

# Minority recruitment: a brief look at the practices of eight universities

*Editor's note: This material was researched by staff writers Steve Huetel and Betsy Flagler and compiled by Chuck Abston, state and national editor.*

Recruitment plans for minority students vary widely from school to school. The *Daily Tar Heel* contacted admissions officials at seven schools other than UNC, including three other schools in the UNC system. The schools were: N.C. State University, Appalachian State University, East Carolina University, Duke University, Ohio State University, the University of Virginia and Harvard University.

For comparison purposes, UNC's minority-recruitment program includes five basic parts:

- Information concerning UNC is sent to high school students, black and white, detailing UNC courses, programs and entrance requirements.
- Names of prospective minority students are furnished to the University by the National Achievement scholarship program and Student

Search Service. In addition, the University holds a project Uplift-National Achievement weekend, which brings minority high school juniors and seniors to the campus.

- Once a minority student has been offered admission, a follow up visit or call is paid to that student.
- The admissions staff has one member specializing in minority recruitment.

- A total of \$100,000, exclusive of other financial aid, is earmarked for minority students. \$60,000 of which comes from the state legislature through the minority presence scholarship program and \$40,000 from the Pogue Scholarship fund, which has been designated by the chancellor for minority use only.

The following are programs used by the other eight schools surveyed by the *DTH*:

Out of a student body of 17,730 persons, North Carolina State University has 894 black students. This past year 159 black freshmen and 22 junior transfers enrolled at State.

One of State's three assistant directors of admissions is black and specializes in recruiting black students, a job he has held for five years. Beginning before Christmas and continuing until April, Larry Guest travels around the state to high schools, recording the names of the black students to whom he talks. He follows up on the prospective students and guides their applications through the admission process.

In April the school conducts a Pan-African weekend designed to influence blacks to enroll. "We've always given blacks the personal contact we cannot give to all applicants," says Anna Keller, director of admissions.

In addition, this year State began sending out questionnaires to all black students who were accepted but chose not to attend State.

"We make no special effort to recruit black students," says an East Carolina University

admissions official. "We go out and tell anybody — red, yellow, black or white about ECU."

ECU has no special admissions staff for minorities, but minority students that are accepted are sent a form letter by the student government's secretary for minority affairs. In addition, ECU has brochures directed toward minority students describing minority fraternities and activities.

minority students at any of the schools, including whites in predominantly black schools.

Perhaps the most vigorous minority recruitment program in the nation belongs to Ohio State University, where a combination of money, a huge staff and an aggressive contact process has contributed to a 6 percent minority

enrollment in a state with an 11 percent minority population.

OSU has a \$3-million budget designated for minority programs of which \$2.5 million goes for grants to minority students. The school gives 500 of these grants, which include tuition, fees and \$300 for living expenses. Students must repay only one-fourth of the four-year scholarship. A screening committee of students and faculty judges the more than 1,000 applications for the 500 spots.

In addition to the 500 students on scholarships, another 100 to 175 minority students enroll at the school each year, according to William Holloway, vice provost for minority affairs at OSU. Another 100 to 125 of the scholarships are offered to graduate students.

Harvard University relies heavily on lists of minority students provided by the Educational Testing Service (the people who are in charge of the college boards in Princeton, N.J.) for possible minority applicants, according to William Fitzsimmons, director of admissions.

Fitzsimmons says the pool of minority students' names provided by ETS is highly sought by all major universities. Harvard sends these students direct mailings about the school.

Harvard has a minority weekend for prospective students at the end of April each year and utilizes alumni and community contacts.

"Basically there is a great deal of minority recruitment here, but there are no quotas," Fitzsimmons reports.

Minorities comprise 15 percent of Harvard's undergraduate student body.

Duke University actively recruits minority students and hopes to increase the proportion of these students in its enrollment, according to David Belton of the admissions office.

