

f North Carolina -- A Dream Deferred...

discuss the black experience. Cross-cultural communications workshops encourage interacting that will lead to understanding among the races. The black music program and the artist in residence components focus on the black aesthetic as a means to educate people about african-american culture. The dates of the programs can be found in Word, the official newsletter of the BCC.

The BCC has been governed by a planning committee, which replaced the original steering

Non-marginal people, marginal center.

Black students begin to move

From the very beginning of the proposal, the Black Student Movement played a major role in articulating the need for a BCC. When it appeared that the temporary space in the Union would become the permanent BCC, black students began to move. On October 5, 1988, the BSM led by former president Kenneth Perry, passed a resolution setting a deadline for the

"I thought that it (BCC) was important that we continue to work for a permanent site. I never knew what the University's intentions were. However, I thought the BCC was something that could be easily forgotten once you had gotten a temporary site."

Perry and the BSM continued to make a permanent BCC site a priority within the organization.

Still No Place to Call Our Own

The BCC has been in its temporary site in the Union for over two years. The small space has made conditions virtually unbearable for the BCC staff. Margo Crawford has a cramped office, where you may find 2-3 people working on any given day. The secretary, Esther Womack, has temporary walls around a desk to obtain a little privacy. The so-called meeting room can hardly accommodate a great number of people at one time. Yet Crawford must continue to attempt to schedule workshops and seminars in the cultural corner.

"What the cultural center is right now is an office," Crawford said. "We also have a medium to small multi-purpose room that is getting smaller by the day. Also, since we're over the Cabaret, the music may come up during the middle of one of our workshops. And we have to scream to hear ourselves talk."

"We're no longer talking about a vision of what we need; we're

now talking about what we desperately need, which is more space."

The center obviously has not kept pace with the quality of programming Crawford has brought to the campus. Crawford's work has exceeded everyone's expectations and quited a lot of criticism concerning a BCC.

Still some people consider the place an insult to black people. For example, former Dean, Hayden Renwick.

"What you have is an oversized bathroom. I refuse to even go in the place. It's a slap in the face for black people to even call that place a Black Cultural Center."

Several possible ideas have been mentioned as a means to find a permanent site for the

center. The renovation of Howell Hall could be a possibility if the School of Journalism gets approval for a new building. Another idea was to expand the Student Union. Also, the planning committee could possibly find a free-standing space on campus to build the center.

The feasibility of all three ideas will be discussed since the University is experiencing a budget crisis. Although, the center was approved for funding for three years, the majority of its money has come from grants and donations. The N.C. Arts Council and Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation have both contributed to the BCC.

In November of 1989, the planning committee released a feasibility study on the construction of a permanent 23,000 square foot BCC. The study included dimensions on an art gallery, a library and a media room. The projected cost of such a center was in the area of \$3 million dollars.

Edith Wiggins says that getting resources to build a permanent center is not an impossible task.

"Additional space and additional resources are needed to make the BCC successful, which will in turn make the whole university successful. However, the University must decide that it (the BCC) is a priority, so that the resources will flow."

