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THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2007

N.C. Central still healing from murder

Slain student's funeral set for today

BY ERIN FRANCE
STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

Today marks the funeral for Denita Smith, a 25-year-old graduate student at N.C. Central University who was shot Jan. 4 outside her apartment.

Former 911 dispatcher Shannon Elizabeth Crawley is being charged with the murder.

Crawley was arrested Tuesday in Greensboro and is being held at Durham County Jail without bond.

Her court date is set for Feb. 1. Though the arrest brought some

closure, students at N.C. Central still are recovering from the shock of the incident.

"The students are saddened by the death of Denita," Sharon Saunders, special assistant to the chancellor for public relations, said.

"It took us all by surprise." She said Smith worked in her office as an intern for a semester as an undergraduate.

"She was very eager to learn new and different things," she said.

Saunders said the university provided a sign-up sheet for stu-



Graduate student Denita Smith was shot and killed Jan. 4 and is remembered as a top scholar.

dents who wanted to attend the funeral.

A 57-seat bus bound for the service will depart campus.

The funeral is slated to start at 2 p.m. at University Park Baptist Church on 6029 Beatties Ford Road in Charlotte following a family hour.

The university will hold a

memorial service Tuesday, at 10:50 a.m. Tuesday in the B.N. Duke Auditorium.

Association of Student Governments President Derek Pantiel, a senior at N.C. Central, said many on campus are concerned.

"Everyone's in shock more than anything," he said.

"Her death caught a lot of people off guard."

Pantiel said he knew Smith since his freshman year when she worked as a photographer on his campaign for student body vice president.

"She always was a caring individual," he said.

"Always willing to put forth effort."

Pantiel said that though the Durham crime rate is high, no one expected the event to occur in Campus Crossings Apartments, where Smith lived.

"It's a hard loss."

The complex is operated by N.C. Central and houses about 500 of its students.

Since the incident N.C. Central campus police have kept constant surveillance on the apartments, including checking the identification of people going into the residence.

The university's police department also is examining changes

including more video surveillance in the wake of the murder.

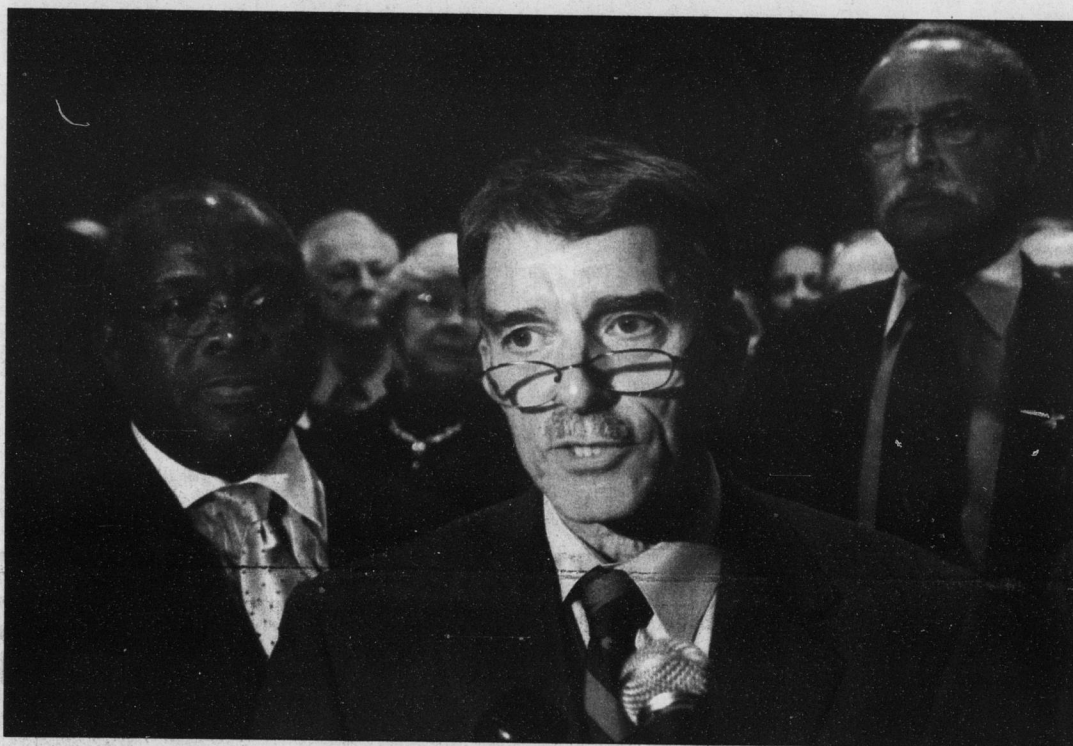
Crawley was suspended from her job as a 911 operator when it was learned she was a person of interest in the case.

She had worked in that position since 2000.

Smith was found by a maintenance worker at the bottom of a stairwell in Campus Crossing Apartments about 10 p.m., two hours after gunshots were reported at the residence.

The Associated Press contributed to this article. Contact the State & National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

HACKNEY IN LINE TO LEAD



N.C. Rep Joe Hackney, D-Orange, addresses the crowd at a press conference after winning the Democratic Caucus nomination for House Speaker on Wednesday. Hackney, who has served 14 terms in the N.C. House, earned the nod after more than two hours of debate.

Caucus pick to go before full House on Jan. 24

BY BRENDAN BROWN
ASSISTANT STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

RALEIGH — Applause accompanied Orange County Rep. Joe Hackney as he was voted the Democratic Caucus' candidate for House Speaker.

Hackney gathered more than 60 percent of the final vote as Rep. William Wainwright, D-Craven, became the Speaker Pro Tem candidate and Rep. Hugh Holliman, D-Davidson, succeeded Hackney as likely majority leader.

