

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

University of North Carolina

Black Faculty/Staff Caucus

May 16, 2014

Dr. Rosalind Fuse-Hall, Bennett College

- To Chancellor Folt (like Colt), Judge Goodson, and Professor Daye and other distinguished guests
- My honor to speak about my time as a junior administrator and member of the Carolina Black Caucus Group.
- I returned to Carolina in 1989 after encouragement and nomination by Dr. J. Lee Greene of the English Department. He affectionately called him “Doc”
- Now returning after being here as a student was interesting, to say the least.
- People who were your faculty members are now your---WHAT—not colleagues, not peers, so WHAT/
- It was like being the baby in the family. Everyone knows you’re the baby and they think that’s cute; but, you can have no say...Just, you are the one with young legs so you do the work.
- But mostly, you learn the dynamics of Black Love and as in our African heritage and tradition; you have respect for the elders.
- Elders like:
 - Harold Wallace and Archie Ervin, who were the perpetual chairs of the Caucus
 - Sonya Stone and Audrey E. Johnson, who were the fierce sisters that spoke their mind.
 - Carl Smith, who was the strategist and brought the sobering factor of reality and funds to our plans of action.
 - Mrs. Beverly _____ and Mrs. Donella Crosland, who brought the student perspective to each matter.
 - Mrs. Shirley _____, from Housing
 - Clifford Charles from Counseling Services

- Few faculty came consistently but I remember, Dr. Fred Hall, Harry Amana, Chuck Stone, J. Lee Greene, who usually had the agenda rolled up and would bid us adieu after his part was done.
 - Soyini Madison, who was my buddy and would also provide another slice of analysis for our evening conversations almost every night.
- Later it was my true sisters: Dr. Carolyn Mayo and Dr. Carol Malloy, who would take me to lunch the next day and break it down for me about faculty and staff tensions within the academy.
- But, this was a great gathering, if for no other reason than to welcome each fall the new Black folk on the campus and to let people know that they had a support system, if they wanted one. Reflecting back, I now understand clearly that it was an oasis also. Because as I or the only in your respective department, who “didn’t understand your perspective about an issue”, this was a place to refresh and rejuvenate that you were not crazy and people from your similar experiences felt a similar reaction to how rooms got reserved, or hires were made or tenure was granted or mostly not granted and so another person was leaving the fold.
- Moreover, it was a place to learn the politics of the campus at least for me and to hear what was happening on the campus outside of the DTH, or my office environment.
- But for these meetings, I would have been oblivious to the larger world, especially the operational side of Carolina. That is what I learned about the greater university and even the understanding of us as a member of a system. I thought we were just CHAPEL HILL—the alpha and the omega of higher education.
- This group was especially present during the struggle for the Black Cultural Center days. The debates and heated discussions about what was needed and who would serve on the advisory committee certainly emanated from discussion around that conference room table.
- Sometimes I would force myself to attend; but, I knew that it was an obligation to hear and to learn, even when I didn’t always agree with the positions being promoted.
- But, it was a great lesson in University operations beyond your own shop. Most importantly, it introduced me to a host of great colleagues that grew

me up to become the higher education professional career that I have been blessed to live.

- And I am grateful that a new generation of young Black professionals and faculty has this “safe harbor” to develop within also.
- Cheers and salute for at least 40-50 more years of good health and healthy dialogues.