

## Two Cents

## Post-game brawl reflects poorly on all

Here's the scenario: four women, one man, fight in a basketball gym.

No, the fight didn't happen on a middle school playground.

Heck, it didn't even happen on a high school campus.

The fight happened right here at NCCU, in Mc Lendon - Mc Dougald gymnasium earlier in the month.

Now, I'm not entirely sure myself of the events on Jan. 6. But I do know what happened was ugly.

Very ugly. Ugly enough to get plastered on the pages of the Durham Herald-Sun, The News & Observer in Raleigh, and even USA Today.

Ugly enough to be broadcast on local television channels.

I'm not sure what motivated the first blow to be thrown, or even who threw it. But I am appalled that a blow was even thrown in the first place. Maybe I'm just a little too naive, but I don't think college students should be involved in fistfights at all. Especially on campus.

Maybe five or four years ago, students fighting in the gym wouldn't have shocked me—back then I was in high school, and that's what high school students did, fight.

But call me a prude, somehow I didn't expect to find the same behavior on the campus of a university. When I left high school in 1994, I thought I was entering college to join the ranks of the talented, the focused, the responsible, the intelligent.

But apparently, that wasn't the case. To those students who fought, What were you thinking?

Granted, at NCCU no one is going to give you detention, or call your mommy and daddy if you get into a fight, but that doesn't mean students shouldn't practice the fine art of self-restraint; a little self-policing doesn't hurt.

You see, when students at NCCU fight, and that fight becomes the stuff the 6 o'clock news is made of, that fight doesn't reflect poorly just on the students who were unwise enough to throw blows, it reflects poorly on all of us at NCCU.

And that includes me.

I'm proud of my school, have never been a fight here, wasn't even on campus at the time of the Jan. 6 fight. I dislike being cast in a poor light by the actions of a few. I dislike when my university is cast in a poor light because of the actions of a few.

You see, Carmelita Spicer isn't the university's only public relations person. Every time students step off campus, we too, like it or not, are ambassadors for the university.

People will look at what we do, what we say, how we behave, and make judgments about this university and the people associated with it.

Those involved in the fight did a horrible disservice to us.

Sure, getting upset is an everyday occurrence.

But by this stage in the game we should all be adept at handling that anger.

We should know better than to lash out physically at other people.

Now maybe those who were involved in the fight did have what they thought were good reason to throw some punches.

But were they reasons good enough to be suspended for?

Actions have consequences, especially violent actions.

Everyone at NCCU shares in the consequences of the fight Jan. 6, because, simply put, the fight (regardless of who was right or wrong) makes us all look bad.

And I, for one, am not willing to share in those consequences. I'm not willing to be painted with the same brush as those students who took part in the fight that night.

Are you?



Shelvia Dancy

Though approaching the end of her reign as NCCU student government association president, Catilla Everette said the job was tough, at times thankless, but in the end the effort was well worth it.

by Tomeka Ruffin  
Staff Writer

From the green fields of a little town in North Carolina called Greenlevel to the bustling, city life of the Triangle, Catilla R. Everette, president of North Carolina Central University's Student Government Association for the 1997-98 school year, has made her mark at NCCU.

Everette's contributions to student life began with her involvement with the community service program when she first arrived at NCCU in 1994.

"My initial goal was not to run for president," Everette said. "I was more involved with community service."

Through her activities with the community service program, which included publishing a newsletter, Everette said she discovered that there was a lot more that she could do to improve the quality of education at NCCU.

She said she realized that community service was linked with higher education issues as well as social issues, such as affirmative action, diversity and the reauthorization of funding for HBCUs.

With this realization, Everette decided to run for sophomore class president in 1995. Throughout that year she continued to broaden her horizons implementing several programs in order to help improve NCCU.

"I participated in a program called University Partners, a NCCU-Duke initiative, and Break for a Change," Everette said.

The University Partners program involved eight students from NCCU and Duke attending a class discussing the history of Durham during the spring semester and then placement in a communal house for the summer.

The Break for a Change program involved working with the homeless and the working poor from a local, state, national and legislative level.

The students spent their spring break in Atlanta working with the homeless. Everette participated in the program during both her freshman and sophomore years.

