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# The CAMPUS ECHO

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Eagles rise to the top of the men's basketball Western Division.

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## Black History Month events dedicated to professor

**NCCU begins a month of events aimed at celebrating the African American community, in honor of the late Dr. Helen Edmonds.**

by CHANDRA MOSS  
The Campus Echo

North Carolina Central University is sharing the spirit of Black History Month with its students and the

Durham community.

With grants provided by the office of the Chancellor, the history department has come up with a month filled with black history activities.

Coordinated by Dr. Oscar Williams III of the history department, the title of this year's Black History Month programming is "The Legacy of African American Leadership for the Present and the Future."

The program is dedicated in the memory of Dr. Helen G. Edmonds, the late chairperson of the history department at NCCU.

Born in Lawrenceville, Va., on Dec. 3, 1911, Edmonds earned distinction as an educator and historian in her approximately 50 years of service to NCCU. She began teaching history at NCCU in 1941.

In 1963, she became chair of the

department of history and social science. From 1964 until 1971, Edmonds was the dean for the graduate school of arts and science.

Edmonds' outside affiliations included membership on the board of directors of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund board of directors. She was a U.S. alternate delegate to the United Nations General Assembly as well as a mem-

ber of the Peace Corps national advisory council.

Edmonds was also a member of the American Historical Association, the Association for Study of Negro Life and History, and the National Education Association. She received numerous awards, fellowships, and grants.

Edmonds died in 1995 at the age of 83.

This year's Black History Month activities in her honor include lectures, discussion groups, movies, trivia game shows, and a choreopoem that deals with the contributions of others to the African-American community.

The events are sponsored by the Alfonso Elder Student Union, C.A. Jones History Club, E.E. Thorpe Historians Society, and the Stanford L. Warren Library.

## NCCU's 'report card' imminent

**A self-study of its programs will help determine whether NCCU retains its SACS accreditation.**

by MARI McNEIL,  
RICHARD DUNLOP  
and IBI LEWIS  
The Campus Echo

Every 10 years, North Carolina Central University gets a "report card" on its academic effectiveness - its "grades" in part determined by the university itself but ultimately awarded by an outside agency known as SACS.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) is an organization of higher-education specialists that examines a requesting university's case for reaffirmation of its accreditation.

By the end of 1999, SACS is expected to give the thumbs-up or thumbs-down on NCCU's performance. But what, exactly, is the significance of accreditation?

NCCU officials say that accreditation is a standard tool used to rate the quality and assurance of standard educational systems used by a majority of universities and colleges in the country.

In practical terms, accreditation has a great deal to do with the money available to the university.

If NCCU were to lose its accreditation, state and federal money for grants and scholarships would be seriously depleted. Because many students depend upon this very funding to complete their education, university officials say a drastic decline in enrollment could result.

The purpose of the self-study is to help schools recognize weaknesses, plan improvements and establish a timeline for implementing the corrections. If agreed-upon corrections are not met within that specified period, then accreditation can be revoked, noted Desretta H. McAllister, a library science faculty member who is overall coordinator of NCCU's own self-study that precedes the SACS evaluation.

Reaffirmation of accreditation is a continuous process that peaks every eight years. The process is broken into three parts. The initial part is the self-survey. Once NCCU committees complete that survey, a report is completed and evaluation is done. The report is completed every five years so departments can review their progress.

SACS completes its evaluation  
See SACS, page 2

## 25-YEAR VETERAN HAS A WINNING RECORD

# NCCU hires new coach

by ED BOYCE  
The Campus Echo

After a two-month, nationwide search, North Carolina Central University has named Thomas "Rudy" Abrams as head football coach, replacing Larry Little, who was fired Nov. 19 after two straight losing seasons.

Abrams signed a five-year contract in which financial terms were not disclosed. NCCU athletic director Dr. William Lide would only state that Abrams was receiving "fair market value" for his services.

"I am extremely happy to be here, and I am very eager to get to work," Abrams said. "I am really looking forward to building this football program in to a championship-caliber program as quickly as possible."

