in health care aware of what the feelings are is like throwing seeds. Somewhere they might find fertile soil."

Brooker of The Women's Center cautions that ending racism will take more than good intentions.

"It's going to cost money - on the part of our state and county governments, our school systems and employers," she says. "But if you've got a physical problem, you spend money to make it well. My theory is that this is an ailment that is just as deadly as a lot of physical ailments. We need to find the resources to address it."

For Sister Maxine Towns, who runs the newly-created African American Ministry for the Catholic Diocese of Raleigh, the most important thing is to continue the conversation started by the Reynolds Foundation report.

"I'd like to see people make a more conscious effort to try to sit down and talk with one another, work out differences," she says. "If you don't understand something, ask, instead of interpreting what the other person means. They might be using the same words as you but they really are speaking a different language."

### Measuring the gaps

## Survey shows races growing apart

A report on race relations released last month by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation is thought to be the first of its kind in North Carolina.

The Winston-Salem foundation commissioned the survey at the request of its statewide advisory panel.

"A question was raised: 'What is the most pressing problem?' and race relations surfaced immediately," says Robert Bridges, chairman of the committee that requested the study. "The greatest challenge now is to create some settings across racial lines where we can begin to understand each other better."

The survey, conducted by Howard, Merrell & Partners in Raleigh, found that blacks and whites in North Carolina have limited contact and very different perceptions of issues involving race.

Polling expert John Shelton Reed, director of the Institute for Research in Social Science at UNC-Chapel Hill says the findings of the Reynolds survey are consistent with national surveys on race.

The Z. Smith Reynolds report was based on interviews with 812 North Carolinians and four focus group discussions in Wilmington and Greensboro that were broken down by race and — in the case of black respondents — by gender.

Among the findings:

- Sixty-two percent of whites and 76 percent of blacks said it is hard for people to talk honestly about race relations.
- Thirty-two percent of whites and 38 percent of blacks believe violent racial disturbances like the Los Angeles riots will occur in North Carolina in the near future.
- Blacks and whites had oppo-

site opinions on treatment of blacks by the state's criminal justice system. Almost two-thirds of blacks surveyed said getting equal justice is a problem, while nearly the same percentage of whites felt blacks receive equal treatment.

• A majority of whites and blacks favor open housing laws and oppose giving blacks "preference over equally qualified whites in such matters as getting into college or getting jobs."

• A little more than half of whites and more than three-quarters of blacks said they were interested in getting directly involved in improving race relations in their communities.

For a copy of the report, call the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation at (910) 725-7541.

Barbara Solow



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