

THE BLUE BANNER

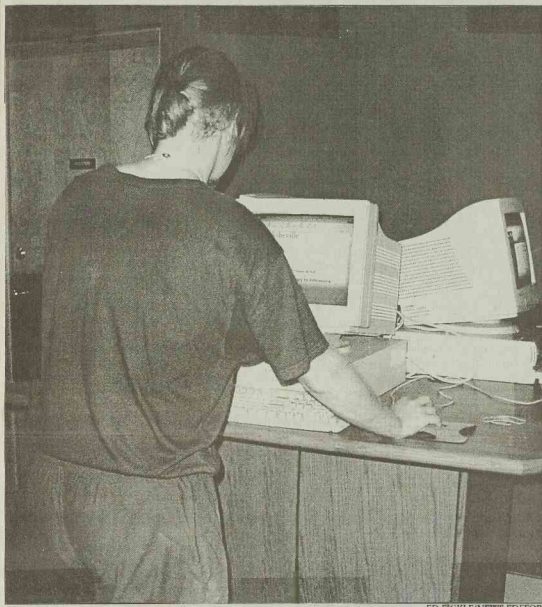
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Black student enrollment falls to five-year low

Bowles and Dole face off in upcoming election



ED FICKLE/NEWS EDITOR

While UNCA's overall enrollment statistics are higher than ever this year, the university struggles to draw minority students, especially blacks. There are 11 new black students at UNCA this semester.

Christina Clayton
News Reporter

Despite overall enrollment being at an all-time high for UNCA, the number of black students enrolled is declining, according to a recently published report by the Office of Institutional Research.

"I see the blame being passed from the administration, to the faculty, to the people in the admissions office and so on," said LaTashia Atkinson, president of the African American student association (AASA). "No one wants to own up to or provide an answer or reason as to why each year UNCA recruits less and less black students."

The black population of the university was the hardest hit by a decrease in enrollment. Of the total 3,294 students enrolled in classes this semester, only 232 are minority students. Seventy of the minority students are black. Black student enrollment dropped 22 students from last year, and only 11 of the black students are freshmen. Reasons include "lack of financial assistance, decrease in a support system for black students, lack of a social scene or activities that cater to the needs (and) interests of black students and retention of black students (who) fall below good academic standing," said Atkinson.

Organizations, such as AASA, try to provide activities for black students. Atkinson does not feel this is enough to increase growth of minority students, especially blacks. "I believe that UNCA should change that plan of action and focus on schools that are graduating higher percentages of black stu-

dents," said Atkinson.

Samuel Williams, director for multicultural student affairs, believes the isolated location of UNCA within the mountains could be one reason for lack of increase in minority population.

"We want to promote a healthy cultural climate for all the students who are here, including minority students, so that they feel comfortable here at a predominately white university," said Williams. "We will possibly work with the other regional institutions, Appalachian State (University) and Western Carolina (University), to bring minority students together and give them some sense of community, not just on campus but off campus as well."

A report from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) claims UNCA is focusing on "recruiting students of color because it is the 'right thing to do' rather than clearly communicating the educational value of having the diverse perspectives of students of color brought to bear upon the cognitive and affective development of all students."

"The majority of black students that come to UNCA feel that we were lied to when we came here on previous visits to the campus," said Atkinson. "We were introduced to just about, if not all, of the minority faculty and told about student organizations that are here and cater to the needs of black students. Once we got here as students, things started to be taken away from us."

The enrollment report shows that over the past five years, the decrease

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Dearborn McCorkle
News Reporter

Erskine Bowles and Elizabeth Dole will fight for North Carolina Senator Jesse Helm's seat in the upcoming Nov. 5 election.

Bowles, President Clinton's former White House Chief of Staff, prevailed in the nine-way democratic primary race, edging out two longstanding party regulars.

Republicans overwhelmingly voted for Dole, former Cabinet Secretary and Red Cross chief, to replace the party's retiring Senator Jesse Helms.

The Dole-Bowles race will be one of the high-profile battles in this key election year. Democrats hope to pick up the seat Helms occupied for 30 years to help maintain control of the closely divided Senate.

