

Jordan Reflects on Football, Looks Toward Graduation

By Tia Webster
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It all started with a group of little boys playing backyard football. Later, one of those boys, senior Randy Jordan, joined his first organized football team in the seventh grade at Norlina Middle School in Manson, N.C. as tailback, and has played the same position since.

With a little help during his earlier years from his Uncle Johnathan Valentine, Jordan has become one of the leading tailbacks at Carolina.

"When I started off, he used to try and encourage me and coach me and just sit me aside and give me pointers about football. I think that had a real big influence on my football career."

But Carolina was not the only school that welcomed this young, talented tailback. "I visited Wake Forest and that was one major school that wanted me, and I also visited Alabama. Those are the

only two schools that I thought about going to besides Carolina. I chose Carolina because this is somewhere that I always wanted to go. It's a great University as for academics, and I've made friends here that I will cherish for a lifetime. That's two main reasons I think it's been a healthy decision on my part."

But although

Jordan has made many friends, there is one special friend that secures a space place in his heart. He is engaged to Romonda Baxter, who like Jordan, is a Senior majoring in Speech Communications.

"We met in summer school and

it took off from there. In actuality, it's funny because when I think about it, she didn't like me the first time she met me because when I don't know you I'm a very moody person. She used to come and visit Chuckie Burnette, who was my

Many students recall the crucial year in 1990 when Jordan was forced to miss the entire season due to a shoulder injury.

"It was a setback when it first happened, but now that I look back at it, and I've gotten a year under my

roommate at the time, and they were friends. She didn't pay me any mind, and plus I kind of liked her every time she would come to the room. But we ended up just talking one afternoon, and it took off from there."

But for now, Jordan's main objective is to "graduate like I said I would."

belt, and I'm playing now, the injury made me appreciate football more. I realize now that at any time, at any point when you're on that field, football can be over within the blink of an eye."

This may be the reason why Jordan does everything in football for the crowd. He gets a rush from being in front of a large crowd and playing ACC teams. "But I think the biggest rush I get, and I haven't done it yet this season, but I hope it'll come soon, is scoring," Jordan said. "Last year when I scored, I would just run in the end zone and lay the ball down. Usually there's a crowd in the end zone and I'd just high five the first person I could get to just to let them know 'thank you for coming to the game.'"

"When I score, I try to do it for the fans because I think the fans are real crucial in football."



Randy Jordan heads for daylight

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our behalf. We must use our jobs in the various classrooms and offices across this campus as a means of expression on behalf of what is right. When we "knock" like this, in our own way, we awaken those who are asleep and encourage those who are demoralized regarding racial injustice at Carolina.

For those of you who may mistakenly think that the purpose of this appeal is to engage in some sort of anti-white, anti-administration diatribe, here is something that must be said to Carolina's African-American community that surely will be labeled by some as anti-black:

Because all of us (particularly, African Americans) have a responsibility to participate in the struggle for racial justice at Carolina, all of us must have the freedom to express our views without fear of threat,

sanction, harassment and either being labeled "too black" or "not black enough" because of our views. The responsibility to speak out must be free to us all, and yet, the freedom to speak must be used responsibly by us all as well. You see, just as long as we share the same end goal—the attainment of racial justice—then let us accept our minor differences on strategies and tactics. In so doing, we refuse to engage in the ultimate "Black on Black crime" of oppressing each other as others have so often oppressed us.

Therefore, it is dismaying to note that Carolina's African-American community is more and more coming to resemble Los Angeles' Black community before and during the insurrection/riot of this past Spring. In Los Angeles, justifiable anger about the ideology of White supremacy often took on unfocused and irresponsible forms of expression that were not functionally related to attaining the goal of racial justice. Here, the same thing is happening within Carolina's African-American community also. Right

now, ideologues, hate-mongers, and the emotionally unstable are engaging in the lowest forms of demagoguery, terrorism and character assassination against other Black folks for the crime of (allegedly) holding divergent points of thought about how (not whether) to achieve racial justice. Of course, all this is done in the name and cover of "loving Black people". If White people attacked members of the black community in this same way, we would be justifiably outraged. Yet, we cast a blind eye when the crime is "Black on Black". Blacks who love other blacks do not assassinate one another. Instead, they seek direct dialogue and understanding with the brother or sister with whom they have a disagreement and try to move on. To those who struggle with this idea, please (re)read the last few chapters of The Autobiography of Malcolm X.

Insidiously playing this game of "system-beating" as an inappropriate coping response to the ideology of white supremacy allows irresponsible behavior in our community to

go unspoken to and unchecked. For, if the "system-beater" and his/her behavior is confronted by whites, the whites are AUTOMATICALLY accused of being racist, manipulated by feelings of guilt or fear, and dismissed. End of discussion. If the same behavior is confronted by those in the black community, the confronter is REFLEXIVELY written-off as an "Uncle Tom," made to feel guilty or fearful and similarly dismissed. End of discussion. Thus, the perpetrator has it both ways. They are accountable to no one, and, by definition, cannot be a truly responsible speaker or leader, no matter how well they are able to fan our fears or pander to our pain. Let all of us in the Black community commit to putting a stop to this behavior NOW!

Ultimately, we must hold the leaders of the black community largely accountable for our collective rise or demise. If our leaders foster undue division within the community or "sell us out" to other communities, we must remove them and replace them with those who

can do better. When they do right by us, we also must give them our full support and insist that they be listened to and respected by those within and beyond the black community. Remember, our leaders need to be a reflection of our best selves and we alone are responsible for holding them accountable to this standard.

In closing, it is clear that each member of this campus community—administrators, faculty, staff and students of all races—must seek racial justice and redemption from the impact of the ideology of white supremacy. Through a process of intense introspection and mediation, contrition, dialogue and action, we can rise above the insanity that currently grips this campus and move with honor into the sunrise of the 21st century.

Dr. Clifford H. Charles is chair of the Black Faculty/Staff Caucus here on campus.