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Host Of Notables Hear Chancellor Call For Higher Admission Standards, Improved Facilities, Research, Service

by ROBYN HACKLEY

"This is an exciting, red-letter day here at N.C. Central!" exclaimed Carl Stewart, chairman of NCCU's Board of Trustees. And that it was. The leadership at the top was changing for only the seventh time since its founding.

Julius L. Chambers was sworn in as chancellor of North Carolina Central University by Justice Henry Frye of the N.C. Supreme Court at the Fall Convocation Oct. 22.

Chambers said he plans to lead the University into a new era of national prominence. He opened his inaugural address by saying that he is guided by an old philosophy:

"I am tired of sailing my boat far inside the harbor bar.

I want to go out where the big ships float,
Out in the deep where the great ones are,
And should my frail craft prove too slight,
The waves that sweep over billowing,
I'd rather go down in a stirring fight
Than drown to death by the sheltered shore."

Chambers outlined four broad areas that he intends to improve: the quality and commitment of the students at Central; the preparation and commitment of the faculty and staff; the programs, facilities and environment at NCCU; and the community services that Central provides.

Chambers insisted that NCCU must raise its admissions standards. By doing this he hopes to "raise the average SAT score to 900. Chambers also said that every program offered must undergo a complete review. "We can no longer remain comfortable with our successes; we must continuously review what we are doing and the objectives that we are trying to achieve."

He added: "I feel my first responsibility is serving the needs of the students of this University, whose minds we have taken in trust. We serve them by addressing ... their academic preparation as well as their social and cultural development."



Chancellor Julius L. Chambers

He concluded his address by talking about a new community service initiative. He said that students, faculty and staff have a responsibility to the community, state and nation to address the problems of crime and poverty which are divisive "cancers" in society.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by students, alumni, faculty and staff, by many friends of the University and by a host of prominent figures from academia, government and business.

C.D. Spangler, president of the University of North Carolina System, presided over the ceremony, which included welcoming remarks from University and state leaders.

Gov. James L. Hunt led the greetings by welcoming Chambers back to North Carolina and back to North Carolina Central University. Other greetings were made by: Samuel Poole, chairman of the Board

of Governors; Carl Stewart, chairman of the Board of Trustees; Provost Mickey Burnim; Kenneth Chambers, vice chairman of the Faculty Senate; Derek Brown, Student Government Association president; Harry Rodenhizer, mayor of Durham; William Bell, chairman of the Board of County Commissioners; and Bert Collins, member of the UNC Board of Governors. Other important platform guests included Eva Clayton of the U.S. House Representatives; the speaker of the N.C. House of Representatives, Dan Blue; Miss NCCU, Laurie Robinson; and Nan Keohane, Duke University's new chancellor.

John Hope Franklin, professor emeritus at Duke University, introduced the guest speaker, the Rev. Samuel Proctor. Proctor is a professor emeritus of Rutgers University and pastor emeritus of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City where he met Chambers. Proctor spoke powerfully about the need for a new attitude in the younger generation: "We need to commend young people for their accuracy in diagnosing the problems in society and encourage them to change the prognosis. ... You only dim your aspirations by focusing on the negative."

Although the ceremony that began at 10 a.m. lasted for three hours, the audience was entertained by the University Band and a combined choir of alumni and students directed by Xavier Carson and Charles Gilchrist. Several of the selections brought the crowd to their feet.

Though the audience was enthusiastic, student attendance was sparse. Inaugural Committee Co-Chair Sarah Bell-Lucas said that the event's planners were disappointed by student turnout, especially since this event gave them such an exciting opportunity to mingle with some of the country's leaders in both government and education.

At a luncheon for official delegates, Chambers thanked everybody involved and remarked, "If you take a moment to help people, they remember it and turn around and repay you like this."

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