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## Public Forum

### Panel Says: Racial Problems Affect Education, But Resist Solutions

Milton Jordan  
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facet of Durham's  
education, but the  
precise definition,  
and threaten the

\* Many African Americans believe African American teachers are leaving the county system in large numbers, and the system is having difficulty recruiting others.

Dr. Larry Coble, county schools superintendent, cited a lengthy list of statistics that he says refutes that perception.

According to Dr. Coble's data, the pool of available "minority" certified personnel has grown from 11% three years ago to 13% today. The largest available pools are in teachers certified to teach in kindergarten through fourth grade, fourth grade through sixth grade, and business education. The smallest pools are teachers for secondary grades, special education and vocational education.

The system wide ratio of (Continued On Page 2)

### Committee Plans Recognition

## Shepard Middle School Track To Be Named For Russell E. Blunt

By Milton Jordan

A group of associates in the Durham City School system, former students and other plan to honor Hillside High School's former football coach and current track coach next month by naming a local school's athletic field in his honor.

The group is planning a ceremony for May 24 that will culminate in the athletic field at Shepard Middle School being named the Russell E. Blunt Athletic Field.

Blunt, who will be 78 this month, has been a coach at Hillside since 1955, 30 years of a coaching and teaching career that began in 1936 in Andover and Lawrence, Massachusetts.

"Blunt has meant a lot to the Durham community," said Willie Bradshaw, athletic director for Durham City Schools and a longtime associate of the coach. "He is truly a great person, who has been a role model for young people for years, and very instrumental in putting many of them on the right track."



MRS. BETTY MERRITT accepted a plaque commemorating the induction of her late husband, Lindsey A. Merritt into the NCCU Sports Hall of Fame. Merritt, chairman of the university's Athletic Committee at the time of his death in 1984, was widely known as The Voice of the Eagles.

Bradshaw chairs the committee planning the recognition.

In addition to naming the field for Coach Blunt, the committee also plans to have a monument erected in his honor. In addition, Albert Huey, coordinator of the Durham city Schools' community schools program, continues his search for former students and athletes who would like to write testimonial letters to Blunt.

These letters will be put in a special testimonial book and presented to Blunt on the day of the ceremony.

Anyone interested in writing a testimonial letter to the book, may contact Huey at P.O. Box 2246, Durham, N.C. 27702, or telephone him at 682-5786.

According to Ben Ruffin, a N.C. Mutual Life Insurance Company senior vice president, the masonry class at Hillside is constructing the monument to be unveiled on the 24th.

"Blunt has been a father figure to me," said Ruffin during a recent interview. "He's a firm disciplinarian. But he's always

encouraging you, always helping you to believe in yourself, because he believes in you."

Ruffin was Blunt's water boy on the 1960 football team.

According to Mrs. Missouri Morris, an assistant principal at Hillside High School, the recognition program will begin with a 1:30 p.m. reception following a Saturday morning Middle School track meet at the Shepard field. The formal presentation program will begin at 3 p.m.

In addition to coaching, Blunt has also been a long time teacher, both at the high school and the college levels.

Blunt, who has degrees from Raleigh's St. Augustine's College and Boston University, has received many honors for his athletic and civic work.

Married since 1941 to the former Ms. Cora Lee Duren of Camden, S.C., the Blunts have two married daughters and two grandchildren.

He is a member of St. Titus Episcopal Church.

## Lincoln's Road Race is Coming Sign Up Now!

By Jocelyn Daniels  
Staff Writer

Energy and enthusiasm filled the Lincoln Community Health Center Conference Room recently as committee chairmen and members reported final plans for the Second Annual City of Medicine Road Race.

The race, which will be held on Saturday, May 3, involves a 5 kilometer race (3.1 miles) for runners and 1 mile fun run/walk for those who still want to participate.

"We encourage those who want to participate to come on out," said co-chairman Claire Crenshaw. "Last year, the youngest participant was 14-months (in a stroller) and the oldest was 89 years. We have two events so everyone can participate."

The idea for such an event, explained Ms. Crenshaw, began last year.

"Last year we were trying to raise money for the new eye clinic," she recalled. "We needed equipment for it. Lynn Miller (co-chairman) who is a runner suggested we have a race around the block. Well, those plans have turned into a fully certified race."

"At the time we didn't know what we were getting into," she chuckled. "Now it's a full-fledged event."

The purpose of the annual event is to raise money to support the Lincoln Community Health Center. Funds specifically will go toward covering costs of capital equipment. The race also encourages health and fitness in the community.

"There's a very real cause for funds and the race," noted Dr. Evelyn Schmidt, director of Lincoln. "We need to raise money through other avenues because of the budget cuts. It's a means of support and a way to have fun."

