

# Police Trauma Experts Aid Healing

## Notifying Next of Kin and Counseling Witnesses All Part of a Delicate Job

BY NANCY NELSON  
STAFF WRITER

"We help people at the rawest times of their lives. We try to make human the inhuman."

In incidents such as Thursday's shootings, crisis intervention counselor Sabrina Garcia of the Chapel Hill Police Department and her colleagues help victims cope with trauma.

Jim Huegerich, another crisis intervention counselor, said the department, formed in 1972, dealt with the many mental health concerns the police department faced. These range from handling psychiatric emergencies and hostage negotiations to suicides and victim counseling. He said one of the hardest parts of his job was notifying the families of victims.

Crisis intervention counselor Joe Krieg said the department preferred to notify the family in person. If families live in distant places, Chapel Hill intervention counse-

lors call the local law enforcement agency and have that department's crisis counselor notify the next of kin in person.

"If we can inform them in a kind of sympathetic fashion, then that can help a lot," Krieg said.

He said he also worked with officers involved in the incident and their families to help the healing process.

"Anytime there's a line-of-duty assault or a line-of-duty death, we want to make sure we leave people who love around her and notify them as empathetically as we can," he said.

Huegerich said that because his job is difficult, he must find personal outlets for stress.

"There is no way you can experience grief and sadness in life without bringing it away with you," he said. "I try to handle it by spending time with friends who care. I get exercise. Also, I have a strong belief in God."

Garcia said she thought crisis counselors should have a personality that fit in with a reactive environment. She said she took a spiritual approach to dealing with the stress of her job.

Garcia and Huegerich said crime victims might use these methods in coping

with trauma.

"There are many different avenues in dealing with pain," Garcia said. "The worst thing you can do is let a wound fester."

In situations such as last week's shootings, the department works with other police divisions to assist in interviewing and counseling witnesses, Garcia said. While the department does provide some victim counseling, its primary goal is to pair individuals with community support programs outside the department, Huegerich said.

He said the Henderson Street shootings had many victims because they had shattered the community's sense of security.

"It scares the heck out of everyone because people don't think something like this can happen," Huegerich said. "It's like hitting a brick wall at 90 miles an hour. The community is going to mourn its loss of innocence."

Victims of the shooting fall into two categories, he said. Primary victims are those who experienced the crime firsthand, while secondary victims are people who were close to, but not directly involved in, the incident. These include relatives and friends of the victims, people who heard the shootings, or residents who could have

been at the scene of the crime.

Huegerich said trauma victims would move through emotional stages, similar to those experienced when mourning a death, when coping with their trauma.

First, victims go into shock, he said. Following this, they become angry and try to piece together what happened, Huegerich said. In this stage, they attempt to gain control through knowledge.

"They ask a lot of what-ifs," he said. "What if I had done this or what if I had done that?"

Finally, people use the energy and adrenaline generated by the crime to make positive changes, Huegerich said.

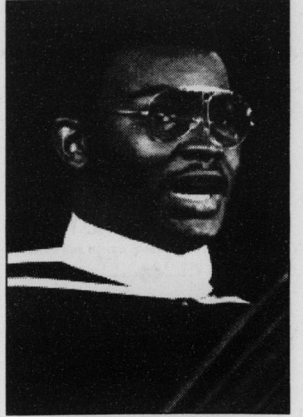
"In the long term, people look at how this could be avoided," Garcia said. "Are changes needed to be made?"

Huegerich said it was important for victims to find positive ways to deal with their stress and gave tips for doing this:

- Do not allow yourself to become numb. Avoid alcohol and drugs and stay in touch with others;
- Stay around people who care—those who are supportive and willing to listen; and
- Get exercise, good nights of sleep and eat regularly.

# First Black Student Body President Dead at Age 43

BY BRIAN VANN  
STAFF WRITER



RICHARD EPPS as UNC's student body president in 1973

Richard Epps, the first black student body president at UNC, died Jan. 16 at the age of 43.

