

# Bill to establish King Research Center introduced in House

By HERBERT L. WHITE  
CONSOLIDATED MEDIA GROUP

**RALIEGH** - A bill to establish the Martin Luther King Race Relations Research Center has been introduced in the N.C. House.

N.C. Rep. Dan Blue, D-Wake, introduced the bill last week, designed to jump start the program next year. The bill requests \$500,000, which will provide initial funding for research scholars to start work. Organizers say most of the \$4.5 million needed to build

the center will be sought from the private sector.

For almost two years, the Raleigh-based Martin Luther King Committee has been laying a foundation for the building of a state-of-the-art race relations research center that would seek solutions to racial issues facing society.

"This King group does its homework," Blue said. "They not only have a good idea, they have a plan, and they have collaboration from a broad cross-section of the community. I'm very impressed

with their presentations."

Center proponents say they like the chances for passage during this legislative session.

"Most lawmakers seem to agree that the time has come to get a handle on racial divisions, perceptions and realities. No one has yet to come out and say that this is a bad idea," said Lori Ann Harris, one of the project's chief consultants.

Organizers have held numerous meetings throughout the Research Triangle with community groups, faith leaders and educa-

tion officials. Triangle-area colleges such as N.C. State University, St. Augustine's College, Shaw University, N.C. Central University and Duke University have helped to organize research work. Collaboration is also under way with behavioral scientists at UCLA, Fisk University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Florida. The center will link electronically with educational institutions, government agencies, media and race relations groups nationwide.

Many church leaders view the

King Center as a good vehicle to connect with scholars, law enforcement and public officials to address social and economic ills.

The Rev. William Thurston, pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Raleigh and architect of the King Center concept, said: "There is strength in coming together. With this new center, we will now be able to reach across denominational lines and form working partnerships with a broad multiracial coalition of the-

