

Trustee Board voted to consider Blacks

Editor's note: Plans are now underway to place a painting of UNC's first Black students in the undergraduate library. Kurt Garrett is the artist. This is the second in a three-part series.

The state of North Carolina led by Attorney General Harry McMillan and L.P. McLendon was going to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court before allowing any Negroes at the Chapel Hill school. But what made the situation unusual in a state of white supremacy was that the UNC-CH Board of Trustees voted 61-14 on April 4, 1951 (17 years before the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. and 28 years before the 1979 BSM march) to consider Black applications to the medical school since there was no Black medical school in North Carolina. As a result, Edward O. Diggs, 30, a pre-med student at A&T College, was the first Black admitted on April 23, 1951 and he enrolled in the fall. This act occurred without a court order.

The Trustees also encouraged the State to appeal the Law School decision but when the Supreme Court refused to rehear the case, Law School Dean Henry P. Brandis, Jr. announced that the Black law students would be admitted.

Since the law students enrolled in the summer session, they became the first Blacks enrolled at UNC-CH beating med student Diggs who came in the fall. At the April 4th meeting, the State College YMCA building (Campus Y) rocked with three hours of debate "with more echoes and challenges than a sextet of collegiate debating societies."

One trustee said "This is absolutely nothing but a wedge to get 'em in public schools. Within five years there won't be a Negro left at A&T College. They'll be over at Chapel Hill and sitting here on Chancellor Harrelson. A vote for this resolution will be a vote for social equality. If you want to maintain white

supremacy, this is your opportunity to do it."

Replied another trustee "It's difficult to separate a question of this sentiment from the emotion. But today the problem is not one of emotion but of legal technicality."

After the Black students Beech, Lee, McKissick and Lassiter enrolled, the struggle was still not easy for them and other early Black students. Discrimination was more obvious and open on campus than it is today even though polls showed around two-thirds of the student body favoring the integration of the school. But actually, most of the 1951 student body were in favor of the Black students' presence out of a sense of justice rather than a desire to integrate. The students were greeted with tolerance but not with a warm welcome.

Lee and Beech applied for a dorm room. They were placed in rooms on the third floor of Steele Building, then a dormitory. Whites on the floor were moved out to live with others who were already overcrowded with three or four people living in some rooms. At least these

pioneers in the struggle did not suffer from the housing shortage as many of us do today.

When football season arrived, the first four were granted passbooks for seats in the colored section.



Nina Ford

Then when fourteen student organizations, the *Daily Tar Heel*, and then Student Body President Henry Bowers protested to Chancellor Robert House, the Chancellor issued them regular student seat passbooks with an accompanying letter telling them to use their judgement before taking the seats. On November 3, 1951, Blacks sat alongside whites at a UNC football game for the first time in history. It didn't create a stir. Last year, 300 Black students sat together in reserved block seating to cheer the announcement of the fourth straight Black Homecoming Queen, Nina Ford.

Yack editor responds

Editor's note: The following was taken from a letter Chrisann Ohler, a 1979 Yackety Yack editor, sent the Black Student Movement following a meeting last year at which the BSM Central Committee discussed its displeasure with the yearbook. Much of UNC's Black Community did not like the manner in which Blacks were portrayed in the yearbook. Due to limited space, the entire letter could not be reproduced.

I would like to extend my appreciation to the BSM for inviting our staff to attend your Central Committee meeting of April 27, 1980. I feel that it was a valuable and important opportunity to address the issues raised by the 1979 edition of the *Yackety Yack*.

Through my involvement in operational and editorial matters of the *Yackety Yack*, I have noticed a rapidly increasing sensitivity to coverage of Black students on campus over the past few years. This concern arose from the recognition that previous issues of the *Yackety Yack* had virtually ignored many aspects of student life, including the Black community. Also neglected were many of the smaller student organizations, most South Campus activities, and academic issues in general.

This imbalance can be partially explained, although not excused, by the origin of the *Yackety Yack* itself, which was published by the fraternity system in the beginning, and later expanded to include sports, class picture, honoraries and the like, as conventional yearbooks became more prevalent. The long overdue realization that this portrayal of the University was a biased one has precipitated a conscious effort on the part of our photographers and editorial staff to be fair, honest, and as thorough as physical limitations deem possible in our coverage of the campus.

The racial climate at the University of North Carolina is a distressing one in light of the liberal reputation of the campus. It was our observation that a lack of communication and understanding among groups has compounded a separatist and

