

the CAMPUS echo

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One of 13 black speech pathologists in the state Rare profession spurs Donell Lewis

By Brian Davis
Staff Writer

Dr. H. Donell Lewis, coordinator of the North Carolina Central University graduate program in speech and hearing and director of the speech-hearing-language department is one of only 13 black speech pathologists in the state.

Because he's a rarity, Lewis had the distinction of being featured in a 1987 issue of "Ebony" magazine.

"They were looking for blacks with unusual careers and they found me," he says. "There are not too many speech pathologists and audiologists in the country. Less than 10 percent have their Ph.D.s. I am one, and five are at Howard University."

Lewis is one of 45,000 speech pathologists in the country; less than four percent are minorities, and 2000 are black.

Asked exactly what a speech pathologist does, Lewis says: "First, a speech pathologist diagnoses and attempts to remediate the effects of communication disorders—voice problems, stuttering, hearing and dialectical problems."

According to Lewis, black students are often discouraged from going into the field; they are told that they do not have adequate verbal skills. Lewis

asserts that since most blacks seeking careers in speech pathology have to attend white institutions to get their training, they are very impressionable and easily discouraged by white professors.

Lewis cites the history and evolution of black speech patterns as one of the reasons why blacks shy away from the discipline. "Blacks are told that they have do not have the dialectical skills to be successful," he says.

Lewis feels that he and his staff can help increase the number of blacks in the field. The program has 17 students.

"NCCU is one of several historically black institutions to offer a graduate program in speech and hearing. I get calls everyday looking for competent speech pathologists and audiologists. We're training as many as we can, but we're just not training enough," he says.

Lewis says that the number of students entering his program is increasing, and so is his clientele.

NCCU's clinic does not charge for its services, and the majority of its clients cannot afford to pay the fees that Duke and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill medical centers charge.

"The clinic sees 50 people per month; 30 are seen twice a



week; and others are new them travel "great distances, as far as 50 miles" to come to

Lewis has a five person staff, and each is a specialist.

Minnie Forte and Alfredia Collins specialize in dialectical problems, Terry Gibson deals with early intervention and child language, and Dr. Laura Love is concerned with neurological disorders and stuttering, and Lewis tackles speech process and hearing.

Lewis says that his students are much older than most graduate students (ages range from 26-57), and some of

(people) are the only ones with access."

Most schools in other states have experienced significant decline in the enrollment of minorities, but enrollment in the University of North Carolina's 16-campus system has increased from 14,440 in 1972 to 24,207 in 1986, Richmond said.

Turning to the freshman class of the year 2000 (now 4 years old and totaling 3.6 million people), Richmond pointed out that one-third are non-white; 24 percent live in poverty; 18 percent were born out of wedlock and 54 percent receive some form of day care.

In order to meet the diverse

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*-For today you have
the strength of youth
-And youth is
tomorrow's man.
-So work! Map out your life
-And with wisdom
make your plan.
"To youth,"
Langston Hughes,
1918*

educational needs of this class, he said NCCU plans to:

- create administrative and management systems to maintain and enhance the university's exemplary record of public accountability, as well as allow flexibility to respond quickly to significant changes in the education market place;
- recruit well-prepared students;
- play a major role economically by working in partnership with government and the private sector;
- intensify research efforts of faculty and students to deal with local problems;

See Richmond, pg.9

Richmond
looks to
the future

By Bobby Amosun

North Carolina Central University must continue to serve as "a bridge of hope and faith" for minorities, said Dr. Tyrone R. Richmond at his inauguration Saturday, Oct. 17.

Richmond is the sixth chief administrator of this predominantly black institution, which was founded in 1910 as a national religious training school to provide opportunity for the politically disadvantaged.

Under representation of minorities, both as students and faculty in our institutions, is a matter of national importance, he said. "NCCU will

promote teaching as a career for our most talented students," he added.

Pointing out that one-third of America is expected to be made up of minorities by the year 2000 and quoting Dr. Reginald Wilson of the American Council on Education, Richmond said, "If that one-third of the population has less access to higher education, you will not only have the racially divided society with minorities at the bottom and whites at the top, but also a sharply divided class of society where poor, uneducated people are kept from upward mobility and middle- and upper-class