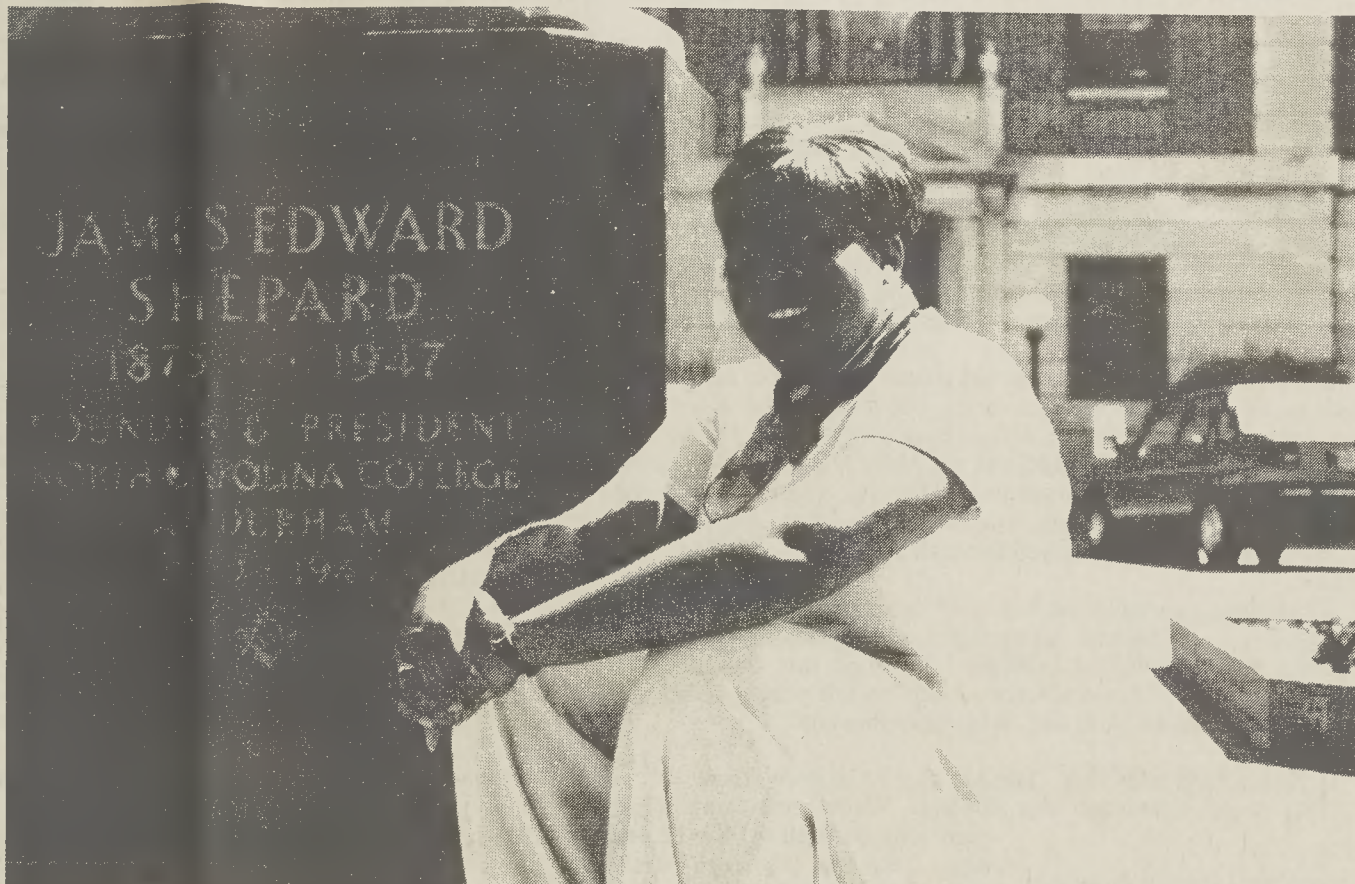
The sophomore class presidency led to Everette's appointment as vice-president of SGA in the 1996 spring elections.

Being vice-president allowed Everette to become more involved with the Universities' administration.

As vice-president, Everette had the opportunity to become involved with day-to-day operations within the university's administration.

"I was more involved with policy oriented issues such as voter participation and higher education funding of HBCUs," she said.

"It involved educating people about the issues within the congress, drawing on their ideas and taking it back to the board of



Student Government Association President Catilla Everette said she is looking forward not only to the activities SGA has planned for the spring semester, but what she says will be her biggest accomplishment: graduation in May.

governors."

Everette's tenure as vice-president resulted in the first HBCU day held at NCCU. The day was a successful campaign for voter registration which involved political speakers who were campaigning for office in 1996. The day resulted in an increase in voter turnout off NCCU on election day.

Even with this success, Everette still was not convinced that she should run for SGA president.

Witnessing the time commitment required of

*"I wasn't sure if I wanted to deal with the sleepless nights, I also questioned the true support of the student body....I don't have any regrets... The student government has made me what I am today- a passionate person."*

Catilla Everette  
SGA President, NCCU

Sekou J.B. Gargonnu, the president at that time, almost kept Everette away from the elections.

