

ANZELL HARRELL – THE HARDEST WORKING MAN IN ECSU SHOW BUSINESS

By Keisha Hill

Editor-at-large

After getting past the constant revolving door of students, contracts and ringing phones, one can find the glue that holds the Student Life department together. Anzell Harrell wears many hats being the director of the Student Union and Student Life, but neither gets as much publicity and student interest as ECSU's homecoming and the infamous Viking Fest.

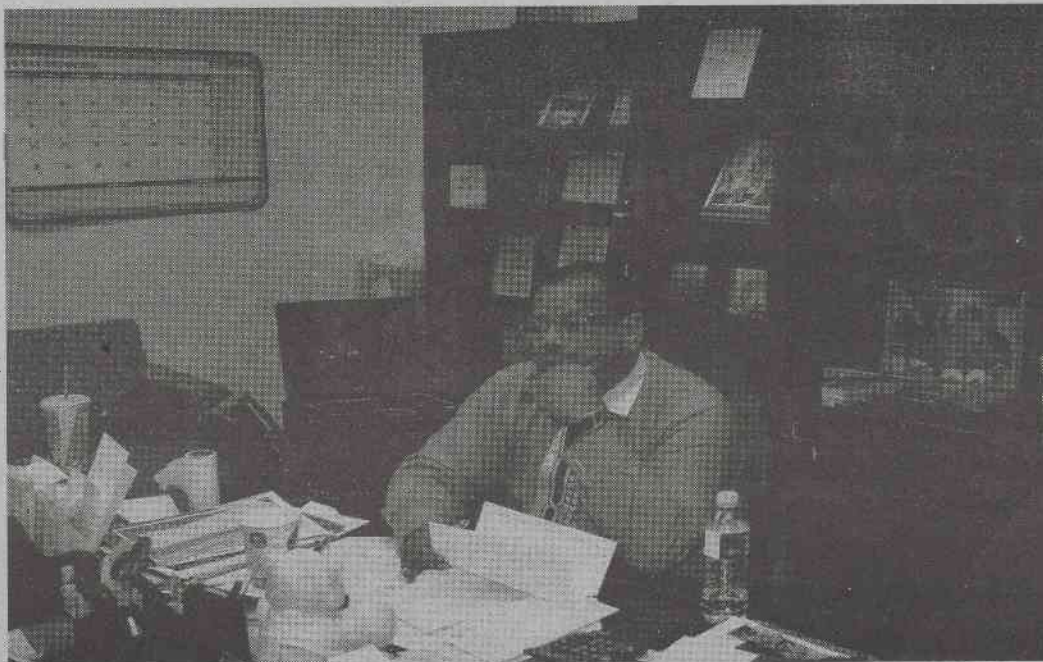
As ECSU prepares for this year's Viking Fest with multi-platinum artist T.I. headlining the festivities, Harrell is working hard to make sure things run as smoothly as possible to make the event a success.

"You're constantly in preparation, because it's always something, someone or some other issue," Harrell said.

On a daily basis, Harrell oversees various campus clubs and organizations, but the ECSU alumnus has been the wizard behind the curtain coordinating and organizing the annual Viking Fest event for the past seven years. From booking artists to

coordinating sound and lights, Harrell knows that everything must be in sync by show time.

"It's typical back and forth with management, and getting them to sign and return contracts is one problem that rises," Harrell said. "Another problem is a lot of artists



do not want to stay here because we do not have the proper accommodations."

Harrell has to make sure his A-list celebrities get start treatment en route to Elizabeth City from the Hampton Roads area. A displeased artist may translate into an equally discontented audience due to a lackluster performance, which could possibly decrease participation at the next year's festivities.

In recent years, there has been an increase in complaints about the combination bill of the concert and step show.

Some people wish to have the option of picking which show they attend, but Harrell says that the current program is not set to change anytime soon because it is not cost ef-

fective.

"Until we can get 2,500 – 3,000 people to fill the Vaughn Center for a concert it's not economically sound to do that," Harrell said.

At times Harrell's desk overflows with students' ideas of what they think are feasible things to do. Whether it's the notion that ECSU can bring in a megastar like Beyonce with Jay Z making a cameo, it's Harrell's job

to curtail those dreams to help "shape and mold them into a finished product."

"The Student Life department has a great deal of responsibility for coming up with ideas and special events to keep the interest of the students that so many people only from upon," Harrell admits.

Though he is the man in the driver's seat, Harrell is extremely modest and shares credit not only with his staff but students as well.

During a moment of quiet reflection in the midst of chaos, Harrell divulges his true love like a proud father. "Working with the students. I wouldn't trade it for the world. To see their growth from freshmen to sophomores all the way to seniors, and seeing them learn how this all works."

Asked what was next after Viking Fest, Harrell without hesitation said, "Homecoming." Undoubtedly, the mini-version of New York's Times Square during New Year's will keep on as Harrell and his staff continues to bring the students events that they want.