

## Howard's HILLTOP Goes Daily

WASHINGTON—The Princeton Review recently recognized Howard University's student newspaper, The Hilltop, as the best college newspaper. It continues to distinguish itself by becoming the first paper at a historically Black college and university (HBCU) to go daily. The move from publishing twice weekly to daily is the brainchild of its editor Ruth Tisdale, a junior journalism major.

"Every October, Howard has a job fair and the students complained that the recruiters wanted daily experience. HBCUs don't have that," said Ms. Tisdale. "In November, I went to a college media advisors conference and met a student from a school with a daily that had a staff comparable to ours. That's when I decided that The Hilltop was ready to become a daily."

She said that the staff was hesitant at first: "It means more work, but most of all they were excited about the possibilities." The Hilltop debuts as a daily February 28, 2005.

The road to daily has also had some bumps.

"Some felt it was too hasty a decision," Ms. Tisdale revealed. "I was told that Blacks wouldn't read a daily, that HBCUs are known for their bad writing and why just increase the bad writing."

But none of that deterred her. "You're always going to have negative feedback about things. The president was hesitant at first because he didn't know our plan of action. Once I wrote the proposal and submitted it to the Policy board, they voted unanimously to approve it."

What challenges does she face?

"I have to be on top of the business side of things by keeping up with the daily costs. We needed copy editing training, as well as daily production support. The writers had to learn how to do breaking news stories and we needed editorial workshops."

Ms. Tisdale is responsible for a staff of 50 students, from freshmen to seniors. "It can be overwhelming," she shares. "This year's staff is committed to the craft, dedicated to becoming the first Black daily and making a change. People with attitudes like that are great to work with."

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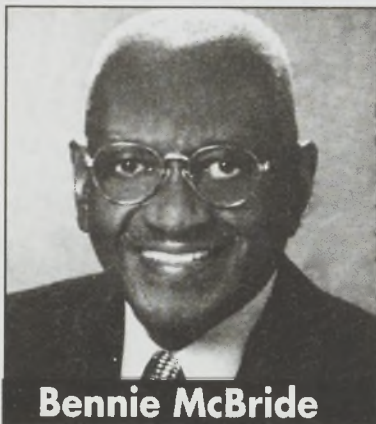
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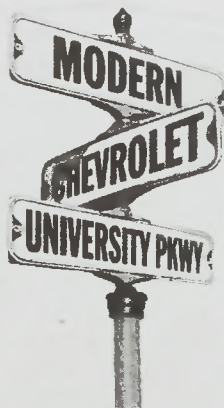
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