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TELEPHONE 919-682-2913

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NCCU School of Education. NCCU Photo

NCCU School of Education Awarded \$3.7 Million Grant by Regional Educational Coalition to Increase Diversity in School Administration

North Carolina Central University's School of Education has been awarded \$3.7 million to expand diversity among school administrators.

The funds are provided by the Central Carolina Regional Education Service Alliance (CCRESA) to bolster the university's efforts in producing a diverse pool of Master of School Administration graduates.

"The School of Education is excited to receive this grant to develop proficient leaders who will enhance student success in schools with a great need for diverse leaders," said Audrey W. Beard, Ed.D., NCCU School of Education dean. "The funding will help us enhance the hands-on skills and offerings that we provide educators to become effective leaders for urban and rural high-need schools in North Carolina."

NCCU is part of CCRESA, a non-profit coalition supporting opportunities for collaboration, professional growth and educational excellence among school systems and their stakeholders in the central region of the state.

The four-year grant to NCCU's School of Education will provide funding to implement the Central Carolina Principal Preparation Program. This initiative will focus on developing diverse individuals as school principals to enrich teaching and learning in North Carolina's underserved communities. The assistance will be provided through face-to-face and online instruction using research-based content and embedded assessments. During the second year of study, students will complete a 10-month internship.

NCCU consistently provides students with quality education that has a tremendous impact on the community.

"The NCCU School of Education is actively training high-quality primary and secondary educators and administrators who instruct children in their formative years in school districts throughout North Carolina," said Chancellor Johnson O. Akinleye, Ph.D. "Through the grant provided by the Central Carolina Regional Education Service Alliance, we are able to expand our reach in supporting the school's overall framework of 'Preparing Educators for Diverse Cultural Contexts.'"

The National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS) reports 22.2% of public school principal positions were held by people of color, while 77.8% of principal positions were held by white, non-Hispanic people.

NTPS also reports a greater representation of African American principals, at 19.6%, and Hispanic/Latinx principals, at 12.9%, in urban areas when compared with non-urban areas. Rural schools have the least representation of African American principals, 5%, and

Hispanic/Latinx principals, 2.9%.

"I am very excited about the partnership with NC Central University, which focuses on preparing principals to serve schools in the CCRESA districts," said Edward Croom, Ed.D., CCRESA executive director. "Research shows that a well-trained principal is a key ingredient for a successful school. This grant will play a vital role in developing effective leaders for our schools."

Approximately 25% of Durham Public Schools principals have earned an MSA degree from NCCU.

The School of Education will provide a curriculum that develops responsive school leaders in marginalized communities and focuses on high academic achievement for students. After earning a degree, graduates will receive continued support for an additional two years through personalized, targeted coaching based on individual needs and North Carolina School Executive Standards.

The School of Education is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, which uses a voluntary peer-review process to conduct comprehensive evaluations of universities that prepare teachers and other professional school personnel. All programs are fully accredited by their respective bodies.

North Carolina Central University prepares students to succeed in the global marketplace. Consistently ranked as a top Historically Black College or University, NCCU offers flagship programs in the sciences, education, law, business, nursing and the arts. Founded in 1910, NCCU remains committed to diversity in and access to higher education. Our alumni excel in a wide variety of academic and professional fields. Visit www.nccu.edu.

College apologizes for high school line-up by skin color

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) - A college president has apologized after a recruiter told students at an Oklahoma City high school to line up by the skin color and hair texture.

At an open campus meeting Sunday, Oklahoma Christian University President John DeSteiguer called recruiter Cedric Sunray's actions at Harding Charter Preparatory High School "offensive, harmful and inappropriate."

Harding student Corey Todd told KFOR-TV that during the Feb. 24 assembly Sunray "barely talked about the school itself." Todd says Sunray ranked students based on whose hair was the most "nappy." Student Rio Brown said, "He told us to line up nappiest hair in the back and straightest hair in the front."

DeSteiguer says the university had parted with Sunray within an hour of the incident.

Sunray, who is white, wrote in a lengthy statement published Monday in the Christian Chronicle that his motives behind the exercise were not racist. "Nothing I spoke at Harding Charter Preparatory during an initial 'ice-breaker' session had any intention of promoting a racist agenda. My presentations are the opposite. They are intended to take a hard look at issues such as this," he wrote.

Biden fights for momentum in Democrats' shifting primary

By Steve Peoples, Bill Barrow and Alexandra Jaffe
SELMA, Ala. (AP) - An emboldened Joe Biden is trying to cast himself as the clear moderate alternative to progressive Bernie Sanders as the Democrats' shrinking presidential field races toward Super Tuesday.