A pioneer in more than one respect, Epps not only broke the color barrier as president, he later returned to the University and helped change the process of minority recruitment.

A native of Wilmington, Epps graduated from UNC in 1973 after serving as student body president his senior year.

Epps was also a member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, the Order of the Golden Fleece and the Order of the Grail. He was chairman of the Men's Honor Council and president of the Order of the Old Well.

At the time of his election, Epps was one of only 350 black students at UNC. Once elected, he ensured adequate black representation in his various board and committee appointments.

In a 1975 interview with the Wilmington Journal, Epps described his presidency as "the biggest growing experience ever."

"The fact that I realize how difficult it has been for other blacks who've worked hard to open doors makes me feel we owe it to them to accomplish as much as we can and lay the groundwork for future generations," Epps said in the interview.

Ironically, Epps considered dropping out of school after he was the victim of a racial slur during his first day on campus.

In April 1973, Epps was one of nine students selected by Parade magazine to travel to Europe as a counselor of fifteen boys between the ages of 8 and 15.

Epps moved to the Washington, D.C., area after graduation to work as a legislative assistant to Rep. Ronald Dellums of California. He then returned to Chapel Hill as assistant director of undergraduate admissions.

While working at the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, Epps played a ma-

major role in creating programs to aid in minority recruitment.

Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions Herbert Davis Jr. said Epps was a wonderful man. "He was very instrumental in starting many programs that took students from the campus to the state to recruit."

After his stay at the University, Epps returned to the Washington area for eight years to work as senior trial attorney in the Justice Department's civil rights division. Epps then went into private practice in Alexandria, Va. He moved back to Raleigh in July.

Although he lived in the D.C. area for most of his adult life, his commitment to the University remained strong.

"He remained very active with recruitment of students in his area even after he left the University," Davis said.

Epps died in a Raleigh hospital of complications associated with AIDS.

## SUSPECT

FROM PAGE 1

Monday, Cousins said. She said the Chapel Hill police and the State Bureau of Investigation were conducting independent investigations. She added that federal agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms had spoken with officers.

"As we said at the very beginning of this incident, with how severe and how tragic it was and the number of witnesses to be interviewed, it's going to be a very lengthy investigation," Cousins said.

SBI spokesman Bill Dowdy said the SBI had been called in to investigate the officers who had returned fire at the gunman.

"The scope of the investigation the SBI is conducting is we have been requested by

the Chapel Hill police to look into the action of the officers who returned fire and determine if there is any criminal liability," he said.

Cousins said that while police were not concerned that Williamson might flee, at least one officer was stationed at his hospital room during the past five days.

Buckner handled Williamson's first appearance Friday. During the proceeding, the two charges of first-degree murder were listed and public defender James Williams and Chapel Hill attorney Kirk Osborn were named as Williamson's counsel.

Neither Williamson nor his attorneys appeared in Hillsborough District Court on Monday as anticipated. Williams could not be reached for comment, and Osborn would not elaborate on the defense team's

strategy. Orange-Chatham District Attorney Carl Fox, who is prosecuting the case, also refused to comment Monday.

Buckner said the next step in the hearing would be a probable cause hearing to determine whether there was enough evidence to try Williamson. The earliest possible date for the hearing would be Feb. 10.

A presiding judge in the potential trial of Williamson has not been named. Judge Buckner will not be presiding over the case because he was at the Chapel Hill District Court building, which was hit by bullets, when Thursday's shootings occurred. Buckner said he was withdrawing himself from the proceedings because he was too involved in the incident.

Megan Hanley contributed to this article.

## Campus Calendar

TUESDAY

3 p.m. Career Clinic: Develop an action plan for selecting a major or choosing a career, in the University Counseling Center, 106 Nash Hall.

3:30 p.m. Study Abroad in Eastern Europe information session will be held in 12 Caldwell Hall.

Lesbian Support Group: An affirmative environment to discuss and receive support around relevant issues, the University Counseling Center, 106 Nash Hall.

