Brandon Receives University’s First Human Rights Medal

On the morning of Feb. 1, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University and the Greensboro community celebrated the 41st anniversary of the day four African-American college students initiated a sit-in that changed the course of history, and the university honored one of the students for his lifetime of service.

Brandon received his B.S. in biology from A&T in 1963 and an M.S. in education/biology from A&T in 1968, respectively. He has worked as a research scientist, manager, biologist, university instructor and field representative, and he is currently a science teacher in the Guilford County School System.

Brandon holds memberships with the Greensboro NAACP, Black Child Development Institute of Greensboro, Piedmont Land Conservancy (founding member), North Carolina Association of Educators-Guilford County, National Education Association, N.C. A&T Alumni Association and the Aggie Club. He serves on the boards of directors of Uplift Inc., North Carolina Board for Licensing of Geologists and Beloved Community Center, and he is currently a science teacher in the Guilford County School System.

Brandon and his wife, Jefties, have been married for 39 years and have five children. Brandon is a member of Harvest Chapel of Greensboro, the Greensboro branch of the NAACP, the Greensboro Community Foundation, the Guilford Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors Board and the Greensboro Alumni Association.

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Department Changes Name to Reflect Changes in Industry

With mergers such as those proposed by IBP and Tyson Foods, emerging international markets and developments in technology, agriculture is changing, and one of our academic departments is changing with it.

To reflect changes in the agricultural industry, the department of agricultural education, economics and rural sociology has shifted its focus and taken on a new name: department of agribusiness, applied economics and agriscience education. According to Dr. Anthony Yeboah, interim chair of the department, the move was driven by changes in the market and by input from the university’s corporate partners.

“Any good academic program prepares its students to enter the workforce with the skills and background needed in the current and near-future climate,” said Yeboah. “To make sure that we are doing this, we not only monitor the agricultural industry, we also meet with the companies hiring our students to learn what they expect from their employees and how we can meet those expectations.”

According to Yeboah, what companies expect from a new graduate is the ability to function in an economy that has moved from being industrial to knowledge-based.

More specifically, students must be able to understand consumer needs and the relationship between technology and business goals, and to make business decisions based on that understanding.

“Years ago, independent small to mid-size farms were numerous and they were the dominant factor in agriculture,” Yeboah said. “Today’s farming enterprises are larger, use more technology and often are owned by corporations, therefore, the needs are different from what they were years ago. The result is careers in production agriculture becoming more scarce and careers in agribusiness moving into higher demand.”

As proof of the changing face of agriculture, Yeboah points to an article in the Journal of Education for Business, which states that, of the 16 percent of the U.S. gross national product coming from the agribusiness industry, firms that store, process, transport and otherwise add value to agricultural products account for 82 percent. Meanwhile, traditional farming contributes approximately eight percent and businesses that supply inputs to production farming contribute another 10 percent.

To respond to this shift, A&T’s department of agribusiness, applied economics and agriscience education not only has changed its name, it also has added areas such as sales and marketing, finance, human resources and entrepreneurship to its curriculum.

“Our graduates are increasingly finding themselves in management and management positions with companies that are on the leading edge of technology,” said Yeboah. “These companies expect their employees to be able to anticipate consumer needs and to understand how technology fits into the cycle of supply and demand. We have been steering our curriculum this way, and the name change is a good way to let the public know this.”

FUTURES Council Members Named

Twenty-three individuals from the campus and community have been selected to serve on the newly formed North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University FUTURES Planning and Resource Council.

The purpose of the council is to advise Chancellor James C. Renick on strategic planning that will allow the university to create a shared vision for the years ahead.

On Jan. 11, Renick announced to the campus community the importance of planning for A&T’s future.

“It is now time to … develop institutional foresight that will form the core of a proactive planning process,” Renick said.

The council and other appointed teams will help guide the process and consider future challenges and opportunities in the next few months.

Representatives from campus include: Dr. Quister Craig, dean, School of Business and Economics; Dr. Colleen Grotsky, executive assistant to the chancellor; Rodney Harrigan, assistant professor, graduate level, chancellor, academic affairs/technology and telecommunication/CIO; and David Howard, vice chancellor for development and university relations.

Yeboah

Dr. Samuel Moseley, associate professor, political science; Dr. Earnestine Psalmonds, vice chancellor, research; Lesleyenow, special assistant to the chancellor, legal affairs; Dr. Sanijur Sarin, professor, industrial engineering; Dr. Godfrey Uzochukwu, professor, natural resources and environmental design/director, Waste Management Institute; Dr. Willie Willis, professor, animal science; and Dr. Roselle Wilson, interim vice chancellor, student affairs.