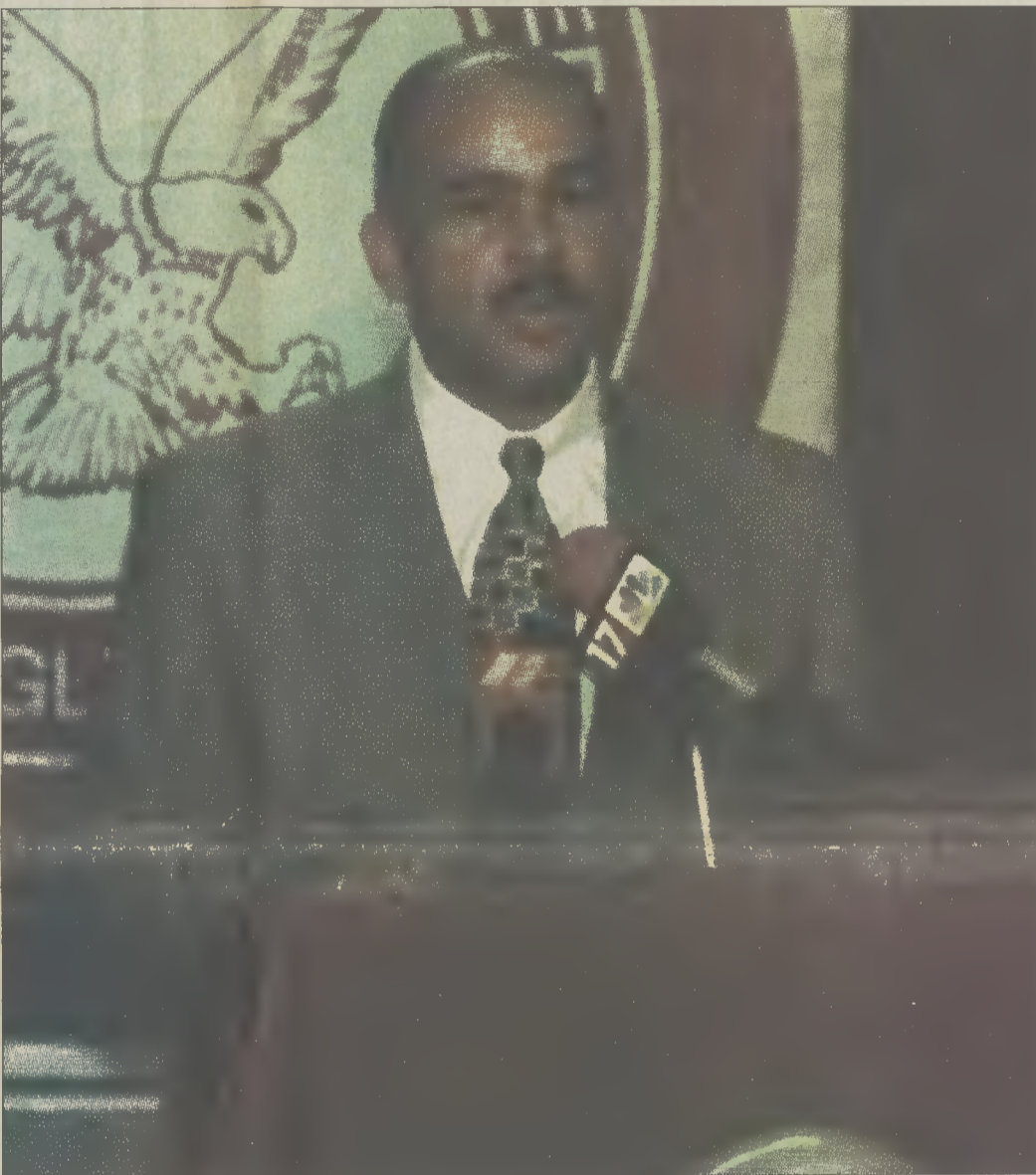
Abrams, 57, has 25 years of football coaching experience on the high school and college levels. Abrams graduated from Livingstone in 1964. As the head coach at his alma mater, Abrams has led the Fighting Blue Bears to two straight conference championships and back-to-back appearances in the Pioneer Bowl, while accumulating a 35-15-1 record in his five seasons.

After receiving a total of 60 applications, Lide narrowed the choices to Abrams and South Carolina State assistant coach Ben Blacknall. Chancellor Julius Chambers made the final decision.

"He is an outstanding recruiter, and he has tremendous strengths in adjusting to defensive and offensive situations," Lide said about Abrams. "He brings a management style that fits well with what we are trying to do here at North Carolina Central."