4 p.m. Diabetes Support Group will discuss "Understanding and Preventing Kidney Disease," on the second-floor Health Education Conference Room, in Student Health Service. Call 966-6562 to enroll.

Study Abroad in Russia information session will be held in 12 Caldwell Hall.

Publishing Careers: Talk with professionals about careers in publishing, in 210 Hanes Hall. Sponsored by University Career Services.

Publishing Careers Panel will be held in 210 Hanes Hall.

# Chapel Hill Pledges ArtsCenter Funding

BY SUZANNE JACOVEC  
STAFF WRITER

The Chapel Hill Town Council will allocate \$20,000 to the Carrboro ArtsCenter each year for the next 10 years, according to a memorandum from Chapel Hill Town Manager Cal Horton.

Chapel Hill's contribution would reduce basic overhead costs, enhance the ArtsCenter's financial stability and assure the availability of the present location, according to the memorandum.

"We believe the Carrboro ArtsCenter to be a worthy organization that, besides providing cultural activities for people in Carrboro and Chapel Hill, increases visitor attendance in town," said Joe Capowski, Town Council member. "It is good for the town's commerce, and it is for cultural and economic reasons that we have committed funds."

The ArtsCenter, located at 300-G E. Main St. in Carrboro, offers workshops and classes in the visual and performing arts as well as after-school programs for children. The center also features plays, art exhibits and concerts by local, regional and national performers.

Due to the high costs of renting the

building, funds are being allocated to purchase the building in the near future, said Eileen Helton, general manager of the ArtsCenter. The center pays \$60,000 to \$65,000 annually in rent and property taxes, Helton said.

Purchase of the building will enable the center to free up funds and create better cash flow, she said. The ArtsCenter must purchase the building by March 31, 1995, because the purchase agreement between the ArtsCenter and the owners of the building expires on April 1, Helton said.

"[The funding] will give us a firm footing here," she said. "A month-to-month lease is difficult when planning."

Funds allocated by Chapel Hill will be used for the sole purpose of purchasing the building, Helton said. Funds other than Chapel Hill's allocations will be used for the center's normal programs. "We're stabilizing and developing programs elsewhere. Program money is separate from capital money," she said.

The ArtsCenter receives support from individual donations and arts foundations in Chapel Hill, Carrboro and other cities throughout Orange County, Helton said. In September 1994, the Carrboro Board of Aldermen made a nonbinding commit-

ment of \$15,000 annually for 10 years, Carrboro Town Manager Robert Morgan said.

"The town of Carrboro has been giving between \$9,000 and \$15,000 per year to the ArtsCenter for over 10 years," Morgan said. "I recommended to the board that we give an amount not to exceed \$15,000 over the next 10 years. To put a cap on it helps from a planning standpoint."

A "nonbinding commitment" means contributors to the ArtsCenter are not bound legally to the agreement. "We expressed our intent and willingness to contribute, but if the town faces needs to do something else, there is no contractual agreement here," Morgan said.

"The ArtsCenter is part of the economic and cultural developmental strategy in the downtown area. It attracts people to downtown. It is in the best interest of the town and community to fund the ArtsCenter," he said.

Originally located in Carr Mill Mall, the center needed more space at a reasonable price. The center's managers looked in downtown Chapel Hill, Capowski said. The ArtsCenter found the desired space and price at its present location in Carrboro but aims to serve both the Chapel Hill and Carrboro communities. Capowski said, "It's more or less on the Chapel Hill-Carrboro border, so it serves both."

## DEFENSE

FROM PAGE 1

that their clients didn't know an act was wrong than prove that they were unaware of an action's nature.

In the M'Naghten case, the defendant was accused of trying to kill Robert Peele, the father of English policeman, and ended up shooting Peele's secretary.

M'Naghten was acquitted on the basis of temporary insanity.

Williamson's former roommate said Williamson often wore fatigues and played the bass guitar.

Several years after moving out, the man occasionally saw Williamson on campus and noticed his mental deterioration.

"I think he just got more and more strange to where he could never communicate," he said. "He was just in another world."