Dr. Schmidt added that money raised this year will be used to replace or update equipment.

"It (the race) has a number of significant importances," said Dr. LeRoy T. Walker, honorary chairman and chancellor of North Carolina Central University. "First, it serves to unify the community in a worthwhile effort. Second, it makes one feel good about himself; and third, it's for an outstanding cause. What better thing can one do for Lincoln that will be of tremendous benefit? I'm very proud to be a part of this."

The 5K race will begin at 8 a.m. and the 1 mile fun run/walk will begin at 8:45 a.m. Registration for both events is being held at local sporting goods stores. Registration fee for the 5K race is \$3.00 and \$7.00 with T-shirt, and \$1.00 for the 1 mile run/walk and \$5.00 with T-shirt. Registration will also take place before the race from 6:45 to 7:45 a.m., with an additional \$2.00 cost after April 29.

The race route for the 5K race starts and finishes at Durham County Stadium, with runners going up Olympic Drive to North Roxboro Road, looping around North Duke Mall via Horton Road and down North Duke Street back to the stadium. The scenic route passes historic Teer House and GTE headquarters.

"The really good thing about the race," pointed out Robert Montgomery, president of the Carolina Godiva Track Club and an expert on road races in this area, "is that it is flat. The flatter the course, the faster the race."

Results of the race will be mailed to all 5K participants and to the National Running Data Center. The club will also manage the finish line.

The 1 mile run/walk will loop up Olympic Drive to North Roxboro Road, then on the drive in front of Durham County General back to Olympic Drive. The route will be marked by life-size rabbit figures, designed by Melissa Schuler-Allen.

Trophies will be awarded to the three top male and the three top female finishers. Medallions with neck ribbons will be awarded to the three top male and three top female finishers in nine different age

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## Conference, Speakers Say Women Can Make A Change

Jocelyn Daniels  
Staff Writer  
Part 4 of 5

day of the "Black Leadership: Challenges and Opportunities" conference held at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill brought a variety of activities. Morning activities began with a showing of the film, "The Color of Politics" by Hamer; Never Turn Back followed by lunchtime entertainment by the Ebony choir.

The speakers forum addressed "Civil Rights: A Struggle for the 1990s," with two speakers from the two different organizations speaking about their experiences.

Mrs. Coley, a retired Greensboro high school teacher, said that she was primed by her mother to be educated and to stand up for her rights.

"I was used to have little discussions," she recalled, "and if I had a point of view, I had to defend it. You've got to have some backbone," he'd say. You've got to be organized."

Mrs. Coley noted, a proponent of her alma mater, Bennett College, who would tell his students, "If you cannot envision the screen of the mind's eye, you can't do it."

she received while growing up, she pointed out. When she graduated, she went to Beaufort (NC) to teach. After trying to find a way to leave and reflecting on her father's words for presenting the proper argument for a position, she stayed because she had no real good argument for leaving.

As Mrs. Coley spoke, she passed on other lessons of life that were passed down to her.

"One thing my father instilled in me," she said, "is that you are not what you say you are and not what others say you are. You are who you are coming from the inside out."

Mrs. Coley has seen her role as a teacher, to teach children who they are and to help them define themselves. Over the years, she took her own advice and worked in organizations such as the NAACP, even though teachers were not supposed to be affiliated with such groups.

When students started sit-ins in Greensboro, however, Mrs. Coley said she was still surprised at the determination of those students to have equal rights. And, although Mrs. Coley was not on the picket line herself, she knows that her influence helped the students do what they did.

A much younger activist, Leah Wise, director of Southerners for

Economic Justice, recalled that as a child, she grew up in the civil rights struggle.

"My parents were activists," the California native said, "and struggled for equality. I had a radical background before I knew what it meant. I grew up walking the picket lines with a Sugar Daddy (candy bar) in my hand."

Ms. Wise pointed out that during that time, things were being examined and questioned — such as civil rights and the Vietnam War.

"This time was not the same as my parents'," she said. "We were challenging everything. Everything was up for examining and questions. And I didn't grow up in a segregated environment."

"The people in SNCC (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee) I was with," she added, "were doing courageous things. That fear was something they could put behind them."

Ms. Wise later traveled around the country collecting documents for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library at the Wisconsin Historical Library. She explained that this was significant because such documents represented black recorded history that could neither be changed nor rewritten. These efforts led to the

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The strong "immigrant drive to succeed" is alive, well and working in the lives of West Indians — such as Cicely Tyson and Sidney Poitier — who now call America home, says the May EBONY.