NCCU senior and search committee member Ansel Brown also sees the advantages in having a coach like Abrams.

"He has definitely proven himself; he's a winner; anywhere he's gone he has won," Brown said. "That's what people in Durham



New NCCU football coach Rudy Abrams, a 25-year veteran of high school and college coaching, says he favors the high-powered option offense

STAFF PHOTO BY PAUL PHIPPS

want, that's what people at Central want: They want a winning program."

Abrams has made a reputation for improving football programs. In his fourth year at West Charlotte High School in 1976 he led the Lions to the North Carolina 4-A State Championship and in his first year at East Mecklenburg High School he finished with a 9-1 record in 1983.

As an assistant coach at Johnson C. Smith University, Abrams coached Lide, who played wide receiver for the Golden Bulls.

"He would stay after practice and watch us work out after practice was over," Lide said. "That inquisitive part of nature was apart of him even then."

Abrams will be busy forming a coaching staff and recruiting within the next few weeks.

Abrams has not made any moves concerning who he will hire as assistant coaches, but he has been meeting with some of the players.

"Hopefully in the next few days I'll get a chance to meet more of them," Abrams said. "Then I'll really get into some of the specifics about what I'll expect from them, what they can expect from me and how I expect to get this job done."

At Livingstone, Abrams' Fighting Blue Bears led the CIAA in scoring, averaging 41 points a game and had the No. 1 defense in Division II. Abrams wants to bring a high-powered, scoring offense to NCCU.

"We're definitely going to do whatever we do best to win," Abrams said. "Eventually, I want to have an option team to control the football and score a lot of points."

## Despite current headaches, new phone system on campus shows promise

by KIM ROSS  
The Campus Echo

The recent installation of a new phone system at North Carolina Central University has meant crossed-up lines, inconvenient drop-ins by phone installers, and the infamous "no dial tone."

However, students say they are willing to endure these temporary glitches as long as progress is made soon.

"I picked up my phone to make a call and some telephone people were on there talking. I had to use the payphone downstairs," said freshmen psychology major, Melissa Laws.

Frustrations such as limited phone features, lengthy repair services, lack of voice mail and roommate con-

flicts will soon come to an end with the installation of NCCU's new phone system.

Five years ago, new cable wires were put underground to replace the deteriorating, aged cable plant.

Since then, the cable plant has reached its capacity, hindering new phone lines from being added, according to Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research Evaluation and Planning Larry Lee.

Therefore, Lee said, for a year he has collaborated with state telecommunications and the GTE telephone company to develop ways of improving NCCU's phone service.

Studies were done to determine how to acquire a switch, which handles phone transmissions across campus, expanding to add phone

lines as the campus grows.

For months, telephone workers have been busy all over campus verifying phone connections in every building back to the PBX (Public Exchange) switch location in the Shepherd Library.

"There were wires that weren't labeled and there was no knowledge of where they went," said Lee. "It's a very tedious process. We hope to have completed [conversion to new phones] in a couple of weeks."

New phones are expected to be in place by this weekend. To assist in using the new equipment, a set of instructions will be distributed prior to the conversion date. A list of faculty and staff telephone numbers will also accompany the new administrative phones.

Each department on campus will enjoy features specifically suited for the type of work done in that office. The number of phone lines on each phone will be determined by each office's individual need for multi-lines.

Faculty and students can expect "less problems with repairs, much improved functions, better quality, and more reliability [with the new phones]," said Lee.

According to Lee, it used to be time-consuming to have phone repairs done because of the many wiring companies that had to come onto campus to fix problems.

NCCU now deals with one single telephone company: Sprint. As a result, Lee said, when phone outages occur, the problem can be found and

repairs can be done in a timely fashion.

Resident Assistant Courtney Whymys said she hopes the new telephone system, which enables roommates to have individual lines, will cut down on problems.

"I think it's better because one roommate can get a call without worrying about the other [roommate] taking up too much phone time," said Whymys. She added that it's also a plus that students from local areas such as Raleigh and Chapel Hill can call home free of charge as a benefit of the new phone system.

"There has been an awful lot of hard work and I appreciate the patience of faculty and staff waiting for the new phone system. I think they'll be very pleased," said Lee.

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