Dr. Grace McWhorter, ACE Fellow, also has been appointed to the council.

From the community are Mona Edwards, deputy city manager, Obrie Smith, chair, N.C. A&T University Foundation; Dr. Olenda Snodgrass, N.C. A&T Board of Trustees; and Dennis Snear, certified financial planner.

Nominees Sought for University Awards

The North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University Awards and Honorary Degrees committee is accepting nominations for the Outstanding University Administrator Award and the Honorary Degree Award(s) for 2001.

The Outstanding University Administrator Award is given annually to recognize the most outstanding full-time university administrator for service to the university. The award is sponsored by the university and carries a cash stipend.

Critera for this award are: (1) demonstrated excellence over a minimum of three years in his/her administrative position discipline and ability to plan, execute and successfully implement goals of the university; (2) outstanding service over and above his/her primary assignments; (3) outstanding achievement as evidenced by participation in professional organizations and activities, further study and/or professional certification, and honors and awards received; and (4) specific exceptional services to the community, state, or region.

The Honorary Degree Award(s) is given annually by the university to recognize individuals who have achieved national or international prominence.

Criteria for the honorary degree are (1) eminent achievement that has brought to the candidate regional, national or international stature; (2) exceptional service to N.C. A&T, the state, the region or the nation; and (3) timeliness and appropriateness of the award. A fourth criterion is that the nominee must be present for the awarding of the degree.

For nomination forms, call (336) 334-7567.

New Year’s Resolutions Party Nabbs 132 Prospects

A New Year’s Resolutions Party held Jan. 2 in the lobby of Smith Hall resulted in 132 prospective students visiting the campus for information about admissions, financial aid and courses of study.

The “party” actually was a recruitment campaign that encouraged individuals to resolve to actualize their desire to advance their education in 2003. The campaigns began in December and included a blitz of ads in periodicals and on television and radio.

Faculty and staff talked one-on-one with prospective students, explaining the admissions process, how to register for undergraduate and graduate courses, and how to apply for financial aid.

Participants were able to apply for admission for the spring semester on site or online at www.ncat.edu. The spring semester registration deadline was Jan. 8.

A&T’s radio station, WNAA 90.1 FM, and WFMV-TV 25’s “Good Morning Show” broadcast live from the party. Traditional New Year’s Day foods were served for lunch.

The New Year’s Resolution campaign was a collaborative effort between Enrollment Management, the Graduate School and the Office of University Relations.
Researchers Seek Gestation Success

Segerson

The Office of Alumni Affairs has begun the planning and implementation of A&T’s first Family Weekend, April 6-8.

mortality. In their article, Segerson and Beetham also wrote "Suppressor Activity of Bone Marrow Cells and Localization of Fluorescent-Labeled Bone Marrow Cells within Ovine Endometrial Tissue" appeared in the March 2000 issue of the Journal of Animal Science. In this article, Segerson and Beetham examined endometrial suppressor cells that may be important in preventing the rejection of conceptus tissues by effector lymphocytes during early pregnancy in sheep. Their findings suggest that suppressor cells may originate from bone marrow and that their trafficking through the peripheral blood and localization within the endometrium may be regulated, in part, by an ovarian factor.

In the July 2000 issue of the same journal, Segerson and Beetham addressed early conceptus mortality in swine, in an article entitled, "A Porcine Intrauterine 4-Mda Component with Transforming Growth-factor-B activity suppresses natural killer cell responses." Early conceptus mortality is a costly problem for swine producers. Reproductive immunologists speculate that rejection of conceptus tissues by the maternal immune system may be responsible for part of the mortality. In their article, Segerson and Beetham examined the ability of a growth factor to affect immunomodulation preventing early conceptus mortality in swine.

Segerson and Beetham also wrote "Immunosuppressive Macromolecules of Endometrial and Conceptus Origins in Livestock Species," an article which appeared in the August 2000 issue of the Journal of Reproductive Immunology. In this article, they described the intrauterine macromolecules that have been shown to suppress lymphocyte responses in an effort to delineate whether immunosuppressive macromolecules have a role in the regulation and maintenance of conceptus tissues during pregnancy.

For more information, contact Segerson at (336) 334-7536.

Family Weekend Planned

Morgan

The event will be a collaborative endeavor with the Office of Student Affairs and the Office of Admissions. Chancellor James C. Renick and Dr. J.C. Morgan, director of alumni affairs, have named a planning committee to design a weekend built around the Piedmont Jazz Festival that will be inviting and interesting to parents.

