

ECSU's shortest man believes,

# It's what's inside that counts

By Anna Herring

As Alton Simpson walks across the ECSU campus, he knows he is being stared at. At times he hears even hears comments like, "Ooh, he's so little. Look how short he is."

Even though Simpson is only 4'11", he says he doesn't let his relatively small stature slow him down.

"Don't let the size fool you," he says. "I'll be your friend if you'll be mine."

Simpson admitted that some women have a problem with his height when it comes to a relationship.

"Some women won't talk to me, just because I'm short, but I can understand that. All I want from a lady is for her to realize that my height is physical but on the inside, I'm a special, loving person. Some women think that I look like a boy, but I'm not a boy, I'm a man."

Being short, says Simpson with a laugh, has some advantages.

"By being short, I can get through some places that taller or bigger people can't get through," he said.

A Plymouth native, Simpson is a freshman computer science major. He played football in high school, receiving a coach's award in 1992. His position was tailback.

Simpson's father, Alton Simpson, Sr. proudly points out that height is no problem for his son when it comes to sports.

"He played little league sports when he was small and football in high school," said Mr. Simpson. "He was also in weightlifting class and the coaches continue to say nice things about him."

"We know his height bothers him sometimes, but we have always told him that the Lord made him the way He wanted to and that he was healthy and could achieve anything he wanted to."

Simpson Jr. said he has no plans to play sports at ECSU unless his "grade point average goes up" then he may think about playing.

Aside from schoolwork and computers, Simpson enjoys working with electronics.

"It may take me awhile to fix something, but eventually it gets fixed," he said.

Besides playing sports, Simpson also enjoys listening to music.

He maintains a positive attitude about life regarding his height, but family members back in Plymouth can recall times when Simpson got upset after being teased about his height.

"Alton and a cousin were talking and the cousin got mad at something that Alton had said," said a cousin of Simpson. "Before I knew it, Alton had jumped on his cousin, who was six two. I wanted to laugh because it was funny to see, but I didn't. I realized that Alton got mad because the cousin called him a midget."

"Short people are treated bad because they can't reach places where tall people can reach," Simpson believes. "People shouldn't judge a person by his height because it's what's inside that counts. That's what makes a person."

Simpson, Jr. has a brother, Anthony, 17, who stands five' nine" and a sister, Kalisha, 13. Simpson Sr. is also five' nine".

Simpson's parents say they are extremely proud of their son.

