

The Compass wins Top National Award

The Compass, ECSU's student newspaper, has received the prestigious Medalist award from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, the main ranking agency for college newspapers nationally.

For the years 1989-92, *The Compass* won first-place awards in the category, but this is the first year the student paper has won in the medalist category.

Judges gave *The Compass* 972 out of a possible 1,000 points, according to the paper's advisor, Stephen March. The paper was evaluated on such categories as writing style, accuracy and completeness in news coverage, photography, design, balance in news coverage, adherence to professional standards and overall excellence.

The Compass, published by the University's Department of Language, Literature & Communication, received the top award for papers published during the 1992-93 academic year. Craig Avondo and Mark Morris served as editors.

"I'm thrilled we won the Medalist rating this year," said March, an assistant professor in the Department. "That's been our goal from the first year I was here (1988). Every year, after each contest, the staff and editors studied the judges' critiques and worked on our areas that needed improvement. It's all finally paid off in this award."

March said the medalist ranking as well as *The Compass'* other first place awards, pay off for students who work on the paper.

"Awards like these greatly enhance

students' employment opportunities," March said. "When prospective employers see students have been a part of an award-winning student news organization, they are impressed. The awards and the student's published work in *The Compass* give them a valuable edge in today's highly competitive job market."

March said several graduates of ECSU's News Media Program who have launched careers in communications have returned to speak to his journalism classes. "They always cite *The Compass* as helping them in their careers."

In commenting on *The Compass*, judges wrote, "It's obvious you have a talented and hard-working staff. The paper reads very well, and the design improvements make *The Compass* sparkle."

March said that although the staff and editors deserve the "real credit" for the award, he thanked Dr. Helen Caldwell, ECSU's Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, "for giving us the funds back in 1989 to buy our desktop publishing equipment," which enabled students to do more with graphics and design.

"I also want to thank ECSU Chancellor Dr. Jimmy Jenkins for this award," March said. "Dr. Jenkins has shown he supports the student paper by having an open door policy to *Compass* reporters and by supporting the right of the students to express themselves freely, in news coverage and opinion pages."

March also thanked former chairperson of the Department Dr. Anne Henderson, and the Department's current chairperson, Dr. Linda Callahan, for their support of the school paper.



Mrs. Elizabeth Bias Cofield explains why she is pledging \$25,000 to ECSU's capital campaign, during the Founder's Day Ceremony, while Chancellor Dr. Jimmy Jenkins listens in the background. Cofield, the daughter of former ECSU President John Henry Bias, pledged the gift on behalf of herself and her husband, James, in memory of their parents.



Photo by Shelia Johnson

Dr. Gary Callahan, ECSU's Director of Bands, conducts the University Concert Band during Founder's Day. The band performed "March of the War Priest," "Festivo." and "The Free Lance." The University Concert Choir directed by Billy C. Hines also performed. Freshman Nikita Sutton sang a moving rendition of the hymn, "Precious Lord."