

# and Graduation of African-American students at UNC

school graduates.

"The first thing you've got to do is look at where these students come from. Black students still come primarily from public high schools. In North Carolina, there hasn't been a big trend in the number of black kids who graduate from high school."

The number of black high school graduates in N.C. dropped from 19,595 in 1984 to 17,731 in 1987. Approximately 48,000 white students graduated in 1984 and 50,000 in 1987.

Of the 18,614 black high school graduates in 1986, about 2,600 entered the military and about 4,000 sought employment immediately after graduation.

"You're not talking about a whole lot of folks who are making a decision to attend college," Dr. Cannon said. "Economics plays a major factor in career decisions."

The low number of blacks attending college means that someone has got to go out and entice these students to come to UNC.

## Cracking the Door to Opportunity— Recruitment

UNC Chapel Hill has developed several programs designed to attract minority students, especially African and Native Americans. Recruitment seems to be an area that is working well or at least appears that way.

Still, some black faculty members on campus see UNC-CH's recruitment as a problem. Dr. J. Lee Greene, associate professor of English, said the University does not seek out the most talented black student in the state.

"UNC doesn't effectively recruit the top black students or the most outstanding students in the state. This University doesn't do the kinds of things that would allow it to compete with other universities for students. Schools such as Duke tend to offer students a better overall package deal than Carolina."

Dr. Robert Cannon agreed.

"I think the University felt the need to get in a certain amount of minority students. When you bring students in only to keep numbers up, then you're doing them a disservice."

Archie Ervin, assistant to the vice chancellor for university affairs, organizes several recruitment programs at UNC-CH. Ervin is director of Project Uplift, a program designed to attract talented black students to UNC-CH. Rising high school seniors are invited to stay at the University for one weekend during the summer.

A number of students who attended Project Uplift actually enrolled as freshmen at UNC-CH for the past year. During Project Uplift 1989, 780 students attended the four-week program. Forty percent of those students were ranked in the top 15 percent of their classes. Of the 241 Project Uplift students who applied to the University, 209 were accepted. Of the 209 accepted, 129 are

enrolled as freshmen for fall 1990.

Ervin also works with National Honors Day, a program which targets black students to encourage them to attend UNC-CH. Black high school students are chosen from among those who attended Project Uplift to come to UNC-CH in the fall of each year.

"By this time we have narrowed down the prospect pool to that group of students who have the best chance of being accepted," Ervin said. "These are students who were first identified as being academically gifted at the end of their junior year."

In the Fall of 1989, 70 students attended High School Honors Day. Fifty-three of the 70 applied to the University, and 49 of those were accepted. Forty of those accepted for the fall semester for 1990.

The statistics on recruitment programs are encouraging to Archie Ervin.

"We're doing the job of recruiting at the undergraduate level," Archie Ervin said. "One of the problems we still face is that we're way down in terms of the number of black students interested in this university."

## Opening the door of opportunity— Enrollment/Choice of Major

Since 1985, the number of black students applying to the University has increased. In 1985, 750 black students applied to UNC-CH; however, that number increased to 1,281 in 1989. Although the University accepted 646 black applicants, only 400 of them actually enrolled in 1989. Still, blacks increased in the freshmen class from approximately 10 percent in 1985 to 12 percent in 1989.

The majority of black undergraduate students at UNC-CH remain in the College of Arts and Sciences for their entire four years. During the freshmen and sophomore years, students take courses in General College, but they have the option of transferring to a professional school at the end of their sophomore year.

The College of Arts and Sciences houses all of the undergraduate programs in humanities, liberal arts and natural or mathematical sciences. As of Spring 1990, there were 5,175 students in the College of Arts and Sciences, 1,183 of whom were black.

Dean Fuse-Hall gave one explanation for the large amount of black students in the College of Arts and Sciences.

"Since most of them are not prepared from high school for the demands of collegiate rigor, they can't meet the requisite grade point averages for professional schools so they end up choosing majors in the arts and sciences."

Numbers confirm that few black students transfer into professional schools at the University to complete their undergraduate degrees. The Division of Health Affairs contains the School of



Public Health, the School of Nursing and School of Pharmacy. As of Spring 1990, there were 10 blacks in the School of Public Health and 16 in the School of Nursing.

The Division of Academic Affairs contains the School of Journalism, School of Education and the School of Business Administration. There are 22 black undergraduate students in the School of Education and 36 in the School of Journalism.

The Journalism School has made a strong commitment to recruit minority students, said Dulcie Straughan, assistant professor of journalism. Straughan researched the portion of the school's accreditation report that dealt with minority students.

"It is evident that a lot of the minority students aren't interested in it (journalism) because it is not a lucrative field," Straughan said. "Journalism isn't considered one of the bread winner professions. We're trying to change that by getting involved in more of the programs designed to attract minority students to this campus."

Raising admission requirements may contribute to the small percentages of blacks in the

professional schools. The Journalism School requires a 2.4 grade point average, while the Business School requires a 3.0 for undergraduate admission. Both schools have been ranked as two of the best professional schools in the United States.

"You have to have a standard by which to weed people out," Dean Fuse-Hall said. "Everybody is not going to get into the professional schools. However, raising admissions requirements has a negative impact on people of color because there are so few of them to begin with."

The University can recruit blacks and half-way enroll them, but what happens once they get here?

*Editors' Note: "We're Gonna Make It"—The Retention, Recruitment and Graduation of African-American students at UNC" will be completed in the October 9 issue of Black Ink.*

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