One of Biden's leading moderate rivals, former South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, dropped out of the campaign Sunday just 24 hours after Biden scored a resounding victory in South Carolina, his first of the 2020 roller coaster nomination fight. Buttigieg and Biden spoke late Sunday night, but it was unclear if Buttigieg planned to endorse the former vice president.

Other rivals appeared undeterred and vowed to press on, potentially toward a contested convention. Biden, meanwhile, pressed his case during a round of national television interviews that reflected a stark reality a day after his resounding primary victory in South Carolina: The former vice president was forced to rely upon free media coverage because he was understaffed, underfunded and almost out of time as he fought to transform his sole win into a national movement.

Biden pledged to improve his campaign operation, his fundraising haul - and even his own performance - in an interview on ABC's "This Week." He warned of a "stark choice" between him and Sanders, while making the case he was the candidate who could win up and down the ballot and in states beyond those voting next week.

Biden added a swipe at one of Sanders' signature lines during an appearance on "Fox New Sunday": "The people aren't looking for revolution. They're looking for results."

The newfound confidence came at a crossroads in the Democratic Party's turbulent primary season. Sanders remained the undisputed front-runner. But the rest of the field was decidedly unsettled, even after Biden's South Carolina blowout and Buttigieg's sudden departure.

Most notably, New York billionaire Mike Bloomberg could create problems for Biden as the race speeds toward Super Tuesday, when 14 states from Maine to Alabama to California hold Democratic elections as the 2020 primary moves into a new phase. No longer will individual states hold primaries every week. Starting Tuesday, and most Tuesdays through early June, batches of states will vote at the same time in what has essentially become a national election.

Biden claimed a handful of new endorsements and fundraising successes on Sunday in his quest to project strength. Perhaps the most powerful endorsement would come from former President Barack Obama, who has a relationship with most of the candidates and has talked with several in recent weeks as primary voting has begun. He spoke with Biden after his South Carolina victory, but still has no plans to endorse in the primary at this point.

But a handful of high-profile political strategists with ties to the former president encouraged Biden's rivals - including Bloomberg - to quit the race to allow anti-Sanders' Democrats to unify behind Obama's former vice president.

"Most of them have seen the writing on the wall for at least the last week," said Rufus Gifford, who held top fundraising posts on both of Obama's campaigns and was part of Biden's fundraising operation. "It's clear the Democratic alternative to Bernie Sanders is Joe Biden."

Text messages reviewed by The Associated Press revealed an outpouring of interest in Biden from donors supporting other candidates, including Buttigieg and Elizabeth Warren.

Biden announced he took in \$5 million immediately after his South Carolina win, by far his best single day of fundraising over the last year. But in an example of Biden's challenge ahead, Sanders said Sunday he raised an eye-popping \$46.5 million for February. That compared to \$29 million for Warren and \$18 million for Biden over the same period.

Sanders, who dominated the money race for much of the year even though he did not court wealthy donors, said it was not the overall fundraising haul that should impress but the enthusiasm of working people fueling his candidacy.

"No campaign out there has a stronger grassroots movement than we do," Sanders said on CBS's "Face the Nation." "That's how you beat Trump."

Biden allies conceded that the post-South Carolina fundraising surge would have little impact on Super Tuesday.

"Super Tuesday is too close," said former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, a Biden supporter. "Fortunately, Joe Biden has been on the national scene for 35 years. He has less need to advertise."

Barry Goodman, a top Biden donor in Michigan and a prominent member of the Democratic National Committee, said he'd heard from about "a dozen or so" regular party donors who had been on the sidelines and now wanted to support Biden. He said he had personally targeting at least 20 Bloomberg supporters who had been sitting on their checkbooks at Bloomberg's request.

"If Mike had known what was going to happen last night in South Carolina, he'd never have gotten in," Goodman said.

As he exited the race on Sunday, Buttigieg said he was acknowledging reality: "The path has narrowed to a close for our candidacy."

In addition to his phone call with Biden, Buttigieg also spoke with Obama, who has been calling most of the candidates who have departed the race. Obama praised Buttigieg's campaign and his decision to step aside at this critical juncture in the Democratic primary, according to a person with knowledge of the call.

Biden's other rivals showed no interest in getting out of the race. In fact, some vowed to keep fighting no matter what happened on Super Tuesday.

Warren campaign manager Roger Lau spoke brazenly of pushing into a floor battle at the Democratic National Convention this summer if no candidate emerged from the primary season with a clear majority, which was possible even if someone had a large delegate lead.

"The convention in Milwaukee is the final play," Lau wrote in a Sunday memo.

And Bloomberg, who this week will be on the ballot for the first time, insisted that he was not going anywhere before Tuesday's primaries.

"I'm optimistic," he told voters in Selma, Alabama, where many of the White House hopefuls gathered for ceremonies commemorating civil rights heroism.



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