University rich in distinguished alumni

Athletes, authors prominent on list

BY SARA BOATRIGHT

When Thomas Wolfe entered UNC-Chapel Hill in 1916, he was a self-proclaimed "awkward, unhappy misfit."

Twenty-three years later, the revered alumnus' novel - "Look Homeward, Angel" - lured Richard Adler, a noted contemporary composer and lyricist, to UNC-CH from New York City. said George Ann Bissett, director of the Memorial Hall Campaign.

"I loved the University," Adler said. "It's an amazing place, as (current students) are discovering now."

Wolfe and Adler belong to a long list of UNC-CH's noteworthy alumni. Spanning fields of expertise from track and field to journalism and law, many think former graduates are indispensable to carrying the University's reputation

"(Adler) is one of the leading lights of American musical theater," Bissett said. "He is a great spokesperson (for the University)."

Adler, whose musical, "Damn Yankees," will be released as a movie adaptation by Miramax in 2005, visited UNC-CH in November 2002 for a performance to benefit Memorial Hall restorations, Bissett said.

"I wanted to give something back," Adler said in an interview. The performance presented the story of the composer's life as told by his musical works.

Giving back to the University is no foreign concept, as alumni offer contributions of both talent and experience to current students.

UNC-CH's Kenan-Flagler Business School recently selected graduate Scott Livengood as the keynote speaker for the Nov. 7 Undergraduate Symposium. Livengood, chief executive officer of Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, took the company public three years ago.

Beyond business, alumni writ-ers continue to follow in Wolfe's literary footsteps, producing works as varied as their experience.

Shelby Foote, considered by many to be the foremost authority on the U.S. Civil War, produced his 1.2 million-word "The Civil War: A Narrative" after leaving the University in 1937, according to the General Alumni Association's Web

Charles Kuralt, one of most recognized broadcast journalists, began to find his niche while writing for the Charlotte News following his departure from UNC-CH in 1955, states the GAA Web site.

Kuralt went on to host CBS' 'Sunday Morning" and was named Broadcaster of the Year in 1985.

Noted athletic figures include Marion Jones, who entered UNC-CH on a basketball scholarship in 1994. Jones left the women's basketball team her junior year to pur- sen as editor in chief for the

record-breaking speed.

While many alumni, such as Jones, ventured far beyond North Carolina's borders, some ultimately returned to the UNC system.

Julius Chambers, who in 1962 graduated first in his class from UNC-CH School of Law, later served eight years as N.C. Central University's chancellor. Chambers, who was the first black to be cho-

sue track and field, going on to win Carolina Law Review, fought for five Olympic gold medals for her several affirmative action programs during his time as chancel-

> But for alumni who are separated by miles from UNC-CH, the University remains close at heart.

"All of my children and all of my stepchildren (attended UNC-CH), said Adler, who lives in his native New York. "There's no place like it."

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Famous alumni Julius Chambers (left) and Charles Kuralt, a civil rights activist and renowned journalist, respectively, are recognized nationally for their contributions.