Projected plans include dinner theater on Friday evening, a cookout on Saturday afternoon with a radio personality, messages from Renick, the Office of Admissions, the Student Government Association and the National Alumni Association; campus tours; and performances by the choir, cheerleaders and band. In addition, A&T and other businesses in the Piedmont are sponsoring the first Piedmont Jazz Festival that weekend, April 6-8.

"Parent and family weekends are sponsored by colleges and universities simply to say welcome and thank you," Morgan said. "For upperclassmen, it may be the only time their families come to campus."

The Piedmont Jazz Festival will provide the necessary ambiance for a great weekend of entertainment," Morgan added.

Cooperative Extension Wants Nominations for Award

The Cooperative Extension Program of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is accepting nominations for the 2001 Gilmer L. and Clara Y. Dudley Small Farmer of the Year Award.

The award, given annually for the past 15 years, honors the state’s top small-scale farmer. It will be presented during a luncheon on Small Farms Day, March 28, on campus. A cash prize accompanies the award.

Joseph L. Dudley, president of Dudley Products, Inc., established the award as a tribute to his parents’ commitment to higher education and appreciation of farming.

"Today’s small-scale farmers face tough challenges," said Dr. Daniel L. Lyons Sr., assistant administrator of regional and county field operations for A&T’s Cooperative Extension Program. "Yet, by working hard and taking advantage of learning opportunities, such as those offered through Cooperative Extension and other agencies, many can and do succeed. This award is given in recognition of those who meet the challenges and come out on top."

To be eligible for the award, farmers must demonstrate prudent stewardship of the land while optimizing resources and enhancing farm operations through cooperative extension programs. Gross annual income from farm operations cannot exceed $50,000.

Applications are available at county cooperative extension centers, and are due by Feb. 14. For more information, please contact Lyons at (336) 334-7915.

New Research Project Aimed at Studying Sensors

A research effort at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University will examine combination sensors in a new project funded by NASA’s Ames Research Center.

Dr. Meldon Human of the department of mechanical engineering will lead “Combustion Sensors: Gas Turbine Applications,” a project that earned a $143,397 award from NASA.

Combustion sensors help designers monitor the physical and chemical environments associated with combustion processes, enabling them to create more effective and efficient propulsion mechanisms and energy-generating devices, such as gas turbines.

According to Human, improvements in sensor designs and configurations will aid the analysis and development of gas turbine engines, leading to jet engines with higher efficiency.

Through this project, Human and others will assess the latest combustion sensors, recommend the best sensors for specific applications and identify needed advancements in the field, including possible improvements in data processing.

For more information, contact Human at (336) 334-7620.

In the Spirit of Giving...

Carolyn Ruff's painting of one of her designs.

Sharing our talents with friends and loved ones when they are ill is something most of us seldom think of doing. We generally send flowers, a card or money to express our concern. Carolyn Ruff, a secretary in the history department, decided to do something different when her longtime friend Thelma Wade became ill and had to have surgery.

“I knew Thelma would get flowers and cards, but I wanted to do something that was lasting,” Ruff said.

When the Greensboro native, who had taught herself decorative painting six months earlier, asked Wade if she could paint a border in her bedroom, she agreed.

“I wasn’t sure what she was going to do, but I was excited about it,” Wade said.

Remembering the occasion, Ruff said, “As I began painting the border, I started out with a vine that did not look like very much. I could tell by Thelma’s expression that she was unsure of what I was doing, so I assured her that once the painting took its form, it would be beautiful.”

When the first rose was completed, Wade grew less apprehensive. Once the project was completed, Wade called her family members and invited them to see it.

“It was so nice of Carolyn to do this for me, it made me feel so much better,” she said.
An exhibition of oil paintings and other items painted by African American folk artist Clementine Hunter (c. 1886-1988) can be viewed in the Mattye Reed African Heritage Center through May 15. Hunter was born on a large Louisiana cotton plantation called Hidden Hill, which is believed to be the setting for Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin. At age 14 or 15, Hunter moved to Melrose Plantation, where she spent most of her life.

Self-taught as an artist, Hunter did not begin painting until she was in her mid-50s. She produced more than 5,000 works of art. Some of her themes were church scenes, figures of African ancestry presented in spirituals and anecdotes. Her one-woman show, "Momma Kemba," was held at the historical figures of Mary McLeod Bethune and Harriet Tubman in her own words. Kemba’s at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 13, in the Memorial Student Union Ballroom. The event is part of the 2000-01 Lyceum Series and is free and open to the public.

Kemba consists of historic and heroic figures of African ancestry presented in full costume and spiced with moving spirituals and anecdotes.

"My presentation will enlighten, educate and encourage, hopefully transforming the mindset and motivating the audience to strive to make a positive difference in their community and our world," said Johnson-Webb.

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