Never Give Up Hope

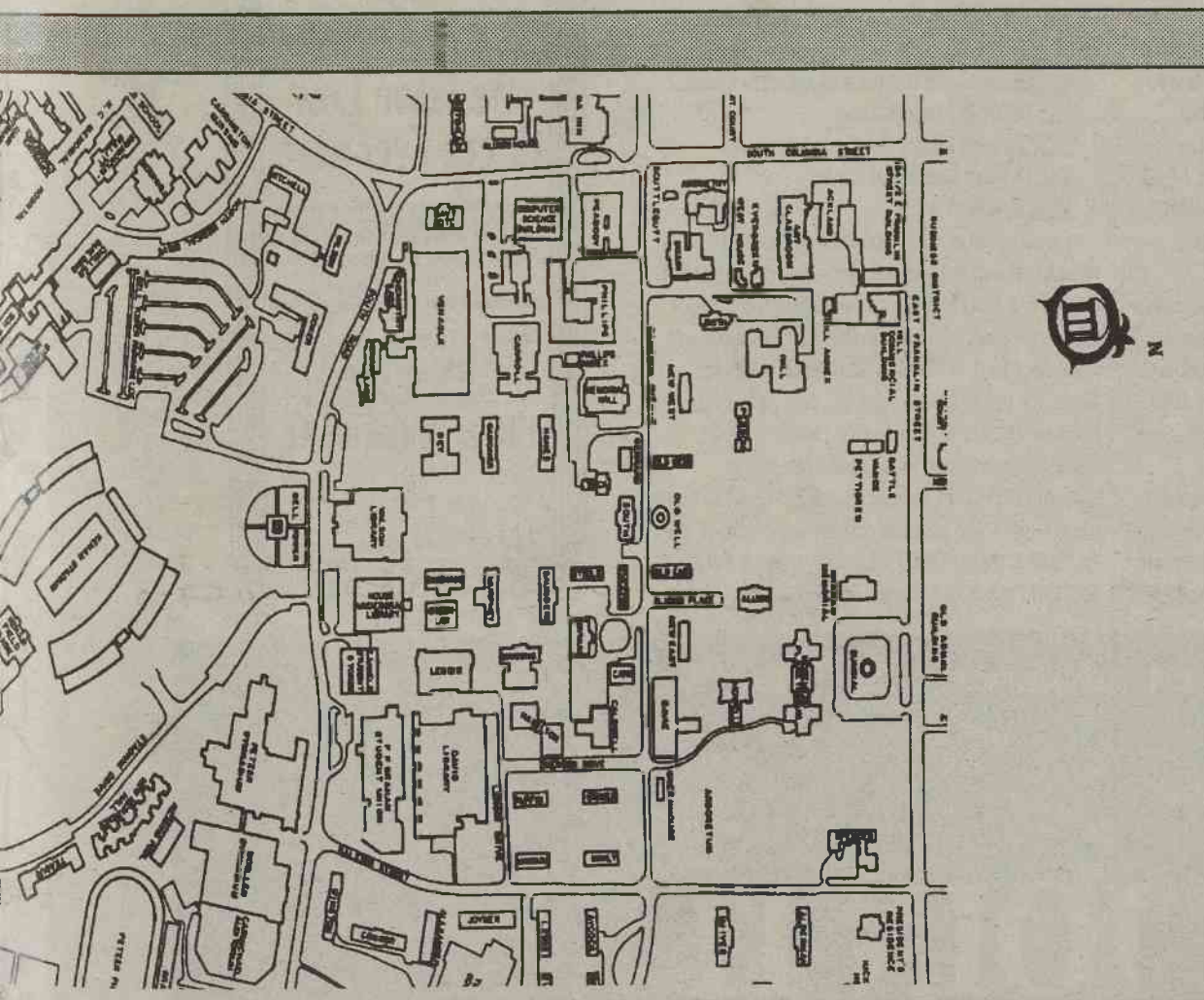
Crawford is optimistic about the chances of a permanent BCC.

"I believe a permanent BCC is inevitable. I think that if we keep knocking, the door is going to open, and we're not going to stop knocking."

How Long?

Crawford and her staff are still in a process of trying to find a permanent place for the BCC. A dream envisioned in 1984, is still not a reality today. Yet, it has come a long way from a mere proposal back in 1984. African-American students, faculty and staff must work to find a permanent place for the study of black culture. We can't allow the administration to hold us back. For six years, we've had talk with little or no action. It's time for us to move. We need help from everybody in the African-American community. Black students, don't let the BCC continue to be a corner in the Union. Stand up and make a difference on this campus. Everybody has something to contribute. Many of you may not see a permanent BCC during your undergraduate years, but you can pave the way for future generations of black students who enroll at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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ges and universities have built Black Cul-
importance of African-American history
of North Carolina at Chapel Hill."

committee in 1988. The planning committee's job will end when it finishes selecting persons to sit on the BCC permanent advisory board. Seven students, five non-students and other student leaders from groups like Campus Y will comprise the board.

Margo Crawford says the BCC operating in full capacity can give African-Americans a true sense of pride.

"What we're trying to do here is correct the omissions and distortions in history. Black people are the oldest people in the world, yet almost everything black is defined as negative. As a result, black people have felt marginal and isolated in society. A BCC should help them feel a little less marginal about themselves."

University to find a permanent site for the center. The resolution called for the selection of a new site by Jan. 31, 1989 and construction on that site by Jan. 31, 1990. In December of 1988, the BSM rejected the possibility of another interim spot for the BCC. Black students had decided to work for nothing less than a permanent home for the Black Cultural Center.

Margo Crawford praised Kenneth Perry for keeping black students moving during those days.

"Kenneth Perry forced us to stay focused on that if we didn't have a permanent center, we really didn't have one at all."

Perry, now a UNC law student reflects upon those days.