The entire House will vote on the choices when it convenes Jan. 24, but the positions

are all but ensured.

"We stand here united and ready to go to work," Hackney said.

The caucus debated for more than two hours before announcing Hackney as the winner. But for the N.C. House, the highly competitive speaker race is nothing new.

"This election is another moment in a series of moments of the recent volatile history of the house," said Ferrel Guillory, director of the UNC Program on Public Life.

Starting back in the era of Liston Ramsey, who set the record with four consecutive

speaker terms in the 1980s, such events have propelled exciting politics, Guillory said.

The factors paramount in House speaker contests also contribute to their sometimes chaotic nature.

Traditionally any hopeful's time in office, geographic location, ability to raise money and political ideology all influence votes, said Ran Coble, executive director of the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research.

Where a candidate falls on the political spectrum is a relative term: only one Republican N.C. House Speaker has been elected in the 20th century, when the GOP swept national and state

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Thompson resigns post

RHA president to study abroad

BY KELLY GIEDRAITIS
AND WHITNEY KISLING
ASSISTANT UNIVERSITY EDITORS

William Thompson announced late Tuesday that he is stepping down from his post as president of the Residence Hall Association.

Thompson, whose represented on-campus residents' concerns and provided programming, turned in his resignation to Student Body President James Allred.

"It's been a great experience," Thompson said Wednesday. "It definitely has been worth the sacrifice, the opportunity to grow as a leader. I've just learned so much about the University."

He had to step down because the RHA president is required to live on campus, and he will study in Denmark this semester through the Kenan-Flagler Business School's international business program, Global Learning Opportunities in Business Education.

In his resignation letter, Thompson stated that he will continue in the post until Tuesday and that RHA Treasurer Denny Lyons plans to serve as interim president.

Although Thompson, a junior, was notified of his acceptance to the GLOBE program in mid-March, he said he wanted to remain mum on his spring plans until the logistics were straightened out.

"I didn't want to be seen as a president in transition throughout my entire term," he said.

He added that he knew during his campaign that he might be forced to leave after one semester and decided to run for office only when no one else did.



Junior William Thompson knew in March that he would be forced to vacate office.

Thompson has never traveled abroad, so he said he could not pass up the opportunity to participate in such a prestigious program. "I don't want to use RHA as an excuse not to challenge myself academically."

Lyons' appointment must be approved by Student Congress' rules and judiciary committee today and by the full body Tuesday.

Allred said he expects the appointment to go smoothly, adding that "everyone seems to be on board."

Lyons, a senior, said he plans to stay in the position until the 2007-08 RHA president is inaugurated in April. "I'm going to take over fully as president and take over as many of the platform points that are left."

To prepare for the changing of the guard, Lyons has been sitting in on the meetings Thompson must attend as RHA president.

Thompson passed over RHA Vice President Ryan Coffield for the appointment because, he said, Lyons has seniority and more experience. In addition to his position this year, Lyons also served as RHA treasurer for the 2004-05 school year.

The Student Code has no rules governing the succession of the RHA president. And with student government elections just around the corner on Feb. 13, Allred said a special election wasn't needed.

He said he met with Congress

SEE THOMPSON, PAGE 10

ANALYSIS

Bowles faces test when N.C. assembly returns

BY ELIZABETH DEORNELLAS
SENIOR WRITER

The much touted relationship between UNC-system President Erskine Bowles and the N.C. General Assembly will come under scrutiny when the legislature comes back into session Jan. 24.

Bowles' most important role is as a liaison between the system and the legislature, said Andy Willis, vice president for government relations for the UNC system.

"He is our chief salesperson and our chief marketer."

Expectations are high among members of the UNC Board of



UNC-system President Erskine Bowles is pursuing an ambitious budget request.

Governors that Bowles will be able to procure a generous level of legislative funding for the system.

"That's his job — that's why we're paying him," BOG member Ray Farris said.

He said that it is necessary for the board to have high hopes for

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Store offers textbook renting option

University won't mirror program

BY ERIN ZUREICK
UNIVERSITY EDITOR

Students scrounging for textbook bargains have a new option this semester.

Ram Book & Supply, located at 306 W. Franklin St., is offering a textbook rental program that gives students their books at a reduced rate — something that UNC officials discussed but chose not to pursue.

"It was probably the No. 1 thing that students asked us for, frankly, so we thought it would be a very popular program with the students," said Scott Cardais, owner of the store.

Students who use the rental program pay less than they would if they bought a new or used book. The one catch is that participants also must dole out for a security deposit.

For example, a rental textbook for Geology 101 costs \$40.90 plus a \$32 security deposit, which brings the total cost to the same as that of a used geology book — \$72.90.

Rental books must be returned by May 15, and students can collect the security deposit at that time. Those who decide to keep their rental textbooks at the end of the semester will forfeit their deposit.

Cardais said store officials decided to implement a deposit

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Junior Will Fleming rents an anatomy textbook from Ram Book & Supply on Wednesday. Renting the book will save him about \$40.

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TOP PRIORITY Greek officials hold a retreat to discuss leadership and values

BIOLOGY WIZ UNC student receives a grant to continue cell division research

WORTH 1,000 WORDS Chatham County exhibit features local photographers



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A PERFECT 10?

The Diversions staff rolls out its top 10 albums and movies of 2006. See how the picks stack up to your favorites of the year.

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SURVIVING A SCARE

The No. 1 ranked Tar Heels win an ugly game against Virginia on Wednesday night moving to 2-0 in conference and staying undefeated at home.

this day in history

JAN. 11, 1995 ...

A study by a professor of pediatrics at UNC finds that many mothers believe spanking is a good way to discipline young children.

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