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UNC-system schools may be in jeopardy after court decision

By Peter Wallsten
Editor

A recent U.S. Supreme Court decision citing the University of Mississippi's failure to fully integrate its eight-campus system could impact the UNC system, which has five historically black colleges and 11 predominantly white institutions.

The 8-1 decision, rendered Friday, concluded that Mississippi courts must take a closer look at admission standards, mission assignments, duplication of programs at black and white schools, and the continued operation of all its schools. Experts said the ruling could have far-reaching effects in states with dual higher-education systems. Fifteen states, including North Carolina, have university systems with several historically black schools.

North Carolina's majority-black colleges, like others throughout the South, were created to educate the state's non-white residents during decades of legalized segregation. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education Supreme Court case both concluded that the concept of "separate but equal" education was illegal.

UNC-system officials said it was too early to tell what effect the decision would have. "It's going to take us a while to digest this decision," said Elizabeth Bunting, special assistant for legal affairs to system President C.D. Spangler.

Bill Little, UNC-system vice president for academic affairs, said he didn't

expect the Mississippi decision to have any impact in North Carolina. "I don't think the cases are comparable," he said.

Black schools may be jeopardized

Some black educators fear the request for state officials to study the need for program duplication and extra campuses could endanger predominantly black schools.

In the high court's decision, Justice Byron White said majority-black schools in Mississippi existed only as remnants of segregation.

"The existence of eight instead of some lesser number was undoubtedly occasioned by state laws forbidding the mingling of the races," he said. "And, as the District Court recognized, continuing to maintain all eight universities in Mississippi is wasteful and irrational."

But the Constitution may not require closing schools, White said. "Though certainly closure of one or more institutions would decrease the discriminatory effects of the present system, ... based on the present record we are unable to say whether such action is constitutionally required," he said.

The UNC system's predominantly black schools are N.C. Agricultural and Technical State University, N.C. Central University, Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University and Winston-Salem State University. The decision could have repercussions on their futures, some said this

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Hardin refutes allegations of civil rights negligence



Paul Hardin (center) laughs with attorneys Lars Nance (left) and Alan McSurely

By Anna Griffin
Associate Editor

HILLSBOROUGH — Chancellor Paul Hardin testified Wednesday that he never discriminated against UNC Police Officer Keith Edwards and that he made every effort to follow up on her complaints of retaliation and racial and gender discrimination.

"Everyone who works for me knows that I want a fair workplace, and that we do not have discrimination based on race or sex," said Hardin, one of seven present and former UNC officials charged with racial and gender discrimination by Edwards, an 18-year veteran of the UNC police force.

The trial, which began last Tuesday in Orange County Superior Court, may last at least another week. Defense attorneys hope to begin presenting their case Monday.

In testimony this week, Hardin and two other defendants denied that Edwards had been the victim of discrimination. The defendants and their attorney, special deputy attorney general Lars Nance, claim Edwards has had many opportunities for advancement within the department but has failed to apply for them.

"She never applied for any other promotional opportunities that became available," testified former Director of Public Safety Robert Sherman. "She fell through the cracks because she failed to take advantage of opportunities that were available."

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Group to draw plans for BCC

Students still desire free-standing center

By Gerri Baer
Staff Writer

Following a tense meeting last week, University officials and students have agreed to prepare plans for an expanded black cultural center, either in a free-standing building or in the Student Union.

The students, part of a coalition supporting a free-standing BCC, and the administrators, including Chancellor Paul Hardin, agreed to assemble a group of University planning officers and coalition members to discuss future plans.

"I hope to form this group in the next several weeks, and plans should be underway in the fall," said Donald Boulton, vice chancellor for student affairs. "It is not easy to get a group together during the summer."

The group will draw three or four sets of BCC plans, Boulton said.

At the meeting, which took place June 24 at South Building, coalition members clashed with Hardin about the necessity and feasibility of a free-standing BCC. Hardin told the group of about 15 students, administrators and professors that he wanted to expand the present BCC in the Student Union.

"I think it is a good idea to expand the Union for lots of student organizations," Hardin said in an interview this week. "I personally have not been convinced that free-standing is the way to go."

At the meeting, Hardin revived the idea of letting the student body vote on a referendum to increase student fees to fund the BCC. Student members of the coalition opposed the idea, citing lack of student support and administrative recognition of the proposed referendum as reasons for their opposition.

"I haven't considered the idea of a referendum," said Ruby Sinreich, president of the Student Environmental Action Coalition and a BCC coalition member. "Referenda are not a powerful tool of students on this campus."

Interim Black Student Movement President Charles McNair said such a referendum wouldn't pass. "The BCC

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Officials unsure about future of funding for 15-501 work

By Dana Pope
City Coordinator

An apparent lack of communication between the N.C. Department of Transportation and the area transportation advisory committee could leave \$56 million in state and federal funding for transportation projects hanging in the balance.

