

Compass Highlights Fall 2000 Graduation Candidate

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You hear "Pomp and Circumstances" and loud praises. You see caps, gowns and tears, some sentimental, some joyful. Those are some of the elements of graduation day. This year, Elizabeth City State University's Fall Commencement is on Saturday, December 9th. On that day, one of ECSU's finest candidates for graduation will gracefully walk across the stage and graduate, never to look back, never to return as a student.

She is 22 year old Miss Kadija Baffoe-Harding. A native of the nation's capital, Washington, DC. Harding is an extremely warm and friendly individual and as a typical DC native, Harding loves "Go Go" music, though she said it is not her favorite genre of music.

Harding is a biology major with a concentration in pre-medicine. She transferred to ECSU in August of 1997 after attending the University of the District of Columbia and Howard University. Harding said that her decision to come to ECSU was helped by the urgings of one of her cousins, a May 2000 ECSU graduate. Harding's cousin, Opal Grey, told her to come to ECSU because of campus life and also because of the school's biology program. Harding said that being accepted to ECSU was the easiest part of her journey.

"I called and applied and got ac-

cepted pretty much all in the same week," she said. Before enrolling, she had never visited the campus or the Elizabeth City area. "Elizabeth City is nothing like DC. It is much slower and boring. Sometimes, it has been so boring that I didn't have a choice to do anything except study," said Harding.

Despite living in a totally new and less cosmopolitan setting, Harding believes that attending ECSU has been well worth her time and a positive experience despite the fact to her the Elizabeth City area is not appealing. She does not feel as though she wasted time and money. "I came here, and I did what I had to do, and I did not depend on professors." Harding said that it is up to students to get the most of out of their education. "It's all in what you make it," she said. "You get the same materials and work here that you would get at any other Uni-

versity. It is up to you to take the extra step and read that extra chapter."

She added, "When it comes to education, "you teach, test and pass yourself, and no one is harder on you than you are."

Harding also said that being at ECSU



Kadija Baffoe-Harding

has humbled her. She said that she is a real "mommy" girl and that being away from home for the first time has given her a new respect for

her mother.

Since coming to ECSU, Harding has made many friendships that are sure to be long-lasting. "My best friends are Cynthia Roberts and Tresha Morning, but I have established a lot of friendships, ones I won't forget, ones that I will miss," she said. She also said that she is a big supporter of both women. "I really support my friends. If Cynthia is in a play, I'm there, and if she is on the air at the radio station, I'm tuning

in," said Harding.

During her years at ECSU, Harding was an active member of the Concerned Black Awareness Council and the NAACP, and she was active in Science Department activities.

At the mention of graduation, Harding cheered and said, "It feels like an enormous weight is about to be lifted. One more day goes by and you're that much closer to graduation."

After graduation, Harding plans to attend undergraduate school for a year to obtain her nursing degree, she then plans to go on to graduate school to receive her masters degree in nursing and one day become a Nurse Practitioner. Her school choices include Georgetown, George Mason and Howard University. She said she plans to attend whichever school gives her the best financial package.

If she had to advise a high school senior about whether to attend ECSU or not, Harding said she would give them a conditional 'yes.' She said that she would especially advise high school seniors from Washington, DC to come only if they can stand the drastic change from home and the non-urban environment.

Miss Harding, such a "rare essence" at ECSU, along with many other December graduates will soon bid ECSU a fond farewell.

Students Find Room Checks Purposeless

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There have been several complaints from students who are against the mandatory weekly room checks in dormitories.

Supposedly, at least once a week a sign is to be posted in dorms to warn students that their rooms will be checked and to give students the opportunity to clean their rooms.

Illegal appliances in the room such as frying pans with oil inside and lamps without covers on them are considered hazardous and are grounds for eviction for violating school safety codes.

Students whose rooms are clean receive a "S" for satisfactory, and students whose rooms are untidy receive an "U" for unsatisfactory. According to Michael Stokes, Director of Housing, if a student receives an unsatisfactory three times they will be required to meet with a housing representative who will then talk to the student about their room and give them a warning. Students who continue to disobey the dormitory rules will be asked to return their key.

"I think room checks are childish and unnecessary," said an occupant in Hugh Cale. "I also think I have a right

to live as I wish especially since I have no roommate."

"Room checks are mandatory because of safety precautions and should not be considered too childish because it is a process that takes place to ensure the safety of the students," said Stokes.

"There is a policy in the Residence Life Student Manual concerning room checks."

Under *Care and Cleaning of Rooms* in the manual, it states: *students are expected to keep their rooms clean. They will be required to clean their living accommodations should the staff determine that the room or suite presents a health hazard. Resident Administrators will conduct weekly room inspections.* "It is not that housing does not trust the students, but it is just a rule that housing must abide by," said Stokes.

"I think that the policy is contradicting. Rooms are to be checked for safety and health reasons. But, I've witnessed the process. The dorm director inspected my bed and trash and whether or not items were on the floor. They ignored things that would pose safety hazards like electrical outlets and smoke detectors," said another campus resident.

When students sign the residence hall

agreement, which states that the office of residence life reserves the right to enter a room or suite for inspection, maintenance or repair and to enforce University regulations regarding health and safety, they give dorm directors the power to do room checks.

By signing the occupancy agreement students also agree to have their rooms neat and tidy by 12 noon each day though majority of the time, inspections are done before noon.

Stokes also commented that there have been several cases where students

have violated housing rules. There have also been cases where students have been evicted from their residence hall for violating those rules.

The battle between students and housing concerning room checks continue. Some students feel that room checks are an invasion of privacy and unnecessary because they feel they're responsible enough to maintain their rooms. Housing, on the other hand, feels it's safer to monitor student's living habits.

Commuter Club Gives to Tots

The Elizabeth City State University Commuter Club in conjunction with the United States Marine Corps Reserve, is starting a new tradition at the University. The club and the USMCR will be collecting toys and distributing them to underprivileged children in Elizabeth City.

The USMCR Toys for Tots program, which distributes an average of eight million toys annually, has been collecting toys for children for over fifty years, and campus organizations such as the Pan Hellenic Council, SGA and the Pickwick Society have joined ECSU's

Commuter Club and USMCR in this endeavor.

The Toys for Tots campaign began on November 15, 2000. The two collection points on campus are the Commuter Center and the G. R. Little Library. Off campus sites include Walmart, First South Bank and both of the Elizabeth City Fire Stations.

The club will accept new, unwrapped gifts which range from five to ten dollars in value.

The Toys for Tots drive will end on December 15, 2000.