The primary election took place Sept. 10 following a four-month delay, due to a legal fight over legislative redistricting.

Helms, currently the ranking minority member of the Committee of Foreign Relations, a Charlotte investment banker, had 277,334 votes, about 43 percent. State Representative Dan Blue had about 29 percent with 184,233 votes, and Secretary of State Elaine Marshall had about 15 percent with 94,394 votes.

Dole's margin was more substantial, according to the State Board of Elections. Dole walked away with approximately 80 percent, or 342,633 votes. Her closest competitor in the seven-way race, lawyer Jim Snyder, had 14 percent.

Bowles, 57, positioned himself as the front-runner late in the campaign. He led the democratic nominees in fundraising, taking in over \$3 million dollars in campaign financing.

He embraced his work in the Clinton White House, according to the Erskine Bowles for U.S. Senate Web site. He got a balanced budget passed in 1997 by a Republican led Congress. However, he

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Erskine Bowles
CEDN.ORG



Elizabeth Dole
FRCOM

Renowned scientist stresses reemergence of malaria

Sara Miller
News Reporter

Jessica Hensley
News Reporter

Dr. Robert Desowitz, advisor to the World Health Organization (WHO), world-renowned doctor and scientist spoke at UNCA Sept. 5 about the eradication and return of malaria.

"Malaria has emerged, it has re-emerged... and we have ignored it. It has become a kind of metaphor for everything that is wrong... and right in the way we treat a disease," said Desowitz. "It is one of the great killers of the world."

Desowitz began his speech by saying that the threat of malaria was accepted, treated, forgotten, and now needs to be accepted again. "Approximately 3 billion people are at risk to malaria and there are at least 300 million cases per year in which 3 million people die," said Desowitz.

Malaria's most common victims are children and pregnant women, according to Desowitz. The disease passes from a pregnant mother to her child and increases the chance of anemia, low birth weight, and stillborn babies. Desowitz showed a slide of a young boy infected with

malaria. The child was severely anemic, had thin legs and a bloated abdomen.

Malaria kills a child every 30 seconds worldwide, according to Desowitz.

Brian Byrd, UNCA graduate and event organizer, said public health is a huge issue, one that must be understood not only biologically, but also culturally, socially, economically and religiously.

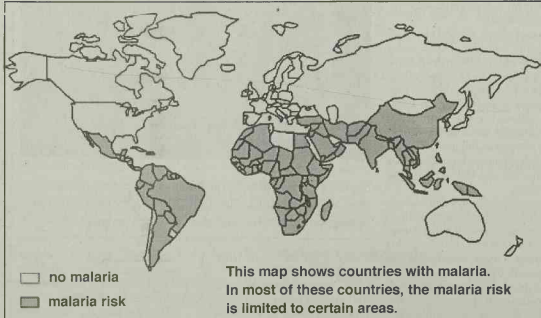
"[Malaria] has affected the economy, social structure and even probably the intelligence of huge numbers of people," said Desowitz. "Africa can't get ahead in this world because of their people dealing with such great sickness."

According to Desowitz, malaria has existed for 60-70 million years. Desowitz studied under Henry Short and received his degree from the London School of Tropical Medicine in 1951.

In the 1950s, malaria was "as American as the heart attack," said Desowitz.

Screens for windows and doors were introduced at this time and the insecticide, Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT) was used to control the mosquito-borne malaria, according to Byrd.

As a result of the basic biological



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The deadly disease malaria has re-emerged as a threat to modern societies all over the world. Those at the highest risk are in undeveloped countries with rapid population growth.

and hygienic inventions of the 1950s and 60s, scientists and the WHO thought that malaria would soon be eliminated.

"Malaria is about to be eradicated and you'll never make a living, let alone a profession out of it," said Desowitz recalling what Short had

once told him.

On a trip to West Africa, Desowitz found that malaria was still a very prevalent disease. By the 1970s, malaria was back and on the rise.

When he introduced Desowitz at the lecture, Byrd tried to relate malaria to western North Carolina.

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