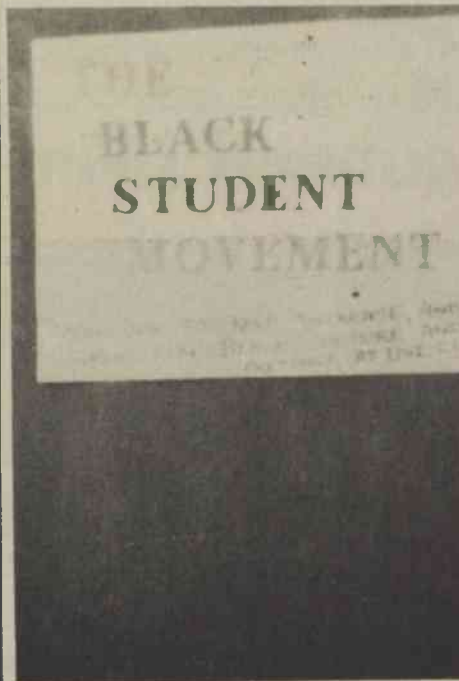
defensive atmosphere, rather than a cooperative one. In producing the yearbook, therefore, our staff presented the situation as we saw it, and chose not to ignore discrimination or subtle Black%white biases where we observed them. We do not share the attitudes that find humor in mock lynchings, nor do we support those stereotypic opinions which are all too prevalent in our community. We are offended by the fact that an Old South mixer, complete with whites in Blackface and Klan robes, is an annual event on this campus. We are disturbed by the fact that Blacks are not welcome in most fraternities and sororities at UNC-CH. We recognize, however, that these attitudes exist and must be confronted if any progress is to be made.

In light of the reactions to the book from the Black community, we offer an apology that our editorial opinion was not made more clear, for we were merely serving as messenger rather than endorser. In any event, the consciousness of the campus has been raised to a sensitivity of the racial barriers and misunderstandings which do exist. It is our sincere hope that all elements of the University will work toward a genuine unification of the student body rather than a polite acknowledgement of different factions. The extent to which progress can be made in terms of human relations on our campus depends on the conviction and creative energy of those people who are dissatisfied with the status quo. Progress has been made on other campuses and can be made here if we face the problems where they exist and confront them constructively and boldly.

As students, we have two alternatives: we can close our eyes to the prejudice that exists and remain comfortable in our own spheres of activity, or we can acknowledge our faults and work hard to break down the barriers of misunderstanding. I join the staff of the *Yackety Yack* in pledging my efforts toward the latter, and in hoping that we all have the courage to be honest with ourselves.

Chrisann Ohler,
Editor, 1979 *Yackety Yack*

Motto chosen



Old BSM Motto gets replaced

DONNA D. WHITAKER
Associate-Managing Editor

While upperclassmen are continually reluctant to participate in campus activities, freshmen usually show enough enthusiasm for everyone. This year's freshman class is no exception.

So far, the enthusiasm has been tremendous. Mark Canady, BSM chairperson, said, "We had 60 people interested in the Freshman Action Committee and three persons who took the initiative to come to a Central Committee meeting."

Those three who live in Morrison Dorm, gave the BSM its new motto.

Clinton Jones, Vicky Sparrow and Rose Williams pooled resources and came up with the motto: Believing in today, Striving for tomorrow, Moving toward the future.

"We wanted to get involved in the BSM because it's a worthwhile cause," Williams said. Sparrow added, "Not many freshmen seemed involved. We wanted to take the first step in being a part of the BSM."

Jones, an Oak City resident, said, "The only thing I've seen them (the BSM) do is Pre-Orientation and that was good."

Williams did not understand the letter she got in the mail this summer, which explained the fundamentals of the BSM.

However, she said, "I think the BSM is a good organization. I think it will improve over the months if people become active."

Williams and Sparrow are from Clinton. They met Jones during Pre-Orientation.

All three have higher aspirations, which include working for Black Ink, the Freshman Action Committee, the Morrison Action Committee and BSM cultural groups.

The trio had different views about Carolina, but they all agree that the BSM is what makes Carolina appealing.

Canady said he hopes the freshmen's enthusiasm does not dissolve during the course of the year.

If most of the freshmen are like the authors of the new BSM motto, the fire will not die out any time soon.

Thornton Committee to present final edition

LAWRENCE TURNER
News Editor

After deciding on which options to use the Thornton Committee's final edition of the new proposed curriculum for all General College freshmen and sophomores will appear this semester, English Professor Weldon Thornton said.

The Thornton Committee Report is a new curriculum which began in the spring of 1978 organized by Thornton.

The new curriculum will make the educational aim of the University clearer than the present, looser one, Thornton said. The goals are to help students be self-educating, to make reasonable judgments in society and to function in a

technological world.

The Dean's Coordinating Committee is handling the summary of nine subcommittee reports started from Thornton's suggestions.

"An option has never made sense to me — it's just a compromise," Thornton replied.

Two concepts of Basic Skills and Perspectives replaces the old curriculum of General Education. Basic Skills consists of English composition, mathematics, and foreign languages. Perspectives have four areas: scientific, western%non-western culture, aesthetic and humanistic.

The report advocates spreading General Education requirements into junior and senior year for students in the College of Arts and Sciences. Whether those requirements will be three or four and whether a capstone course is developed is debated, Thornton said.

The capstone is "a course that would top off the major experience," he explained. The course would examine the values, the limitations and the methodology of the student's major, Thornton said.

However, capstones may study the major with related subject matter to show "how it blends in with other things."

Still, the course may be problematic handling a

But, "we don't know if we have the resources to do it or not," Thornton said, or even make it required. Faculty goes by departmental guidelines and may not feel comfortable or be able to do the course, he said.

Also in debate is whether a freshman or sophomore can take a non-western perspectives course.

Thornton is pleased with the report as a whole and especially likes a proposed Associate Dean of Education position. The post allows counsel to students on curriculum requirements outside their major.

The fall of '82 is the earliest possible date of beginning the proposed curriculum, Thornton said.