The school's only special program, however, is a "Black Students' Weekend" held in February during which minority students whose applications have been accepted or are still pending are invited for a look-see.

Minority enrollment is 6 percent of the undergraduate population and 10 percent of the total Duke population.

"There is a limited pool of qualified black students from which the major universities can choose," says Lloyd Ricks, dean of admissions. "We have a very active program at the University of Virginia designed to identify minority students qualified for admission here."

The major part of the school's minority-recruitment program is participation in recruitment fairs, particularly in cities with large black populations in the East and Midwest — Richmond, Atlanta, Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, New Orleans and Baltimore.

At these fairs, UVA officials get interested students' test scores and then try to assess if the students are the "type who can handle the work load at UVA," according to Ricks.

Previously a visitors' weekend was held for minority students, but it wasn't working well, Ricks says.

Five to 6 percent of the student body is black, compared to 3 percent three years ago.

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Admissions officials say the University loses several highly qualified blacks each year because more attractive financial packages are offered elsewhere.

One highly qualified black girl from Durham who was not offered a Morehead scholarship chose to go to a Pennsylvania school instead, Rustin notes. UNC had no scholarship to offer her that was comparable to the privately financed Moreheads.

That has changed now, however. The chancellor has earmarked \$40,000 of the annual income from the Pogue Fund, a private endowment, to provide 16 new undergraduate scholarships worth \$2,500 each. Outstanding minority students would receive special consideration for these awards.

"I'm sure that if we had more money of the kind that's gone into these Pogue scholarships, we would be in a better competitive position vis-a-vis other institutions to attract other students," Chancellor Taylor says.

Although money is tangible evidence of commitment, administration and admissions

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## UNC needs more black applicants

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officials do not believe dollars alone will increase the number of black students at UNC.

More personnel and more money would help, Director of Admissions Richard Cashwell says, "but it's not going to appreciably do anything... It isn't that simple. People say, 'Give me more people, give me more money,' and then expect applicants to pop out of the woodwork. It won't happen."

"Even if we doubled the staff, that wouldn't address the basic problem."

And that problem, administrators and students who have worked closely with the minority recruitment program agree, is that black students must be encouraged to attend an institution of higher learning before their junior or senior years of high school.

The junior high school level is not too early to begin informing black youngsters that they can attend college and that they must take college preparatory courses rather than vocational ones in order to do so, they say.

"The only reason I was in the college prep program was because my (ninth grade) principal put me in it," recalls Harold Wallace, director of special programs in the Division of Student Affairs. "I was the first person in my family to go

to college. I was on my way to vocational education to have a good time."

Wallace's family, like many black families today, lacked the tradition for college attendance that is deeply rooted in many white families.

Because the tradition is absent, many black students do not seriously consider attending college until their junior or senior year when college recruiters pay their annual visits to high schools across the state.

But unless the student has been taking college preparatory courses, he may not be able to meet admissions standards.

Thus the problem becomes one of informing black students early enough in their educational process about the courses and grades they need to attend college.

For UNC to motivate and inform students earlier, a larger admissions office staff would be necessary, Rustin says. More assistance from high school guidance counselors would also help, he says.

Cashwell says college admissions officers across the state annually offer to present assembly programs at junior high schools to inform students about colleges.

"To my knowledge, there have been very few



Staff photo by Sam Fuwood III  
**Collin Rustin**

junior high schools that have taken us up on our offer," he says.

A new program designed to attract minority students to UNC is aimed at their parents. The chancellor has guaranteed funding for the program, which will make use of the University's black alumni. The alumni will go to community churches and clubs and encourage parents and their children to consider college preparatory programs in high school and then to consider UNC.

Perhaps the most important element of the minority recruitment program, however, is the human one. "We've got a problem that is a lot bigger than simply recruiting and SAT scores and high school records," Rustin says.

If a black student comes to UNC and has a bad experience, Rustin says, he will do more to "de-recruit" students than any recruitment program could ever correct.

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