The DOT recently indicated that it would withhold the money after the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Trans-

portation Advisory Committee left the widening of U.S. 15-501 from Pittsboro to Chapel Hill off its list of proposed transportation improvements, although one member of the committee said he had not heard directly from transportation officials.

"We have had no official contact," said Chapel Hill Mayor Ken Broun, a committee member. Broun said the committee would be willing to negotiate with state officials, although they felt strongly about their choice not to in-

clude the widening of the section of U.S. 15-501.

But Dan Thomas, a state transportation engineer, said the committee had been informed of the Department of Transportation ruling before a June 25 public hearing. "That was the exact recommendation," Thomas said.

Broun said the committee thought other alternatives were available besides the widening of U.S. 15-501, including park-and-ride lots and increased transit service.

"We listed our priorities, and our priorities did not include the 15-501 widening," Broun said. "We think there are some alternatives. We feel very strongly about it, but we're willing to talk."

Another alternative, which has sparked controversy in Chatham County, is the proposed use of Jack Bennett Road as a bypass through the northern part of the county.

The road would bypass Chapel Hill on its route to Durham and the Research

Triangle Park.

Thomas said he was waiting to receive the Transportation Improvement Program from Durham before making a final recommendation to Secretary of Transportation Thomas Harrelson.

"If it does not include (the U.S. 15-501 widening), I will send it to the secretary and ask that it not be approved," he said, adding that the \$56 million would be withheld until state officials approved a local Transportation Improvement Program.

Military policy banning gays washes out capable soldiers

Editor's note: This is the first in a two-part series on gays in the military.

By Anna Griffin
Associate Editor

Joseph Steffan was a sophomore at the U.S. Naval Academy when he first realized he was gay.

"At the time, I came out only to myself," he said. "It was very frustrating not being able to talk to anyone. But of course, the Academy isn't the best place to admit you're a gay."

In 1987, six weeks before graduation, Steffan finally confided in two close friends, fellow midshipmen in his class who had seen him rise to battalion commander — the highest student rank in the Academy — in four short years.

Steffan was a model soldier and one of the top students in his class. Two years before, he had been chosen to sing the National Anthem at the annual Army-Navy football game because he was, as a superior officer put it, "what the Naval Academy is all about."

But shortly after that late-night talk with his two friends, Steffan's dream of a long and illustrious military career turned into a nightmare. One of his friends told his girlfriend. She just happened to be the daughter of the Academy commandant's top legal aide. The daughter told the aide and he, in turn, told the commandant.

Seven days later, Steffan was asked to resign his commission. "It was scary as hell how quickly it happened," he said recently. "It was beyond my worst dreams. It was like my world was caving in. I was the same person I was the day before they kicked me out but that didn't matter to them."

Today Steffan, who just completed his first year of law school at the University of Connecticut at Hartford,

is busy preparing for this fall, when the U.S. Supreme Court will hear arguments in his case against the federal government and the Department of Defense.

For Steffan, and thousands of men and women like him, life in the military's four branches can be a living hell — a constant struggle between serving the nation but, at the same time, "denying yourself," as Steffan described it.

In recent months, homosexual rights activists have begun working to keep what happened to Joe Steffan and thousands of others from happening to a new generation of soldiers. Their goal is to force the Defense Department to repeal the military directive that forbids homosexuals from serving in the armed forces.

According to Defense Department estimates, more than 1,600 men and women were discharged in 1991 because they admitted to being homosexual. Steffan said he believed total number of soldiers forced out each year because of their sexual orientation actually may be as high as 4,000.

"They have different ways of getting you out," he said. "Voluntary retirement, resignation because of family, etc. They try very hard to get you to leave quietly."

"Of course sometimes, like in my case, they don't succeed."

Steffan has pledged to go down fighting. A year after he was forced to resign his commission to Annapolis, he filed a class-action lawsuit against the federal government, claiming his constitutional rights were violated.

"They did not catch me in any sort of compromising position," Steffan said. "The Navy conducted an investigation on me that turned up nothing unusual. All they have on me is that I said I was gay."

When Steffan discovered in April 1987, through another friend at the Academy, that he was being investi-

gated, he confronted the commandant, demanding an explanation. "He asked me if I was gay," Steffan said. "And I told him that I was."

Within seven days, Steffan was stripped of his insignia and asked to leave Annapolis. Steffan, a native of Minnesota, has written a book, "Honor Bound" about his experiences. The book is due out this fall.

Despite the publicity surrounding his case, Steffan is not alone. Just this month, Greta Cannemeyer, the top nurse in the Washington State National Guard, was given a dishonorable discharge after admitting she was a lesbian. Cannemeyer, who left her husband and children five years ago, said she was shocked by the decision.