"It's hard work serving on the board of trustees and several other organizations, such as the UNC-Association of Student Governments," said Everette.

The SGA president is also required to attend numerous leadership forums, trainings and other events throughout the community.

"I wasn't sure if I wanted to deal with sleepless nights," said Everette. "I also questioned the true support of the student body."

Everette said that she also was not sure if she was ready for the huge sacrifice of working weekends and constant criticism minus appreciation.

Everette said that as she observed the morale of NCCU's student body and administration, she realized that it had declined and that it was time for 'NCCU to heal.'

She adopted that motto as her campaign platform.

"The university is lacking socially as well as academically," she said. "There is also a decline in respect between the students, faculty and administrators."

Although these are problems which Everette said she would like to see fixed before she leaves, Everette said she realizes that the problems cannot be solved overnight.

"It's okay if I don't do everything, as long as I try," she said.

While Everette may not have been successful in correcting all of the problems that she has encountered, she has worked hard during her first semester as president.

Her accomplishments include a successful turnout for the pre-dawn dance for the Eagle-Aggie football classic, homecoming, a lewd and obscene codedeveloped by the student government in collaboration with the administration, as well as continued dialogue between students and administrators concerning leadership.

"I have continued several partnerships between the university and other groups such as K97.5, the AFL-CIO and other government agencies in the D.C. area," Everette said.

Everette has many activities planned for a successful spring semester, among them is the first HBCU leadership training workshop.

NCCU's student government association has made plans to host that workshop at NCCU in February.

The purpose of the workshop is to help train other students who are attending various HBCUs in the area.

"I also plan to have an Eagle Mania in April, and complete the revision of the SGA constitution," Everette said.

Everette said her biggest accomplishment for this year is an accomplishment that she anxiously anticipates: graduation in May.

"It is time for new leadership," she said. "There is nothing more that I can do here."

Everette's college career has been a busy one, but she said she has enjoyed every minute of it.

She said she is leaving NCCU in a healing stage with nothing but the opportunity of continued growth for the next student government leaders.

"I don't have any regrets," she said. "The student government has made me what I am today- a passionate person."

In each issue we'll feature a club or organization worthy of note around campus. Got suggestions for this feature? Call us at 560-6504.

by Joe Wright  
Staff Writer

In just two years, the Student African American Brotherhood at North Carolina Central University has built four houses, mentored over 40 kids and laid a foundation for many young black males.

SAAB was established at NCCU by Dr. Tyrone Bledsoe in the fall of 1995.

It was originally founded by Bledsoe in 1994 on the campus of the University of Georgia Southwestern.

"There are two purposes of SAAB," said Mike Jackson, a senior accounting major from Indianapolis who is a member of SAAB. "One is to provide a support system for members, such as academic and spiritual. The second is to provide the community with a positive and refreshing organization of young African American men."

"SAAB is a group of young brothers doing positive things," said Tex Hargrove, a sophomore math major and a member of SAAB. "I joined SAAB to show young brothers can do something besides kill each other. Brothers can do things to help the community," Hargrove said.

Already this semester SAAB has participated in many

community-based projects, including Habitat for Humanity in Durham, and Project Ace, a mentoring program that

## Join the Club: SAAB: Student African American Brotherhood

pairs SAAB members with students from Shepard Middle School in Durham.

SAAB has five chapters at universities across the country, including the University of Texas at Austin.

Last year SAAB members at NCCU travelled to Cincinnati to participate in the "Black Man Think Tank" where they attended forums on the present and future of black males. Speakers such as Michael Eric Dyson and Na'im Akbar attended as well.

Last October, the 12 members of the SAAB executive board, headed by chairperson Warren Greenfield, a junior psychology major from Winston-Salem, traveled to New Orleans to take part in the four-day "Third Annual Conference on Family and Community Violence Prevention."

While there, members of the executive board participated in forums and workshops concerning violence prevention.

The conference was sponsored by Xavier University.

SAAB is working hard to boost membership for this semester and the coming fall semester. Currently the group has 34 members.

"We are having more public-related events to promote SAAB," said Greenfield, "such as more social events."

This semester the group also wants to promote awareness through a "SAAB Week."

"We want to sponsor a SAAB week which includes a forum on pressing issues on campus, and also an open house meeting for anyone interested in attending," said Jackson.

SAAB meets every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in the Student Union, room 143.

Want to make a Valentine's Day dedication in The Campus Echo?  
Contact us at 560-6504.