Williamson talked to the DTH as a freshman, describing the downtown party that occurred the night before the N.C. drinking age for beer and wine was raised from 19 to 21.

"It's like a war maneuver," Williamson told the DTH on Sept. 1, 1986.

"Everybody just put their bodies in front of the lines of traffic."

Although Williamson often talked about war, the former roommate said it was on an intellectual level.

The former roommate said Williamson never talked about fighting or expressing violence.

"I am really surprised that it was Wendell (who was charged)," he said. "As different as he was, I never would have sensed he would do something like this."

"I feel for him in one sense; I think it's tragic that this is what's become of his life."

Lefebvre said the insanity defense rarely succeeded and was infrequently raised. In fact, insanity pleas represent only a fraction of 1 percent of criminal trials, she said.

People think the insanity defense is used more often than it really is because it is often used in well-publicized, notorious cases, she added.

"It's the kind of thing juries just don't buy," Lefebvre said. "It's really hard to show that someone didn't know an action was wrong."

Chapel Hill attorney Kirk Osborn, who is defending Williamson with public defender James Williams, is one of the first attorneys in North Carolina to win a case using the insanity defense.

In 1986, his client was acquitted and had to serve eight to 12 months in a state hospital.

Osborn was the first N.C. attorney in about 60 years to successfully win using temporary insanity as a defense, Lefebvre said.

Unlike other defenses, if a defendant

uses insanity and is acquitted, he or she can't just walk away. A state statute requires that, within a certain number of hours after the acquittal, the defendant be bound over to a hearing to determine whether he or she should be committed against his or her will.

Williamson is now being held in Raleigh's Central Prison, which is the most secure facility in the state, Lefebvre said.

She said that before a defendant would ever reach the trial stage, courts would determine the accused's competency to stand to trial during a pretrial proceeding.

Competency is found if, at the time of trial, the defendant can understand the nature of the proceedings against him and if he can cooperate with an attorney to prepare a defense, Lefebvre said. During the proceeding, one or more psychiatrists testify.

If a defendant is found incompetent to stand trial, officials wait until he is competent and then the trial starts. Most people are found competent to stand trial, she said.

The competency proceeding is usually held fairly close to the time of trial.

Kelly Ryan and Ryan Thornburg contributed to this article.

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## SICKLE

FROM PAGE 1

improve his children's standard of living. "I thank God for the drug," he said.

Dr. Wendell Rosse, of the Duke School of Medicine, said hydroxyurea was an exciting first step in sickle cell treatment. "We hope that other treatments will follow," he said.

Duke was another medical center that participated in the study. Duke and UNC enrolled 36 of the study's 299 participants.

Current study results reflect only adult responses to the drug. A multicenter study has begun to see whether the drug is safe for children. If it is safe, the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute will sponsor a placebo test for children.

Rosse also said the drug should not be taken without careful thought and monitoring by a physician.

Hydroxyurea is also used to treat overproduction of bone marrow. Sickle cell patients take smaller doses, but the drug can suppress bone marrow production.

The drug has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for its other uses, but it has not yet been approved for sickle cell treatment.

Widespread use of hydroxyurea should be postponed until full details are published in scientific journals, Rosse said.

Oringer said, "If the drug starts to be administered willy-nilly, we're going to see more problems with the drug."

## FIRE

FROM PAGE 1

five minutes after firefighters arrived on the scene. He was transported by ambulance to the emergency room of UNC Hospitals, where officials couldn't comment about his condition.

No firefighters were injured in the fire. Officials had not identified the name of the man transported to the hospital as of press time. It was unknown whether the man was an employee of the car wash.

Murray said the fire was brought under control within an hour. Twenty-five fire personnel responded to the scene. One hook-and-ladder truck and two pumps were used to combat the blaze. Using chainsaws, the firefighters on the trucks ripped into the roof, and smoke could be seen all the way to Columbia Street.

Carrboro police detectives and the Carrboro fire marshal investigated the fire. Murray said more information about the victim and possible cause would be ready at the Carrboro Fire Department at 10 a.m.

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