See Bill on A11



Dan Blue

WINSTON-SALEM GREENSBORO HIGH POINT

Vol. XXV No. 36

010600...CAR-RT-SORT...C012  
N C ROOM  
FORSYTH CNTY PUB LIB  
660 W 5TH ST # Q  
WINSTON SALEM NC 27101-2755

# THE CHRONICLE

For Reference  
Not to be taken  
from this library

1974 - Celebrating 25 Years - 1999

THURSDAY, MAY 6, 1999

## One and done

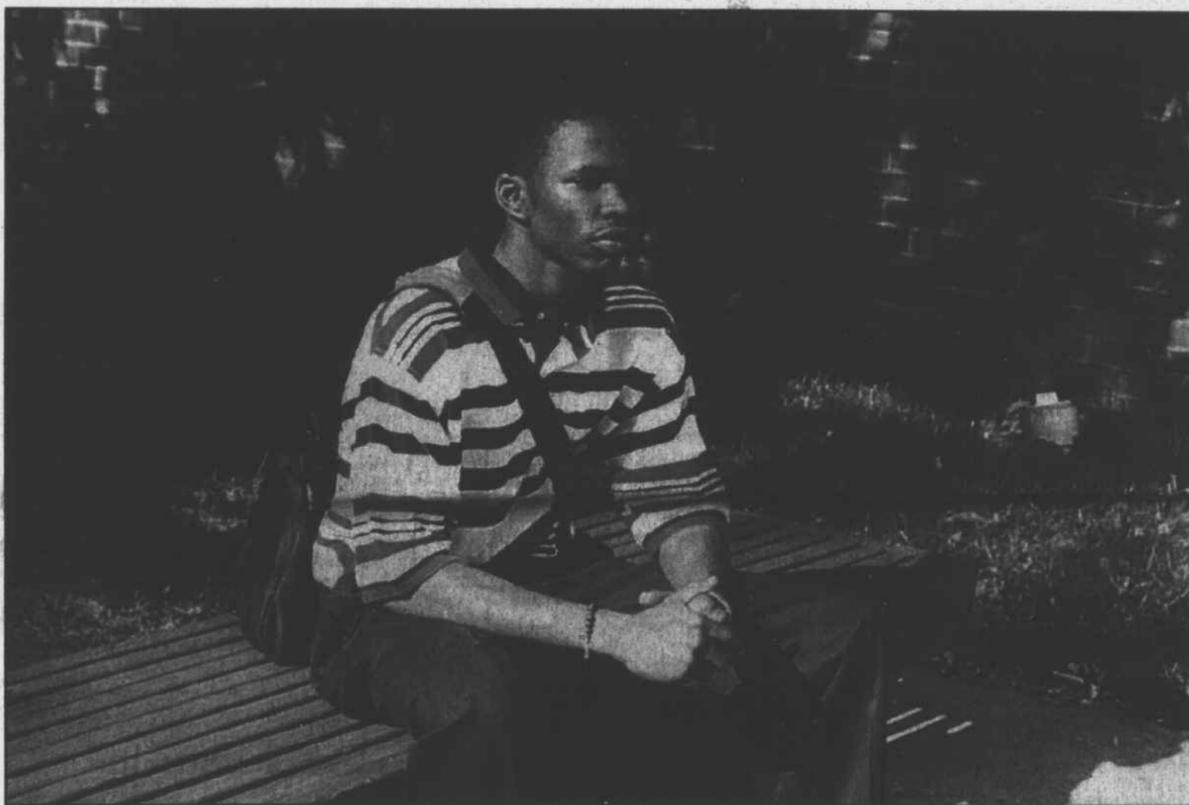


Photo by Damon Ford

Brian Graham distinguished himself among the thousands of freshmen at N.C. A&T State University this year. The Hickory native made the dean's list during the fall semester and achieved several other honors and awards while taking part in campus life.

## Graham ends first year at A&T

This is the last in an ongoing series of articles about Brian Graham, a freshman at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. The Chronicle followed Graham throughout his first year at the Greensboro college to see how he adjusted to life at a large university.

By DAMON FORD  
THE CHRONICLE

**GREENSBORO** - Final exams end today for Brian Graham, putting an exclamation point on what has been one of the best and most daunting years of his life.

Over the past year, Graham, a freshman at North Carolina Agricultural and State University, has learned a lot.

Last August, he was just another first-year student, struggling to figure out how to get around campus. Now, less than 10 months later, he's a rising sophomore who managed to carve out a niche - and find a girlfriend - on campus.

This summer, he begins another chapter in his life. Graham, an accounting major, will be in Memphis, Tenn. working in the accounting and finance department of International Paper. The 2½ month paid internship comes with an

apartment that he will share with another A&T student.

It's a long way from his hometown of Hickory, N.C., he said excitedly.

"They'll give me account-based projects, I'll look at their books and see how they organize their money," Graham said. "It's big time."

Normally, companies don't offer internships to freshmen - especially freshmen who have not taken accounting classes. But Graham was persistent. "I have to be on top of things when I go in because I'll be working with sophomores and juniors who will have had six plus accounting classes," he

said.

Though his family is supportive of his opportunity, Graham said it hasn't made it any easier for them to deal with the fact that he will be gone most of the summer.

"I didn't know they were taking it so hard," he said. "They really missed me this year, especially my little brother."

Graham's biggest concern this summer has little to do with the work. He can't figure out exactly how he's going to eat. He's never had to cook before since his parents always prepared meals for him. Since

See Graham on A11

## Alder-whats?

Correct term for women on board puzzling

By T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE

When Winston and Salem became one in 1913, their town councils were replaced by the Winston-Salem Board of Aldermen.

The term aldermen - which means elder men - accurately described the board for the better part of the century. Board members were older, white and male.

But beginning in 1971 with Ernestine Wilson, women have continually been elected to the board. Their charisma and personalities have often outshone their male counterparts, and they have been at the forefront of key policies and decisions.

But when terms like policemen (now popularly referred to as police officers) and firemen (now referred to as firefighters) fell to the forces of political correctness and common sense, "aldermen" did not follow.

Although the term "alderwomen" is infrequently used to describe female members of the board, it doesn't appear in most dictionaries and many computer spelling programs do not recognize the word.