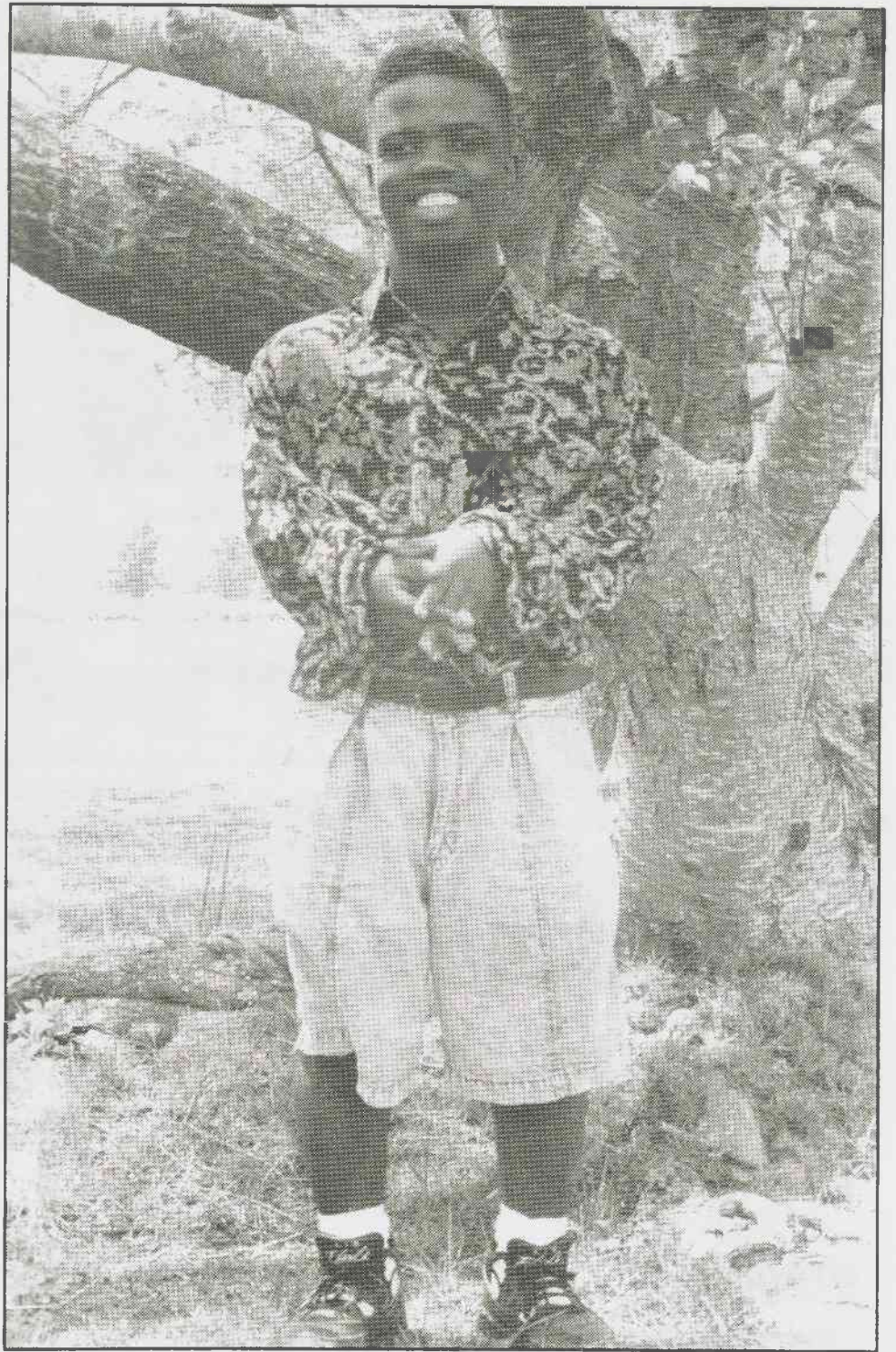
"I have always raised Alton to believe in himself," said his mother, Annie Simpson. "Being tall does not make you a man, it's how you carry yourself and what you achieve in life."

"The true measure of a person, is knowing that person, because you will never know when you may need that person's help."

Simpson plans to graduate in May 1996, and earn a master's degree from East Carolina University. Afterwards he hopes to get a job working with IBM.

When asked who he admires most in life, Simpson replied, "I admire my mother the most because she talked to me about problems of my height. She was there when I was feeling sad about being short. I try to be myself and not anyone else."

"And I pray to the Lord for my health. I am grateful for that because I could always be dead."



ECSU freshman Alton Simpson doesn't let his small size (4' 11") slow him down. "Don't let the size fool you," says this freshman from Plymouth, N.C. "People shouldn't judge a person by his height because it's what's inside that counts."

## POETRY

### Black on Black

Blacks killing blacks is truly a shame  
Running around playing a power game  
When it's over who will remain  
To carry on the family name  
Us killing us is genocide  
If it keeps up we all will reside  
In a wooden box placed down under  
Another man dies from shotgun thunder  
What did it prove, what did it gain  
Nothing for your family except grief and pain  
And oh you think it ends right then  
No way, your young brother is off on a tear  
With a nine he avenges his brothers death  
And soon he too will breathe his last breath  
'Cause the man he killed has a brother just the same  
And revenge is the name of his game  
As you can see it keeps going around  
More black males ending up face down  
The end result I hate to mention  
But sooner or later we'll reach extinction

Ed Porter

### Black Silk Stockings

I hear that silky sound  
As she gently crosses her legs  
I look down and what do I see  
Black stockings hugging  
a pair of flawless legs  
She sees me looking and begins to laugh  
'Cause she knows I want her  
That's why she wears them  
To make me want her more