

Stroman - CBC 40th Anniversary Celebration

Thank you. So, tonight is all about celebration. But celebrate what? How can we celebrate?

We know that there has been Black staff – enslaved, paid, and unpaid, since the doors opened.

We know that in 1951, Kenneth Lee, Henry Beech, and Floyd McKissick became the first three Black students granted admission to UNC when they were admitted to the UNC School of Law.

We know that in 1955, the first black undergraduate students were admitted to the UNC.

We know that in 1966, Hortense McClinton became the *first black faculty* member at UNC-Chapel Hill in the School of Social Work.

We know that – today - we are still troubled by the numbers. The numbers don't lie, right?

1.) **North Carolina Population**- Total 9,752,073; White/Caucasian 63%; **Black 22%**

2.) **Full-Time Permanent Faculty**- Total 3,318; African American 168 **(5%)**

3.) **Full-Time Permanent Employees**- 11,231; African American 1,494 **(13%)**

- **Professors**- 949
 - *African American Professors*- Male 10; Female 13 **(2.4%)**
- **Associate Professors**- 515
 - *African American Associate Professors*- Male 18; Female 23 **(7.9%)**
- **Assistant Professors**- 467
 - *African American Assistant Professors*-Male 13; Female 26 **(8.4%)**
- **Fixed Term Professors**- 1,387
 - *African American Fixed Term Professors*- Male 23; Female 42 **(4.6%)**
- **EPA Non-Faculty**-1,780
 - *African American Non-EPA Faculty*-Male 48; Female 111 **(8.9%)**
- **SPA**- 6,133
 - *African American SPA*- Male 384; Female 783 **(19%)**

How can we celebrate?

Well, I will tell you five reasons why we celebrate and why we have to keep on celebrating.

1. History. Look at what we have overcome. Resistance. Both physical and mental. The resistance is documented – orally and in writing. And we even though the law says we can be here - it does not protect us from those who do not want us here. It does not shield the hurt and pain of not being welcome. Thus, we are ever grateful to the courageous leaders who in 1974 formed a collective to fight for change in culture and policy. The Charter of the Black Faculty and Staff Caucus was signed by Prof. Charles E. Daye, Presiding Officer and Harold G. Wallace, Secretary/Treasurer on November 6, 1974.

Their primary concern was Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment. Their actions, as a unified body, helped to foster respect and acceptance of our scholarship and presence on this campus. Thank you.

2. **Gifts.** We have beauty and brains. We are an attractive people. Think what this university community would be like without our being here. We are educators, business leaders, researchers, scientists, administrators, program directors, technicians, attorneys, coaches, doctors, advisors, public safety, nurses, managers, and more. We direct, guide, energize, improve, and INNOVATE! UNC is a much better place because of our presence.

3. **Partners.** "Leadership is lonely." It is hard to effect change in any environment without support. And that support comes in many different shapes, sizes, and colors. We are very blessed to have Trustee Caudill and Chancellor Folt at the helm during these times. They are leaders with vision and heart. They are working hard and smart to make Carolina more inclusive and more sensitive to our concerns. You might not read it or hear about it through the media. You might not be in attendance at the meetings. But I know our many partners "get it." They are in our offices, our departments, across campus, and in Raleigh. These friends believe it is the right thing to do. We are not alone in this struggle and we should celebrate that fact.

4. **Our children.** The students – of all ethnicities -- need us. We inspire them. And we have to continue to prepare them for the global marketplace. Even though some of them might not want to face this globalization. Our culture, our expressions, our intellect, our style are integral to the future of the world. Each and every day we provide them with that bridge to a world of diverse perspectives and activities. We are amazing and you know it. And the students know it because they tell us. We can't quit or lose our way. Our children depend on us.

5. And lastly and most importantly. **Our Faith.** Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." God has promised us that we WILL be alright. That we will do well. That we will have tears. However, in the midst of the struggles, disappointments, and lack of reward -- we will be blessed. I am trusting in that promise and I know you do too. God will not fail us regardless of what happens outside of our office doors, on this campus, and in the state of North Carolina.

So let's smile, laugh, and make a new friend tonight. Let's trust our history, gifts, partners, children, and our faith to make it through and beyond. We can't let our ancestors and the Caucus pioneers down. We can't afford to go against the greatness of America. We must honor our spirit to love, respect, and celebrate all that is good.

God bless you.

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