The term is also not listed in recent editions of "The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual," a reference book used by more than a million journalists around the nation. Ironically, the stylebook does make reference to such titles as congresswoman, councilwoman and assemblywoman.

Citing issues of gender equity, the Carrboro Board of Aldermen voted last week to change its name to the Carrboro Board of Councilors. The six-member board in the tiny town adjacent to Chapel Hill had begun the process of changing its name about three years ago.

The 4-2 vote last week reflected board members' differences on what the new name should be. Two members wanted the board renamed Carrboro Town Board; however, all board members wanted the term aldermen axed from the title, board member Diana McDuffee said Monday.

"For every other occupation and group we have a gender neutral name... (Board of aldermen) refers to a time when elected bodies were all men, but it didn't fit our reality anymore.... We are no longer six old men sitting around a table," she said.

McDuffee added that the new name has many benefits. She said friends would often "stumble" when they introduced her, unsure of whether to call her alderman, alderwoman or alderperson. She also said the gender unspecific title will show young girls that there is a place for them in Carrboro government.

"Words are important and language really does matter a lot," she said. The Carrboro board had to get approval from the General Assembly before changing its name. Currently, state law allows local legislative bodies to give themselves one of three titles: board of aldermen, town or city council or board of commissioners.

Local bodies have the leeway to change their names to any one of the three without the consent of the General Assembly, but any name outside of those would have to be OK'd, said Chuck Green, an assistant city attorney for Winston-Salem.

Over the years, Carrboro has gained a reputation as one of the most broad-minded towns in the state. The town has liberal policies and has elected an openly gay mayor.

But McDuffee said she doesn't feel that Carrboro is alone in its quest to promote gender equity.

"I think that Carrboro is very progressive, but so many other towns have changed their names too," she said.

See Alder-whats? on A10

## Pigford critical of Pires, settlement

Black farmer says lawyer should be 'disbarred'

By DAMON FORD  
THE CHRONICLE

The lead plaintiff in the black farmers discriminatory suit now says their case should have gone to trial instead of being settled out of court and that their lawyer should be "disbarred" after a U.S. District judge OK'd the settlement.

Tim Pigford, a Bladen County farmer, said that he and the thousands of other black farmers never wanted lead attorney Alex Pires to sign the consent decree, a settlement between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the farmers for more than 10 years of dis-

crimatory loan practices by the USDA.

"They didn't listen to us," Pigford said. "Mr. Pires said I would have to sign the consent decree, and there was no way in hell I would have signed it."

"We made this case and Pires turned and (expletive) us the way he did."

Pires was out of town and unavailable for comment but Phillip Fraas, an attorney who worked with Pires on the black farmers' case, said reaching a quick settlement on the two-year-old case was in the best interest of the farmers.

"We could have fought to our last soldier to try to get farmers more money, but the USDA would have appealed and it would've just

(dragged) out," he said. "For some farmers who have been kept out of commercial farming for years, the amount of money, no matter how substantial, can't account for all the wrong that happened in the past."

Fraas said at least 4,000 black farmers have filled out applications for the settlement, which could be worth a couple billion dollars before it is all over with.

"There's a great deal of interest on the part of black farmers," he said. "So we feel it is a good deal."

In March, U.S. District Judge Paul Friedman made lawyers hammer out a few of the problems farmers had with the decree. At the end of last month, Friedman gave the settlement the thumbs up.

See Black Farmers on A10

## Slamming



Salim Afi a member of K'MOSA, a Miami-based theatrical poetry troupe, performs a martial arts dance during the groups appearance at WFU. For full story, see A3.

## INDEX

OPINION	A6
SPORTS	B1
RELIGION	B6
CLASSIFIEDS	B9
HEALTH	C3
ENTER.	C7
CALENDAR	C10

## This Week In Black History...

May 6, 1787 - Prince Hall forms African Lodge 459, the first black Masonic lodge in the U.S.  
May 10, 1950 - Jackie Robinson becomes the first black to grace the cover of Life magazine.