"I have given this country everything I have, everything I am," said Cannemeyer, who has served two decades in the military. "Now they are taking away my life."

The Defense Department's policy has drawn the ire of the American Civil Liberties Union's gay and lesbian project which, in recent months, has begun an effort to convince college and university presidents to kick Reserve Officer Training Corps programs off campus because of the military's anti-gay policy.

"The military tries to instill homophobic tendencies in its recruits just in boot camp. They try to instill homophobic feelings in students through ROTC," said Jim Holobrough, a spokesman for the ACLU. "If we can't get the policy changed, we can at least try to get this intolerance off college campuses."

The question according to one Coast Guard ensign who is gay, is not whether homosexuals are serving in the armed forces. "It's not a question of whether we're in the force," said the ensign, who spoke on the condi-

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Literary magazine to explore black perspective

By Janet Engelke
Staff Writer

The Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center will expand its resources next fall to include a new literary magazine tentatively named *Pya Sauti*, Swahili for "The New Voice."

Renee Alexander, a sophomore English major from Charlotte, began to organize support for *Pya Sauti* this spring to meet a need on campus for a literary magazine designed to express the black perspective.

The magazine, which will come out sometime in October, offers opportunities for writers, poets, photographers and artists to express themselves, Alexander said.

"The magazine offers another chance to define yourself," she said, adding that the University's other main black student publication, *The Black Ink*, does not deal with the same issues as the literary magazine will.

"The *Black Ink* does not cover literary issues," she said. "It may have photographs, but they aren't presented in an artistic manner."

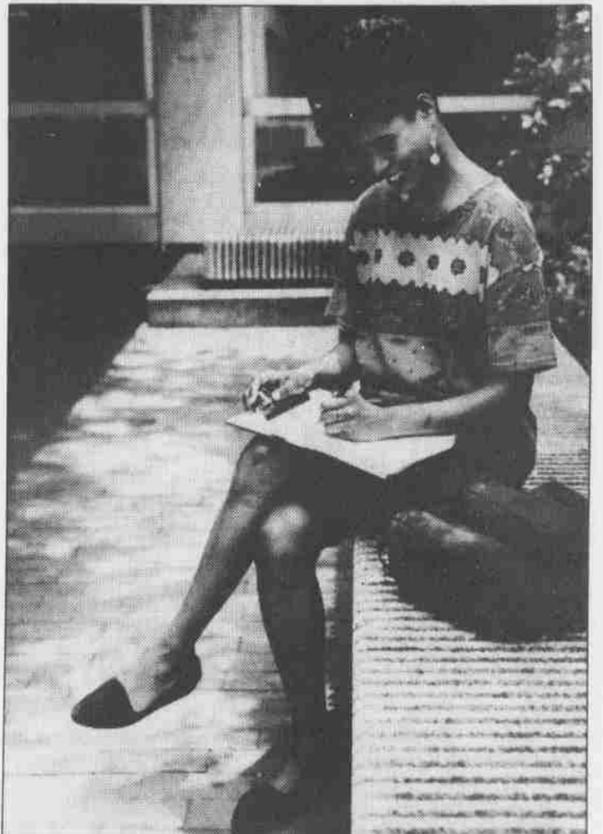
Alexander said she hoped that *Pya Sauti* would help both blacks and whites better understand the black experience. Because a literary magazine provides more opportunity for writers and artists to express their innermost feelings, the magazine may improve race relations on campus, she said.

"There is a difference from saying that I feel segregated on campus than actually feeling this in poems," Alexander said.

Marion Phillips, associate dean of the UNC School of Medicine and editor of the magazine, said he found Alexander's spirit and optimism refreshing. "I am attracted to her energy level," he said.

Phillips, a poet himself, said he would help Alexander with the review process and offer moral support. "I'd like Carolina to be the kind of environment that supports this kind of bold adventure," he said.

Phillips said he would encourage students to follow Alexander's example and get involved in the new magazine. "Tradition built on and extended in



Renee Alexander hopes students will show an interest in her new literary magazine

bold new ways controlled by students is the same kind of ground breaking done by Jean Toomer, Zora Neale Hurston and James Baldwin," he said. "No one in America, regardless of class, ethnic group or gender has not been influenced by the enormous contributions of African Americans that are now the mainstream."

Alexander said she was pleased with a strong student response, but was not

yet satisfied. "I welcome any help," she said, adding that interested students should stop by the BCC for more information on how to get involved.

Some student response has already confirmed that *Pya Sauti* has potential to exist as a literary magazine with visionary purpose, Alexander said. "I'm getting a lot of people that I didn't know were artistic or literary, but they are," she said.

I am 83 years old. I cannot remain on this court forever... — Justice Harry Blackmun