

Fisk receives \$1.3 million from Cosby

By The Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Fisk University has received a \$1.3 million donation from entertainer Bill Cosby, school President Henry Ponder said recently. Henry Ponder said he received the money Dec. 22 when he and his wife, Eunice, attended a dinner at Cosby's Manhattan home. The money is to be used for any purpose the historically black university deems fit, Ponder said. "It was a great Christmas present. It was striking to see the numbers on it (the check)," he said.



Bill Cosby

"With this gift, we have the luxury of taking our time and deciding where the money will be spent," Ponder said.

Cosby, whose television series

"The Cosby Show" has been a smash for NBC, offered the money as part of the university's \$25 million capital fund-raising campaign, which now totals \$17.5 million, Ponder said.

Cash and pledges from the campaign are earmarked for renovating Fisk's buildings, increasing its endowment, expanding the curriculum, increasing faculty salaries, providing student services and buying library books.

Fisk's financial status is much better than it was in 1983, when the Nashville Gas Co. refused to restore heat to dormitories because of unpaid bills. The school had a debt of about \$4 million at the time, but Ponder said that figure has been reduced to about \$300,000 and can be paid through the institution's regular operating budget.

Testimony begins

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Union National Bank in Winston-Salem in October 1985.

The second count of the indictment charges them with actual embezzlement.

Each of the defendants entered not-guilty pleas.

The indictment says that Miss Cassaberry, while employed as a teller supervisor at the bank branch, deposited a \$16,000 check into Tate's account at First Union. The check was drawn on McConnell's account at Wachovia Bank and Trust Co.

The indictment also says Tate then cashed four checks totaling \$15,900 on his account. The indictment alleges that the intent of the transactions was to remove money from Tate's account before the bank discovered that

the check Tate and Miss Cassaberry deposited was no good.

Testimony and evidence presented in the trial thus far indicate that, at the time the \$16,000 check was written, McConnell had a balance of less than \$3 in his Wachovia account.

In his opening statement, Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul A. Weinman, the prosecutor in the trial, said he would attempt to prove that there was a conspiracy between Tate, Miss Cassaberry and McConnell to defraud First Union of \$15,900 and that Tate and McConnell aided and abetted Miss Cassaberry in embezzling funds.

Three of the checks drawn on Tate's account at the time were made payable to three individuals

whom Federal Bureau of Investigation agents investigating the case say they have not been able to identify or locate. The agents testified that the defendants have denied knowing the three individuals.

Throughout the trial, the prosecution has attempted to prove that there was more than a business relationship between the three defendants and that proper bank procedure was ignored in the handling of the checks.

Much of his case has been built around the testimonies of current and former employees and officials at First Union's Lexington Road branch, who may have been familiar with Miss Cassaberry, Tate and McConnell.

Attorneys for the defendants have advised their clients not to comment on the case.

Weinman also declined to make any comment on the government's case against the defendants.

The defense had not called witnesses as of Wednesday afternoon's lunch recess.

Governor's award

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that entry information provides an accurate description of the programs.

The winner will be announced at an awards luncheon later in the spring, at which time Gov. James G. Martin will present the award.

For more information, contact Margot Lester, Governor's Award, Blue Cross and Blue

Shield of North Carolina, Box 2291, Durham, N.C. 27702.



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A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN IS BEING CALLED FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 1987, AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL. ALL PUBLIC HEARINGS AND OTHER BUSINESS HERETOFORE SCHEDULED TO BE HEARD ON JANUARY 20 WILL BE HEARD AT THE SPECIAL MEETING SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 21, 1987.

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